

through a fiery furnace, God will keep us from all harm.

A true Christian shrinks from unnecessary exposure to evil and moral danger. Then in his hour of need he can trust God to deliver him. The dove is a clean bird. Its instincts are clean. It hates defilement. It keeps its plumage anointed with an "unction" that preserves it from impurity. It loves, and lives for, cleanness. God is able to anoint us with an unction of the Holy One, so as to preserve us in holiness before Him. Many fail because their faith does not grasp His Almighty grace. We lack faith because our consecration is not entire, nor our obedience unqualified. External rules and aids will do little for us until we are made right within. You cannot make a ship sail steadily by external supports, but you must put the ballast inside. God has provided grace to ballast our souls for a safe voyage. He is able to keep what we have committed to Him. Life may be rugged, trials sharp, difficulties manifold, burdens heavy, and circumstances unfriendly; but, united to Christ, we may be more than conquerors. "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

THE GOSPEL THE POWER OF GOD.

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I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.—Rom. i: 16.

VIEWED in any and every aspect, Christianity is immeasurably superior to every other system of religious truth. As a speculative scheme it excels human philosophy both in the range and in the methods of its teachings. It tells of God, His nature and perfections, His creative power and providential care. It tells of man, his faculties and destiny; of eternity and its issues. Its aim is higher than the inculcation either of science or philosophy, while its scope includes both. No discovery in

the one, nor sound principle in the other, but serves to strengthen its evidences or to illustrate its mysteries. It overpasses both in the disclosure of truths upon which earthly oracles are dumb. It teaches, not by virtue of human discovery, but upon the authority of an inspired testimony, by which conjecture is reduced to knowledge, and opinion is converted into faith.

In the sphere of morals it transcends all human ethics—not only that it places man in wider relations, sets forth duty with greater precision, and supplies principles of action which are higher—but pre-eminently in the fact that it presents a more perfect and unvarying standard of obligation in the divine law, emancipating us from the shifting canons of utility and expediency, or from the still more capricious sense of fitness and propriety. We are no longer subject to the whims of fancy or of taste, but have a definite law for the measurement both of character and of conduct.

The full power of Christianity, however, is not felt until we accept it as a Gospel; until we rise into the sphere of religion and consider it as the kind of religion which is suited to the case of a sinner. This precisely is what the text affirms: that "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." When we wish to be most deeply impressed with a sense of God's power, we are apt to select our illustrations from the visible and material universe—perhaps for the reason that the movement of physical force gives us the first conception of what we call power; which, once obtained, is readily transferred from the sphere of the natural to that of the spiritual and moral. But Paul finds the highest evidences of divine power, not in the kingdom of nature, but of grace. True, he proves the heathen to be without excuse, since "His eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." (Rom. i: 20.) But, for one reference to the works of creation he makes a dozen to the scheme of grace, when he would