

God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." The glories of gospel grace are hid and sealed alike from the learned and unlearned. "The world by wisdom knew not God." "The wisdom of the wise perisheth." "The understanding of the prudent is hid." The term mysteries has special reference to Christ and his kingdom established on earth in the hearts of men. "The kingdom of God is within you. We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery." "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom," Colossians i. 28, 27; 1 Timothy iii. 16; Ephs. iii. 3, 4, 9. It is manifest from these passages and from the uniform tenor of Scripture, that an experimental knowledge of the gospel can only be attained through the divine teaching of the Spirit and the word.

2ndly. Now there are some important inferences which follow from these considerations. The real cause of all unbelief is not because the head cannot comprehend the great mysteries of Christianity, but simply because the heart will not believe them; it is enmity against the moral perceptions of God as they are revealed in the Bible, that makes Divine truth *hard to be understood*. It is not the understanding but the will that is opposed to the gospel, and the humbling doctrines of the cross. Mystery, is not the sole nor the real cause of man's aversion to the gospel. There is nothing in the doctrines of the Trinity, twofold nature of Christ, conversion, regeneration, resurrection, or in any of the doctrines of Christianity, considered merely in themselves, to provoke or offend, however they may baffle and puzzle our reason. What offends the natural mind, therefore, is not the incomprehensibility of the gospel mysteries, as mere mystery, but the redemption involved in the facts. How intense the enmity of the natural heart, seeing it can believe and admire the Divine power and goodness in nature, and deny it in grace; trace the omnipotence of God in creation, and trample upon it in redemption.

3rdly. We learn that Christ's ministers have a warrant and Divine authority for preaching the "mysteries of the kingdom." Our Apostle desired the prayers of the Church, that "God would open a door of utterance unto him to speak the mysteries of Christ that he might present every man

perfect in Christ." The preaching of the gospel in all its fullness is the appointed means for the ministry of the Spirit. *Preach the word*, is the command. The word of the truth of the gospel is the appointed instrument to convert and regenerate the sinner, and to sanctify the converted. "Born again by incorruptible seed of the word of God." It was "when Peter was yet speaking the word that the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard." "I have not shunned to declare unto you the counsel of God," Teaching us that nothing should be concealed or reserved, but *all truth*, both in doctrine and practice, fully opened and enforced. "The truth as it is in Jesus" implies the whole truth, not mere authorized selections. Cecil has well said. "Half the truth is a lie." Logic and scholastic literature have added nothing to God's truth, but have, very often, bewildered the humble inquirer after it. The Lord has "hid His mysteries from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes."

The Word of God is the foundation, the combustible, so to speak, upon which the Promethean spark of the Holy Spirit falls in conversion; and where most truth is spoken, we are to *hope* there will be most true conversions. While God can work without means, He ordinarily works effectually in the regeneration of sinners, by the instrumentality of the Word; therefore we must do God's work in God's own appointed way, if we would expect His blessing, for God will only bless His own truth. While all Evangelical Christians agree on the necessity of the Holy Spirit's work in the conversion of sinners, they differ widely as to the mode in which the Spirit works. Does the Holy Ghost convert the soul by a positive act of sovereign power, as in the case of Saul's conversion; or does He work mediately by Word, informing the mind, winning the affections, and changing the heart, by the instrumentality of Scripture truth. Surely the latter is the ordinary mode by which the Spirit works. He proposes the truths, the mysteries of Christianity, to the mind, and then disposes the mind and will to receive and believe them. Hence the promise—"He that believeth shall be saved." Thus "Lydia's heart was opened by the things that were spoken by Paul, and our