

disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.*"

Now, had Jesus elsewhere clearly and distinctly taught that these His first disciples were to be inspired of God to speak and write His commands for the world, and that no others were to be clothed with this authority, then the sentence, "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you," would naturally be an allusion to such previous, definite teaching. But there is no such previous teaching, either written or any where alluded to. Then it is evident this sentence cannot possibly be burdened with such weighty thought. The utmost that can be said of it is, that it is a general command from Jesus to all His followers to the end of time, and therefore cannot possibly be made to teach the doctrine of the inspiration of the New Testament scriptures.

Hence is evident our contention that no doctrine of inspiration has for its foundation the words of Jesus Christ either recorded as directly spoken by Him or as indirectly attributed to Him by His first disciples.

But did any of the early disciples, especially those who wrote these Scriptures claim such inspiration? Well, these their writings are open to all for consultation as to their answers to this question. Can any one point out any such definite claim in them? Who will name chapter and verse of such comprehensive claim? It is true that Paul in some of his writings, declares that, concerning some minute matters regarding the regulation of the church founded by him at Corinth, he had the mind of the Lord in what he wrote. But there is no claim in this to regulate other churches, not founded by himself, whilst in some other matters he distinctly states that he does not write as consciously having the mind of the Lord or at least, only thinks he has.

Now, even if these his writings to the Corinthians be accepted as inspired, on the strength of Paul's own statement, as he does not appeal to some distinctive, special authority given to him, in common with the twelve apostles, he must be understood as being inspired after the manner that all the followers of Christ may be inspired, and so there is no proof in Paul's utterances for the modern idea of inspiration.

Hence is evident the fact that the modern definitions of the inspiration of the New Testament Scriptures do not rest on the teachings of Christ or any of His apostles or first disciples.

But such a surprising conclusion naturally demands more than a passing thought. If such be not the foundation of the inspiration of the New Testament, can there be any adequate foundation for such dogma? To ask this question is to answer it in the negative. It is much the same as to ask if any building can have an adequate foundation if all solid material is left out of its foundation. In short, it means that, at best, all inspiration dogmas, which include in them authoritative teaching, are theories only, and can never be anything else to him who without superstitious reverence for traditional teaching examines their claims.

But this conclusion is opposed to the general teaching of Christendom. Certainly it is, and that is the chief reason why it is and will be rejected. "Thou shalt not follow the multitude to do evil," is good wholesome advice to all Christians, provided it is restricted to the multitude outside the church, but it is laughed to scorn when it claims to include themselves.

However, truth is truth, no matter how treated, and so it will continue a truth to the end of time that the ideas of the inspiration of the New Testament Scriptures, now almost universally accepted, are built on a foundation of sand, are the very essence of superstition.

What then is the origin of these theories?