

whatever means he, in his sovereign wisdom, thinks best. The Bible, however, written under his divine influence, is *no* usual means ; but at the same time, be it remembered, that though an unregenerate man were to peruse and study the Bible for ever, its most constant perusal and critical examination would never change his heart. It was not the preaching of the Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, that converted such a multitude ; but it was the Holy Spirit who used the preaching of the word, on that occasion, as an *instrument* in the moral new-birth of thousands.

The Bible is not God, but the word of God ; and the moment we look upon it as an *agent*, and not merely as an *instrument* in our salvation, we erroneously consider it as possessing the innate attributes of Deity himself, and are therefore guilty, though perhaps ignorantly, of idolatry. When the Saviour exhorts the Disciples to "search the Scriptures," it is not because they are God ; but because they testify of Him. Again, "Sanctify them through thy truth ; thy word is truth." In this prayer the Saviour implores his Father to sanctify his Disciples through the *instrumentality* of the Sacred Scriptures.

We make these remarks because we know that there are professed Christians who deem the Bible, not as the *instrument*, but as an *agent* in human redemption ; and who consider it sufficient, independent of the immediate power of the Holy Ghost, to illuminate—to regenerate—to sanctify. Was the Bible, we would ask, the Comforter promised by the Saviour to his Disciples ? And may we not legitimately infer that if the Scriptures had been sufficient to comfort the Disciples there would have been no need of the more potent influence of their Divine Author ? Is there any Scriptural proof that more than *one* agency has ever been employed in communicating eternal life to those who are morally "dead in trespasses and sins?" Supposing the Bible to be that agency, by what power were Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and others, who lived prior to Moses, called from darkness to light—from sin to holiness—from the way of transgression to the paths of obedience ?

By these brief observations we intend not to lessen the importance of the Bible as an *instrument* in the hands of the Supreme Being for the accomplishment of his purposes of mercy ; and it is to us a subject of constant regret that it is too much neglected. Divine love is now conveying it to "every nation, kindred, tongue, and people !" and it is no doubt the principal means that will be employed in the overthrow of every system of false religion throughout the earth ; but it is a means which, without the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost, will never bring one sinner to genuine evangelical repentance. Christian, read the Bible ; for it is the appointed *instrument* of Jehovah for the sanctification and