

tist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian churches have adopted this theory in their creeds, but that does not authoritatively settle it for me.

This morning I appeal, not to human authority or human opinion, but to that *the Being* who only can tell me now whether there is a hell. That Being is God. I reject every opinion except that on which is written: "Thus saith the Lord." I put one "Thus saith the Lord" against all the sermons, in all the ages. "Thus saith the Lord." "Thus saith the Lord."

You see, my friends, I start on the assumption that *the Bible is true*. If you deny it is true, some other Sabbath I will argue that matter, but not this morning. As common-sense men you know that in making any argument on any secular or religious subject, there must be some common data, some common ground where we shall start together. It would be as silly for me to try to prove to you, who reject the truth of the Bible, that there is a place of future retribution as it would be for me to discuss fraud and crime and their penalties with a man who denies Blackstone and the Statutes of the State of New York. Our common-sense tells us that there must be some common ground where we can start.

Now, in passing, I have to ask those who reject the Bible some questions. "Is there a God?" "Yes," you say. "Is he good?" "Yes," you say. Now, I ask you, is it not reasonable that a good God should give us a revelation of some kind? Is it not reasonable to suppose that such a Being, starting our race in this world, should give them some guide, some directory, some written help? "Of course," you say, "that's so." Well then, which is it? The Vedas, the Talmud, the writings of Confucius, the Koran of the Mohammedans, or the Bible?

WHICH IS GOD'S REVELATION TO MAN.

If you will show me a book which seems to be a more reasonable and a better revelation from God than the Bible, I am willing to accept it. I like anything new and unique. By the constitution of my nature I prefer the new to the old. If you can hand me up a book this morning that seems to be a better revelation from God than the Bible, I will take it, and I will preach from it. Is there a man in this house who denies everything?

IT IS EASY TO DENY.

You tell me that the Turko-Russian

war is nearly over. I may deny there has ever been such a war. Moreover, I may deny for the sake of argument a moment, that there are any such places as Russia and Turkey.

"But," you say, "you will admit that there are such places as Moscow and Constantinople?" No; I never saw them. "But," you say, "you must have seen the submarine telegrams in all the news papers, coming from the seat of war?" Yes but those telegrams were not sworn to, and I do not know but that all those telegraphers may have made a conspiracy to deceive me. In other words,

I MAY DENY EVERYTHING.

"Well, you say, 'that is foolish.' I admit it; but you are doing in regard to the Bible just what I am doing in regard to geography. You deny the geography of the eternal world, and I for the minute deny the geography of Europe.

Good-bye my brother. I have no time this morning to talk to you who reject the Bible. Some other Sabbath I will see you. I must turn now to those who believe the Bible to be true. Eternal Spirit of Almighty God, fall upon us now while with fingers of dust we turn the sacred leaves, and with lips of ashes recite the most stupendous truths that ever shook the human soul.

Now if we are honest men we will come to this subject as we would in the midst of a great fresco if at midnight we were on the Erie express train and were to say to the Conductor, do you think any of the bridges are down to-night?"—with something of the feeling I had after our last lifeboat had been crushed to pieces in the midst of the ocean cyclone, when I said to the officer, "Officer, do you think we will ever get to New York?" He shook his head, as much as to say, "Don't ask me."

I have no sympathy with the flippant discussion of this truth, nor with that manner on the part of a preacher which seems to say, "You impenitent people will be lost and you deserve it!" I feel that I am a sinner, and because of the million transgressions of my heart and life I must perish unless some one can show me a way out from under the condemnation. The platform on which I now stand may be two or three feet higher than the paw in which you sit; but I realize that I am not raised one thousandth part of an inch above the level on which we must all stand in judgment before God.