

diseased or unbalanced state of the mind and emotional impulses, persons have been prompted to murder, to martyrdom and suicide, under the direction, they believe, of these spirits.

Those who so frequently refer in conversation to the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost, to the Spirit of God, or the Divine Spirit, that has come down to us from Greek mythology, so much of the style and terms of which are incorporated with our religious literature, and inadvertently, or, perhaps, intentionally, into the context of those ancient writings called the Scriptures, written in the Greek style and in that mythological period, a style in which the classics so much admired, gained all the charms that mythology could impart to make them so impressive and interesting to the taste of modern scholarship.

The confused and mixed style of our Bible literature is embarrassing even to Biblical scholars. The great lack of accurate expression in the text because of the mixture of the metaphorical or mythological with the direct and descriptive has done much to establish the diversified meaning and uses of the word *spirit*, which have helped to form creeds, doctrinal disputes, and divided society into so many religious sects. Sectarians have never engaged in any scientific analysis of the term *spirit* for the purpose of uniting on one distinct standard definition to be used in religious discussions that this confusion of the term might be avoided.

When we speak of the spirit of a man we refer to a property or quality of the man. Then we assert that God is spirit, or a Spirit, and immediately we change the idea and speak of the spirit of God, as though we believed God was something else than spirit and the spirit was one of his attributes or properties. These expressions have led to much confusion and discord, not only between sects but between members of the same sects.

Robert Barclay, in the first proposition in his apology, urges the importance

of a clear and "true knowledge of God as the true and right understanding of this foundation and ground of knowledge is that which is most necessary to be known and believed in the first place."

When we are told that God is spirit, it becomes highly important to know precisely what that word means, that we may have proper conceptions of God. If we give spirit the chameleon character in which it is now used it is impossible to come to any agreement as to what constitutes the true knowledge of God, which Robert Barclay says is so essential in order to know what is meant by the phrase, "This is life eternal to know thee," etc.

To understand and to submit to the *spirit* in this practical, simple, yet most important sense, is indispensable for our salvation from error and evil.

Nothing but the truth can make us free, and nothing else but the spirit of truth will ever enable us to find that truth which will make us free.

While our early Friends saw and felt the force of these views, the state of society around them was such that it seemed to absolutely forbid them fully carrying out and realizing all the advantages they promised.

It should be our delight in our more favored environment to give full freedom to this spirit of truth, that it may free us from the bondage of error in our conduct, in every duty and relation in life.

Early Friends made the *spirit* and the *truth* essential factors in salvation. They accepted the sentiment that the spirit of truth will guide into all truth. Spirit here means an attitude of the mind, clear from the bonds of all the minor forces that too often prevent it ever knowing what it is to be free, in the sense of "The truth shall make you free."

When the spirit of truth takes possession of us, or we yield to it implicitly with the utmost confidence and assurance, it certainly will guide us into the truth and out of the many errors,