

Indeed, sir, I have always considered God as speaking to me by his Spirit whenever I read or hear his word; and I think myself influenced by his Spirit in proportion as I am disposed to obey his word. For example: Suppose some known, or unknown friend, living in some land or country superior to this, superabounding in all the good things necessary to human comfort; should write to me, stating all the advantages I should gain by going to it, and withal pressing me and entreating me to emigrate to it; I should consider myself influenced by his word just so far as I felt disposed to remove thither; and I should suppose myself speaking quite as intelligibly to my neighbors when I told them that I was moved and drawn on by this friend thence, as if I said I was induced by his writings.

It has been urged that the sacred records are read by many on whom it has no influence, while on others it has great power. This is made a great mystery by many. Some explain the mystery by saying that God has, by some mysterious influence, operated independent of the word, and has given them a revelation of it; while having withholden that influence from others, they cannot understand it, and can feel no power in it. Were the question put to me, Why all who read the Scriptures do not alike obey them, or are not alike influenced by them, if there be no divine influence separate from the word? I would answer the query by proposing another, viz.—Why has the *Christian Baptist*, or why has the *Millennial Harbinger* such influence on some, and none on others who read them? Will they answer this question by alleging that you are omnipresent, acting or operating upon the mind of your favorites to make them understand and obey your writings and exhortations, intended to induce them to return to the ancient order of things? Or will they answer this question by saying, that a rational, sober, and honest investigation of facts, induces many to return to the ancient order of things. Let them answer this question as they may, they cannot fail to find in their own answer a refutation of their own objection.

As to the difficulty of exercising faith, of which some so often speak, the whole difficulty is found in the want of a disposition to obey. Our Saviour said respecting some in his day—“*how can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?*” John v. 44. There would be no obscurity attached to the word *faith* and there would be no difficulty in *believing* were it not for that little word *obey*, which God has inseparably connected with it. Ah! here lies the mystery. Many will say, “Good Master, what shall I do that I may enter into the kingdom.” And when they are told about denying themselves and taking their cross, or obeying the gospel, then they exclaim, ‘How hard it is to believe! I wish I knew what faith, true faith, means!’ The *obedience of faith* is that which makes faith unintelligible to many.