

wisdom of men, but in the power of God." I would here take occasion to remark, that this method of demonstrating the truth of the Gospel by a *divine testimony* was most appropriate to the character and circumstances of men. Few men are inclined to listen to a lengthened chain of reasoning; few are able to estimate very accurately the weight of evidence; the bulk of mankind in all practical matters relating to human life, do rely on the testimony of their fellow-creatures. In the promulgation of our religion its divine author calls into play this principle. He has revealed doctrines in naked statement, and commanded us to believe; he has enjoined precepts on naked authority, and commanded us to obey; and all that is vouchsafed as the ground-work of our belief and obedience, is the testimony afforded by the miraculous powers of his Apostles, that they came from God. It is enough. It is obviously the method best fitted to the actual condition and attainments of man. Let us only be assured that God has given his testimony, and a religion founded on it becomes even more certain, more safe, more suited to a being like man, than a religion founded on ratiocination. Reason impaired and darkened is liable to error, at best it reaches truth by very laborious and circuitous paths. But the testimony of God is direct and unerring; is suited to the humblest capacities, and may be briefly conveyed to the latest generations.

The Scriptures are delivered to us, as the preaching of Paul was to the Corinthians, on the testimony of God. It is on the ground of a testimony, and on this ground alone, that our full and implicit assent is demanded. The Scriptures possess a harmonious consistency in all their doctrines; their morality is pure and sublime, suited to the actual

circumstances of man as a moral being; there is a tone and spirit breathing throughout them as distinctly betokening their heavenly origin, as the magnificence of nature betokens the creator's power. But none of these, although they may be properly admitted as illustrative evidence, constitute the proper grounds of the Christian's belief. It was quite possible for one of Paul's Corinthian auditors duly to appreciate all these circumstances in the Apostle's teaching; and because of them he might lend a very reverential ear to his instructions; and yet he might never entirely secede from the schools of Greece, to become an humble disciple in the school of Jesus. There was presented to him, therefore, an argument far stronger than these subsidiary proofs—an argument direct and irresistible—the miraculous power with which the teacher was clothed, and which was as the stamp of heaven to every doctrine that he delivered; and had the Corinthian auditor only given due weight to this testimony of God, it would have led him directly to a certain belief, and would have silenced every doubt and cavil that might have arisen in his mind, when the teacher proceeded to declare the high mysteries of his faith. Let us then discriminate the high claims with which the sacred writings are presented to us, as written by holy men of old, under the influence of the spirit of God—men who exhibited their heavenly credentials, by the signs and wonders and mighty deeds which they were enabled to perform. The identical instructions which they delivered to the Church, preserved like the sacred fire in the temple, have descended to us, undimmed and unchanged, by the lapse of eighteen centuries; and when we approach the study of the sacred volume, it becomes us to remember, that it bears us certainly the impress