

Is this not a literal compliance with the command to search the Scriptures? Will not such work give us a broader, deeper, and, consequently, truer conception of sacred writ?

Have we not been given minds, and if these minds of ours were not intended for such use, for what, pray, were they given?

Do not the results of the work, when conducted in the right spirit, furnish its justification?

In itself, the thing is reasonable and desirable. The fact that it has been abused; that men, hostile to religion, have employed it, is no just objection to it. Shall marriage cease because the sexual relation has been and is abused?

4. It is not sufficient to say that such work is desirable, *it is necessary*. (a) The questions included in the inquiries within the realm of higher criticism are being asked and answered by men who have no interest in a real religion, no personal experience of a fellowship with God. The answers, from the mouths of such men, must be far wide of the truth. Shall these men be the only inquirers, and their answers the only reply? Shall the enemies of the biblical religion be allowed to settle literary and historical questions which vitally affect the sacred truth sought to be conveyed through that literary form and in connection with that history? (b) There is a widely prevailing indifference to these Scriptures of ours. Men, nominally Christian, care for them even less than for a score of works which might be mentioned. Evidently something is wrong, and something very radical is needed to arouse them from this heartless, godless indifference—an indifference worse even than scepticism. Whenever the higher criticism has been properly employed, the result has been a wonderful awakening and a new appreciation of the beauty and power and significance of this divinely sent material. The books are dead to most of us; or, perhaps better, we are dead to them. Our interest must be aroused. A true higher criticism, a proper literary and historical inquiry is, in a multitude of cases, the one thing needful. Do you ask, why? Because such inquiry brings a new knowledge of the force and contents; and indifference is for the most part due to ignorance. (c) Tradition universally obscures the truth. Many