

particular mystery—*this great mystery.*

### III. Concerning Christ.

### IV. Concerning the Church.

### V. Lastly, make some practical improvement of the subject in application to ourselves.

And while we speak and hear, I pray that the Lord the Spirit may quicken, humble, and sanctify our minds, that we may be enabled to realize these blessed truths in our own experience; that we may be *led* in all *truth*, that souls may be edified, truth manifested, and God glorified, for Christ's sake. Our remarks are merely suggestive hints, glimpses of truth, to direct you to the study of the Scriptures referred to in the sequel of this discourse.

1. *Mysteries*—There are mysteries in the kingdom of nature, as well as in the kingdom of grace, which surpass the highest powers of created intelligence to comprehend; God is alike mysterious in His works as in His word; we believe the account of the creation although we cannot comprehend it. The Bible does not explain the mysteries of either empire; the inspired writers state facts and results, not processes. God does not require us to believe in the nature and manner, but in the matter and fact of revealed mysteries. Although we cannot comprehend them we are obliged to believe from the heart all the mysterious truths of revelation respecting our salvation. Should any of these seem to contradict each other, it arises altogether from the finite nature of our own minds. Instead therefore, of rejecting some parts of God's word and labouring to reconcile other apparently paradoxical statements of eternal truth by systems of human invention, we must humbly receive each and all in the simplicity of faith, as God has been pleased to reveal them. It is evident then, that mystery must characterize every communication from an infinite to a finite mind and that, as God is a mystery, for who by searching can find out God, a Bible without mystery, would, in the nature of things,

be just a Bible without a God. If we adopt the rational theory, "to believe nothing that we cannot understand;" that whatever doctrines are involved in mystery, ought, for that reason, to be rejected as false. Now is not this, not only absolute infidelity but absolute folly. Must we renounce our senses, as well as our faith. We cannot satisfactorily explain any of the phenomena of nature, therefore we are to believe no revelation of science. We are not to believe that God created the world because we cannot comprehend how He made it, thus the only way to be orthodox Christians is to turn infidels, and throw philosophy into the same grave with Christianity. The mysteries of nature are just as great as the mysteries of grace, but not so repugnant to the natural heart; and why?—because there is no redemption, no humbling doctrines of the cross, involved in those facts. The wisest philosopher knows no more than a child how a blade of grass grows, nor can he explain the real properties of an atom that floats in the air or of a particle of sand upon the sea shore. And surely to deny the existence of these bodies because we know not how they exist is not very wise. Men are walking by faith in scientific as well as in religious investigations. If there is any force in the maxim, that our faith should go no farther than our ideas, then we must deny the existence of any object of nature, or of any truth in revelation we must deny the existence of God and of our own being. Surely this would not be very orthodox. A heathen philosopher teaches a more excellent way. When some of Epictetus' scholars observed to him that they could not comprehend his nature, although he had told them many excellent things concerning God. To this the stoic answered, "Were I able fully to set forth God, I must either be God myself, or God himself must cease to be."

The Bible, in its spiritual meaning, has ever been a sealed book to the natural mind. 1 Corinthians ii. 14. It is, I grant, an easy thing to acquire correctly a head knowledge of the *truth* as it is in *Jesus*; but the Spirit can alone reveal the deep things of God so as to influence the heart and uplift the veil which spiritual blindness and unbelief have cast around us. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard—but