THE INSPIRATION QUESTION.

(*Further remarks.*)

Our design is to discuss this question exhaustively, so as to secure all possible practical benefit from its consideration. It is possible to approach this question in the iconoclastic spirit, that which takes pleasure in the destruction of ancient theories, just as boys delight to fling stones at the windows of antiquated or deserted homesteads for the pleasure attendant on the rattle and smash caused of their small artillery; for many a learned critic is but an overgrown boy in his tastes. Such hoodlum clatter, however, gives delight to none but the iconoclast himself, and profit to no one.

But when, to erect the new structure, or preserve the old, rubbish has to be cleared away, it is quite another and legitimate matter. In this case it is absolutely necessary to act the part of the iconoclast to secure the real practical benefits which come from proper Bible study.

For example, if one is fettered by any dogma concerning plenary inspiration, how impossible to study the life of Paul according to his own directions concerning such examination His advice is, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good;" "Follow me as I follow Christ." Interpreted by the dogma of inspiration, these would mean, "Accept what I say, without questioning, as ultimate truth." "Follow me, for in so doing, you follow Christ."

But flinging aside such rubbish, and accepting the simple, natural meaning of Paul's utterances, both here and elsewhere, we are challenged to compare the life of Paul with his rule of faith, to see if it squares therewith.

Now, the apostle's rule of faith, as here and in other places enunciated, is the life of Christ. Not the life of Christ as made up of punctilious observance of multiplied rules and regulations for holy living, nor yet as being in perfect harmony with all moral or divine law, but rather the life of Christ in its manner of obedience to law.

This fact is brought out in a multitude of passages, which show that like as Christ walked in the Spirit, that is, carried out in detail the immediate instructions received from God from moment to moment, so Paul fulfilled the righteousness of the law by being led of the Spirit.

And so it came to pass that Paul not only imitated Christ in complying with the minute requirements of every proper law, human or divine; but he also imitated Him in His method of obedience, viz., always doing the will of the Father as made known to him by the Holy Ghost.

The mathematician, who works out problems before his pupils, challenges their examination of his work by the foundational rules or postulates of the science in question. If now the teacher makes a mistake which can be discovered by comparing it with the addition or multiplication table furnished them, they, the pupils, are clearly as able to pronounce upon the mistake as the professor himself. The multiplication table is the infallible arbitrator between them, and there is no appeal against its decision.

So in this case professor Paul has laid down certain foundational axioms or tables. One of them is the law of the Spirit, as given in full by Jesus Christ. Paul elects to stand or fall by this rule, and we have the undoubted right to demand that there be no appeal from its final decision With it we are thoroughly furnished for examining his life with advantage to all concerned.

Now this *multiplication table* of the Gospel is complete in all its parts. There are no exceptions to its absolute demands. A mere tyro can use it successfully in verifying results or detecting errors. Its simple statements are as follows:

(1) In the kingdom of Christ, the Holy Spirit is sole, ultimate guide and teacher for all the subjects. (2) He is sole, ultimate teacher and guide for each individual subject. (3) And as a necessary consequence, no one subject can be a teacher or guide concerning ultimate truth to another subject.

Apply this gospel table to Paul's writings concerning veiling women, for example, and we at once know that he could not harmonize with his own rule