

refutation, to those who cannot study the subject more thoroughly; that you may at the least be prepared to satisfy any of your people, who may be influenced by the assurances that these theories are unassailable, that such assertions are unwarranted. Again I repeat that you should insist upon the *positive* evidence for the truth of Christianity, in opposition to the notion that its claims have been generally abandoned, viz.: the old evidences from prophesy, from miracles, from the character and teaching of Jesus Christ, as derived from the records, which must, in any case, be admitted to be of as much authority as Greek or Roman histories of the same or earlier date. His death and resurrection are as well attested as any event in the whole range of history, and the institution of the Lord's Supper, and the observance of the first day of the week as the Lord's Day, are contemporary memorials which cannot otherwise be accounted for. We have, I think, too much disregarded the necessity for dwelling upon these evidences, and we must return to the teaching which we who are now advanced in years received in our boyhood, when we were so well instructed in them, that so long as we can exercise our reason no power can shake or disturb our faith.

I refer to these things chiefly for your benefit, my younger brethren, that I may direct you in what I believe to be the course dictated by common sense, and the most likely to be profitable to your people. Never be afraid of any discoveries of Science, or of any new interpretations of Scripture, necessitated by additional light thrown upon them; but do not accept the *dicta* of even the most illustrious authorities until they have been thoroughly tested, for many have been the positive assertions afterwards retracted by men of science, since they have been pursuing comparatively new paths of research.

If for the moment any new theories or supposed facts appear to give occasion for doubts, we can calmly wait, in perfect confidence that the edifice which has withstood the assaults of so many ages is still, as it has ever been, impregnable. And it is a fair argument for ordinary people who cannot thoroughly examine, and do not perceive the full force of all the evidence, that they are bound to accept the testimony of those who have had greater opportunities, and whose minds were, or are, unquestionably more power-