

to the blacksmith; what wood is to the carpenter. He must always be found working at it, working in it, working with it. It must be to him what the text-book is to the scholar, what the guide-book is to the traveller, what the compass is to the mariner. It is not "an able commentary" on it that he requires, but the Book itself. If to *know God* is our object, let us take up His Book. If I want to know Longfellow and catch his spirit, I will read and study his writings; live amongst his poems; think over again the thoughts that passed through his mind. If I really wish to know God, His word will become the man of my counsels; I will fill my mind with the "Thus saith the Lord's" until I live over again the thoughts that were born in the mind of Jehovah Himself. "This is the covenant that I will make with them after these days, saith the Lord, I will put *my laws in their hearts*, and *in their minds* will I write them."⁸ God's laws in our hearts, and *obedience* will become our natural attitude; God's laws in our minds, and to be "*spiritually minded*"⁹ which is "life and peace," will become our common experience. Then truly may we be said to "have the mind of Christ."¹⁰ If more time were spent by all Christians, including ministers and students, on the simple Word of God itself, without any special aid of commentary, except for passages about which we are in perplexity, the standard of Christian thought and life, and of pulpit discourses, would be very greatly elevated. It is *the Word itself* that is commended by God—not some able treatise on it. The tendency to follow expositions of the Bible, with its consequent—traditionalism, was the fundamental error of the Pharisees in Christ's day, as it is of the Romish Church in our day. The practice, under different forms, was often severely rebuked by the Saviour. "Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me for he wrote of me."¹¹ "Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men * * * making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered."¹² The sin condemned in these and similar passages, it seems to me, was the sin of *overlooking the plain teaching of Scripture* in a desire to follow the expositions of some presumably authoritative Rabbi. If the Bible said one thing, and Rabbi So-and-So maintained that such another thing was meant, the Divine statement was discarded, and the human implicitly accepted. Thus, as the years passed, the current preaching con-

8. Heb. 10:16; 8:10; Jer. 31:33. 9. Rom. 8:6. 10. 1 Cor. 2:16. 11. Jno. 5:46. 12. Mark 7:8-13; see also verses 7 and 9. Mat. 15:2-3. Mat. 23:1-33.