

have no knowledge of the moral will of God, therefore no obedience. "And such," it may be said, "were some of you," "but the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling and what the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe."

What a wide contrast appears between the two conditions! One receiving its inspiration from him who worketh in the children of disobedience, or the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life; the other from a knowledge of the Divine will being communicated from above, penetrating the darkness, and giving a thorough insight into the nature and purpose of the will of God, as directing the affairs of practical life. But there is connected with this, the spiritual "wisdom and understanding," which brings Divine knowledge into the sphere of the human faculties, as the Holy Spirit alone imparts it. So he imparts it, only through, the understanding, which makes every aspect of the Divine will an object of study. There is a carnal knowledge, which "puffeth up" the individual, which makes also a hollow fellowship, or, to borrow St. Jude's figure, "a cloud without rain," a fair semblance of refreshing droppings, but a grand deception. "The exceeding greatness of his power" within us is not all emotion. Susceptibility to emotion is a matter of natural constitution rather than of grace. A person who would judge of his religion by the state of his feelings, is like a person who starts on a journey to Jerusalem the way the wind goes. Feelings are variable and may be influenced by causes that have no relation to morals or religion.

There are reasons why professing Christians make so little perceivable advancement—and are almost void of any influence for good, who might as well be both out of the church and out of the world for what good they are. The principal cause of this defect is, their want of love to the truth, consequently their very limited knowledge of Divine things. Having no light for the understanding from the God-inspired records, they rest in the knowledge of some general proposition. This is perfectly consistent with complete spiritual blindness. They have no spiritual perception of spiritual objects. The eyes of their understanding are not enlightened. "Sanctify them through Thy *truth*; Thy *word is truth*," said Christ. The truth of God when sought after and apprehended by the understanding, in the light of the Spirit, exerts its own expanding and sanctifying influence on the soul. When God shines on his Word, and his revealing power rests on the understanding, a great inquiry is excited after the truth—which is soon formed into a delightful rule, and "in his love doth he meditate day and night." If religion is only a sort of religious science, without any reference to practical influence, its importance is far below the means employed to establish it on the earth. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, whose business it is to lead all searching and inquiring disciples into all truth. But how is a man to traverse the seas who knows nothing of the laws of navigation? Who could consider themselves and prospects safe in charge of a man who seldom consults his chart, or takes any interest in the tendency of his movements. Knowledge is power, and wisdom is better than strength.