

They laid down as the very basis of their work, "This Bible, as God's book, is man's book, and every living man has the right to have it, read it, own it, and enjoy it for himself." They laid down as the third principle in the basis of that work, "God has given this revelation of infinite perfection and grace to man, and man is commanded to receive it, and read it, and embrace it for himself ; then to distribute that book and send it far abroad everywhere to every man."

This is the part and duty of God's Church ; and wherever there is a living man on earth that has a Bible, there is God's preacher ; and wherever there is the power of a Divine Spirit within, leading guilty men to the blood of Jesus, clothing naked men with the perfect righteousness of an infinite Saviour, and writing upon the grateful hearts of those men, forgiven and redeemed, the glad tidings of a full salvation ; there, in every language of the earth, there is a consecrated messenger direct from heaven, with all the energy of the Spirit upon his head, with all the ointment of the sanctuary marking his forehead, with the living power of light, and fire, and love, burning in his very soul ; there is the man whose duty it is to carry out that Bible, to deliver that Bible, and to proclaim its character and results.

Now, upon that foundation this Bible Society takes its stand. Its Creed is the Creed of Jesus. When Jews around Him doubted the authority of His word, He said to them, "Search the Scriptures ; they are they that testify of Me." He went to the very foundation of human investigation, when He put the minds and consciences of men in the line of discovering what God had said to man. When Jesus took these sacred books in his hand, without the slightest hesitation He declared, they are divine, and every word they teach is a word from God. Bold and faithful in the fulfilment of His mission to men, He did not fear to criticise their errors, to speak to them of their defects, to point out what things in them were to be amended. When he talked with the Scribes and Pharisees, He charged them boldly with setting the word of God aside by their own traditions. There was no want of boldness there ; there was no want of fidelity there.

But when He took these sacred books, that his fathers according to the flesh venerated, and loved, and fed upon, and lived after, He laid His sacred hands upon them and said, "These are divine—the word of my Father who is in heaven ;" or in the still more effective utterance of Paul, "All Scripture has been breathed from the very heart of God ;" and to every man receiving the word, there is a reception of the mind of God who gave it. What then ? We have nothing to say to men that dare to stand upon Mount Sinai and say there is no lightning from heaven. Let such men talk to the bats and to the moles, and pass with them to the oblivion which has buried myriads before them, and will bury them there.

My friends, we are to take care lest the grand theme of our authority degenerate into a mere discussion of humanity. We are to take care lest,