

The Divine Inspiration of the Bible CHAPTER TWELVE: INWARD CONFIRMATION OF THE VERACITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

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Transcript

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CHAPTER TWELVE:

INWARD CONFIRMATION OF THE VERACITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

We are living in a day when confidence is lacking; when skepticism and agnosticism are becoming more and more prevalent; and when doubt and uncertainty are made the badges of culture and wisdom. Everywhere men are demanding proof. Hypotheses and speculations fail to satisfy: the heart cannot rest content until it is able to say, "I know." The demand of the human mind is for definite knowledge and positive assurance. And God has condescended to meet this need. One thing which distinguishes Christianity from all human systems is that it deals with absolute certainties. Christians are people who know. And well it is that they do. The issues concerning life and death are so stupendous, the stake involved in the salvation of the soul is so immense, that we cannot afford to be uncertain here. None but a fool would attempt to cross a frozen river until he was sure that the ice was strong enough to bear him. Dare we then face the river of death with nothing but a vague and uncertain hope to rest upon? Personal assurance is the crying need of the hour. There can be no peace and joy until this is attained. A parent who is in suspense concerning the safety of his child, is in agony of soul. A criminal who lies in the condemned cell hoping for a reprieve, is in mental torment until his pardon arrives. And a professed Christian who knows not whether he shall ultimately land in Heaven or Hell, is a pitiable object. But we say again, real Christians are people who know. They know that their Redeemer liveth (John 19:25). They know that they have passed from death unto life (1 John 3:14). They know that all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28). They know that if their earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, they have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2 Cor. 5:1). They know that one day they shall see Christ face to face and be made like Him (1 John 3:2). In the meantime they know whom they have believed, and are persuaded that He is able to keep that which they have committed unto Him against that day (2 Tim. 1:12). If it be asked, How do they know, the answer is, they have proven for themselves the trustworthiness of God's Word which affirms these things. The force of this present argument will appeal to none save those who have an experimental acquaintance with it. In addition to all the external proofs that we have for the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures, the believer has a source of

evidence to which no unbeliever has access. In his own experience the Christian finds a personal confirmation of the teachings of God's Word. To the man whose life which, judged by the standards of the world, appears morally upright, the statement that "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" seems to be the gloomy view of a pessimist, or a description which has no general application. But the believer has found that "the entrance of Thy words giveth light" (Ps. 119:30), and in the light of God's Word and beneath the illuminating power of God's Spirit who indwells him, he has discovered there is within him a sink of iniquity. To natural wisdom, which is fond of philosophizing about the freedom of the human will, the declaration of Christ that "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me, draw him" (John 6:44) seems a hard saying; but, to the one who has been taught by the Holy Spirit something of the binding power of sin, such a declaration has been verified in his own experience. To the one who has done his best to live up to the light which he had, and has sought to develop an honest and amiable character, such a statement as, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," seems unduly harsh and severe; but to the man who has received "an unction from the Holy One," his very best works appear to him sordid and sinful; and such they are. The Apostle's confession that "in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18) which once appeared absurd to him, the believer now acknowledges to be his own condition. The description of the Christian which is found in Romans ... is something which none but a regenerate person can understand. The things there mentioned as belonging to the same man at the same time, seem foolish to the wise of this world; but the believer realizes completely the truth of it in his own life. The promises of God can be tested: their trustworthiness is capable of verification. In the Gospel Christ promises to give rest to all those who are weary and heavy laden that come unto Him. He declares that He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He affirms that "whosoever drinketh of the Water that I shall give him shall never thirst." In short, the Gospel presents the Lord Jesus Christ as a Saviour. His claim to save can be put to the proof. Yea, it has been, and that by a multitude of individuals that no man can number. Many of these are living on earth today. Every individual who has read in the Scriptures the invitations that are addressed to sinners, and has personally appropriated them to himself, can say in the words of the well-known hymn:—"I came to Jesus as I was. Weary and worn and sad; I found in Him a resting place And He has made me glad."

Should these pages be read by a skeptic who, despite his present unbelief, has a sincere and earnest desire to know the truth, he, too may put God's Word to the test and share the experience described above. It is written, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved,"—believe, my reader, and thou, too, shalt be saved. "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen" (John 3:11). The Bible testifies to the fact that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and our own conscience confirms it. The Bible declares that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy" God saves us; and the Christian has proven that he was unable to do anything to win God's esteem: but, having cried the prayer of the Publican, he has gone down to his house justified. The Bible teaches that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new;" and the believer has found that the things he once hated he now loves, and that the things he hitherto counted gain he now regards as dross. The Bible witnesses to the fact that we "are kept by the power of God through faith," and the believer has proven that though the world, the flesh, and the devil are arrayed against him, yet the grace of God is sufficient for all his need. Ask the Christian, then, why he believes that the Bible is the Word of God, and he will tell you, Because it has done for me what it professes to do (save); because I have tested its promises for myself; because I find its teachings verified in my own experiences. To the unregenerate the Bible is practically a sealed Book. Even the cultured and educated are unable to understand its teachings: parts of it appear plain and simple, but much of it is dark and mysterious. This is exactly what the Bible declares—"The natural man

receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). But to the man of God it is otherwise: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John 5:10). As the Lord Jesus declared, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7:17). While the infidel stumbles in darkness, even in the midst of light, the believer discovers the evidence of its truth in himself with the clearness of a sunbeam. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

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