

ideas—for words are merely the signs of ideas—whenever correct ideas exist, and these ideas are properly explained, whenever submitted to scientific analysis and proper tests, they all arrive at the same conclusions, no matter what nation it is you are among or where you live.

This reasoning is correct, and in regard to nature and its laws, the world and the elements with which we are surrounded, and the laws operating in the world with which we are acquainted, all men arrive at the same conclusions, and there is no difference, unless we come to theorizing, and then there is always difficulty. Well, in regard to all these things we all think alike, because our thoughts are based on correct principles. But when we come to religious matters, we discover that, though men are naturally intelligent, they act like fools; they do not use their common judgment, reason or intelligence. “Well,” say they, “you know we are governed by the Bible.” Now that is exactly what we do not know, and therefore I doubt it. “But our divines tell us we are.” Oh, do they? Well, suppose somebody was to tell you the result of some scientific analysis, you would be very likely to say—“I believe you in part, but I would like to test it for myself; when I have done that I shall know it. Yet strange as it is, you are willing to take anybody’s *ipse dixit* in relation to religious matters, in relation to things of the most vital importance, things pertaining to the immortal part of man, we act like the veriest babies or consummate fools, while in regard to the affairs of this life we act intelligently.

Is there a way of arriving at a knowledge of the things which pertain to man’s eternal welfare? Why yes, we are inclined to think there is.

God, we are told, “is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that fears God, and works righteousness, shall be accepted of him.” Is that true? Yes. God “has made of one blood all the families of the earth,” we are told. There seemed to be an idea of this kind prevailing in ancient days, according to the sayings of some of the inspired men mentioned in the Scriptures. We are in the habit of going along like flocks of sheep—following our leader, no matter where he goes. I have seen sheep sometimes, and perhaps you have, running along a road, and one thought there was an obstacle—perhaps there was not anything—and it would make a leap, and when the others reached the same place they would all make the same leap; if one leaps they all leap. It is so apparently among men.

If we would examine Christianity there is something peculiar about that. We call ourselves Christians, that is, we Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians and “Mormons,” we all call ourselves Christians. Well, perhaps we are, and then, perhaps we are not; it is a matter that would bear investigation, I think; and, then, I think, too, that it is very proper, as I said at the commencement, that we should be honest with ourselves about all things, and especially in religion and the service and worship of God. “Well, but my father was a Methodist, and I am one;” “my father was a Presbyterian, and I am one;” “my father was a ‘Jumper,’ and I am one;” “my father was a Muhammadan, and I am one;” “my father was a worshiper of Buddha, and I am one;” and among us Christians we are Episcopalians, Wesleyans, Presbyterians, and members of the various professional phases descended from