

tury. If ever there was a time when confusion, contention and strife, when inconsistency and skepticism prevailed it is surely now, among the most advanced nations of civilization and of Christendom; there men are to be found laying the axe at the foundation of religious faith, endeavoring to popularize their own doctrines, and to bring into disrepute and into contempt the teachings of the Book that for ages has been held sacred. This is being done with that force of rhetoric, with that glow of imagination, and with that wealth of illustration which belongs to men of the type of Ingersoll, and congregations everywhere, hang with breathless suspense upon the words they utter, and thousands are grateful in their iniquity that the myth of religion, the fear of God, the certainty of punishment, the future life, have been swept away by so ruthless and so untiring a hand. Ministers are paralyzed and stand aghast in presence of the enemy, and before a sin-sick world, and now if there is one medicine needed more than another in this age, it is that medicine which will minister to faith, to peace, to order, to confidence, which will bring assurance, and will give men that trust and satisfaction with and in the doctrines that they teach and practice, such as was possessed by the Apostles and Teachers and Saints of olden time. Where in the Churches of the world can you find men ready to say as Paul said to his converts, "The gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and the Holy Ghost, and much assurance?" 1 Thes. 1:5. Where are those who have the same authority to say, "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accused." "I certify

you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither receive it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Gal. 1:11–12. This assurance is not to be found. It is not known. The spirit of authority, the confidence which grows from the possession of truth is not in connection with the churches, or enjoyed among the intelligent of Christendom. To be sure the world go to a great expense in order that they may secure religious instruction. Colleges are erected. Men of certain temperament spend years and years in order that they may be fitted for the ministerial profession. The people delight to pour out of their wealth for the spiritual food that they receive of their teachers; but with it all, that uniformity, that beauty, that simplicity, that consistency, that force, that assurance which pertained to the primitive days of Christianity is not to be found in the religious world of today.

Now, I might ask what was the order of things in the primitive church as established by the Savior? There are certain first principles which pertain to all branches of science—chemical science, agricultural science, astronomical science, or any other branch—there is implied in connection with all these a possession and use of primary or fundamental principles upon which the superstructure is built, and it is the same in regard to the science of religion. There are certain fundamental and foundation principles upon which the superstructure is built, and it is the same in regard to the science of religion. There are certain fundamental and foundation principles upon which the edifice is to be built, and upon which it must forever stand, and these principles did not