

~Other Speakers G-L: William Law:

[Addr-71] It would be great Folly and Perverseness, to charge me here with slighting, or lessening the true Value, Use, and Importance of the inspired Apostolical Scriptures; for if the Charge was just, it must lie against Paul, and not against me, since I say nothing of them, but that which He says, and in his own express Words, viz., that all their Labor of Preaching, Instructing, and Writing by Divine Inspiration, had in themselves no other Nature, Use, or Power, than that of such Planting and Watering as could not fructify till a higher Power than was in them gave Life and Growth to that which they planted and watered.

[Addr-72] I exceedingly love, and highly reverence the Divine Authority of the sacred Writings of the Apostles and Evangelists, and would gladly persuade everyone, to be as deeply affected with them, and pay as profound a Regard to them, as they would to an Elijah, a St. John Baptist, or a Paul whom they knew to be immediately sent from Heaven with God's Message to them.Â— I reverence them as a literal Truth of and from God, as much the greatest heavenly Blessing that can be outwardly bestowed upon us.Â— I reverence them as doing, or fitted to do all that good amongst Christians now, which the Apostles did in their Day, and as of the same Use and Benefit to the Church of every Age, as their Planting and Watering was to the first.

[Addr-73] But now, if this is not thought that Fullness of Regard that is due to the holy Messengers of God; if anyone will still be so learnedly wise, as to affirm, that though Paul's Preaching in his Epistles, whilst He was alive, was indeed only bare Planting and Watering, but the same Epistles, being published after his Death, got another Nature, became full of Divine and living Power, such a one has no Right to laugh (as the Doctor does) at the silly Mahometan, who believes the Alcoran to be uncreated. For wherever there is Divine Efficacy, there, there must be an uncreated power. And if, as the Doctor says, the Scriptures of the New Testament are the only constant Abode and Supreme Illumination of the Spirit of God with us, all that is said of the Eternal Spirit of God, of the uncreated Light, might and ought to be said of them; that they are the WORD that was God, was with God, and are our true Immanuel, or God within us.

[Addr-74] I shall now only add this friendly hint to the Doctor, that he has a Remedy at hand in his own Sermon, how he may be delivered from thus grossly Mistaking the Spirit of the Gospel, as well as the Law of Moses.Â— St. Paul, (says the doctor) "had a quick and lively Imagination, and an extensive and intimate Acquaintance with those Masters in moral Painting, the classic Writers, (N.B.) all which he proudly sacrificed to the Glory of the everlasting gospel." {Sermons, vol i., page 229.}

[Addr-75] Now if the Doctor did that, though it was only from Humility, which he says the Apostle did proudly, such Humility might be as great a Good to him, as that Pride was to the Apostle.Â— And indeed, one would have thought, that as soon as the Doctor had discovered these Writers to be only great Masters in moral Painting, it should have had the same effect upon him, as if he had found them great Masters in Delusion. For where there is Moral Painting, there, there is moral Delusion. And the Spirit, the Life, the Purity, and Divine Simplicity of Gospel Truth, is more eluded, lost, and destroyed by moral Paintings, whether in Books or Pulpits, than by any material Colorings put upon Images of Wood or Clay, to excite Spiritual Devotion in Churches.Â— Again, if the everlasting Gospel is now as glorious a Thing, as it was in St. Paul's Days; if the highest, most accomplished classic Knowledge is so unsuitable to the Light and Spirit of the Gospel, that it is fit for Nothing but to be cast away, or as the Doctor says, "to be all sacrificed to the Glory of the Gospel," how wonderful is it, that this should never come into his head from the Beginning to the End of his three long Legation-volumes, or that he should come piping hot with fresh and fresh classic Beauties found out by himself in a Shakespeare, a Pope, &c., to preach from the Pulpit the Divine Wisdom of a Paul, in renouncing all his great Classic Attainments, as mere loss and Dung, that by so doing he might win Christ, and be found in him!

[Addr-76] Let it be supposed, that our Lord was to come again for a while in the Flesh, and that his coming was for this end, to do that for the Christian world cumbered with much Learning, which he did to poor Martha, only cumbered with much Serving, who thereby neglected that Good Part which Mary had chosen; must we suppose that the Doctor would hasten to meet him with his Sacred Alliances, his Bundles of Pagan Trash, and hieroglyphic Profundities, as his full Proof that Mary's good Part, which shall never be taken from her, had been chosen for himself and all his Readers? As well might it be thought, that the Pope would come richly laden with his blessed Images, his heavenly Decrees, his divine Bulls, as infallible Proofs of his being born again from above, and solely devoted to the one Thing Needful.

[Addr-77] Let the Doctor figure to himself the gaudy Pageantry of a Divine high Mass in a Romish Cathedral; let him wonder at that flagrant daring Contrariety that it hath to that first Gospel-Church of Christ, viz., "where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them"; would he not be still fuller of

Wonder, if he should hear the Pope declaring that all this heathenish show of invented Fopperies was his projected Defence of that first Church of Christ?— But if the Doctor would see a Protestant Wonder full as great, he need only look at his own theatrical parading Show of heathen Mysteries, and heathenish Learning, set forth in highest Pomp. To what End? Why to bring forth, what he calls (as the Pope above) his projected Defence of Christianity.

[Addr-78] O vainest of all vain Projects! For what is Christianity, but that which Christ was while on Earth? What can it be, but that which it is, and has from him? He is a King, who has all Power in Heaven and on Earth, and his Kingdom, like himself, is not of this World. Away then with the Projects of popish Pomp, and pagan Literature to support it; they are as wise Contrivances, as a high Tower of Babel to defend it against the gates of Hell.

[Addr-79] I come now to the Quotation from the pastoral Letter of Mr. Stinstra. "A judicious Writer," (says the Dissertation), "observes, that Sound Understanding and Reason are That on which, and by which, God principally operates (N.B.) when he finds it proper to assist (N.B.) our weakness by his Spirit." {Dissertation, page 73.}

[Addr-80] I cannot more illustrate the Sense, or extol the Judgment, both of the Author, and Quoter of this Striking Passage, than by the following Words.

[Addr-81] "A judicious Naturalist observes, that Sound and Strong Lungs are that on which, and by which, the Air or Spirit of this World principally operates, when (N.B.) he finds it proper to assist, (N.B.) the Weakness of our Lungs, by his Breathing into them."— Now if any right minded Man should happen to find his Heart edified, his Understanding enlightened, by the above Passage on Divine Inspiration, he will be much pleased at my assuring him, that the Pastoral Letter of Mr. Stinstra, and the Dissertation on Enthusiasm by Mr. Green, are from the Beginning to the End full as good, in every Respect, as that is.

[Addr-82] These two Instances are Proof enough, that as soon as any Man trusts to natural Abilities, Skill in Languages, and commonplace Learning, as the true Means of entering into the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom, which is Nothing else but Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, he gives himself up to certain Delusion, and can escape no Error that is popular, or that suits his State and Situation in the learned, religious World.— He has sold his Birth-right in the Gospel State of Divine Illumination, to make a Figure and Noise with the Sounding Brass and Tinkling Cymbals of the natural Man.

[Addr-83] Whence is it, that we see Genius and natural Abilities to be equally pleased with, and equally contending for the Errors and Absurdities of every System of Religion, under which they are educated? It is because Genius and Natural Abilities are just the same Things, and must have the same nature now, as they had in the ancient schools of the Peripatetic, Academic, Stoic, and Atheistical Philosophers.— "The Temptation of Honour, which the Academic Exercise of Wit" (as Dr. W. says) "was supposed to bring to its Professor," {Divine Legation of Moses, Book I., page 33.} has still its Power among Church Disputants. Nor can it possibly ever be otherwise, till Parts and Genius, &c., do, as the Blind, the Deaf, the Dumb, and Lepers formerly did, go to be healed of their natural Disorders by the Inspiration of that Oracle, who said, "I am the Light of the World, He that followeth me, walketh not in Darkness."— "No Man cometh unto the Father but by me."— Well therefore might St. Paul say, "I have determined to know Nothing among you, but Christ, and him crucified."— And had it not been for this Determination, he had never known, what he then knew, when he said, "The Life that I now live, is not mine, but Christ's that liveth in me."— Now did the Apostle here overstretch the Matter? Was it a Spirit of Enthusiasm, and not of Christ living in him, that made this Declaration? Was He here making Way for Ignorance and Darkness to extinguish the Light that came down from Heaven, and was the Light of the World?— Did he here undermine the true Ground and Rock on which the Church of Christ was to stand, and prevail against the Gates of Hell? Did he by setting up this Knowledge, as the best and only Knowledge that an apostle need to have, break down the Fences of Christ's Vineyard, rob the Church of all its strong Holds, leave it defenceless, without a Pale, and a ready Prey to Infidels?— Who can say this, but that "Spirit of Anti-Christ, that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh?" For, as Christ's intending Nothing, knowing Nothing, willing Nothing, but purely and solely the whole Course of his crucifying Process, was the whole Truth of his being come in the Flesh, was his doing the whole Will of him that sent him, was his overcoming the World, Death, and Hell, so He that embraces this Process, as Christ embraces it, who is wholly given up to it, as Christ was, He has the Will of Christ, and the Mind of Christ, and therefore may well desire to know Nothing else.— To this Man alone, is the World, Death, and Hell, known to be overcome in him, as they were in Christ; to him alone is Christ become the Resurrection and the Life; and he that knows this, he knows with St. Paul that all other Knowledge may, and will be cast away as Dung.— Now if St. Paul, having rejected all other Knowledge but that of a crucified Saviour, which to the Jew was a

Stumbling-Block, and to the Greek Foolishness, if he had afterwards wrote three such Legation-Volumes as the Doctor has done, for the Food and Nourishment of Christ's Sheep, who can have no Life in them but by eating the true Bread that came down from Heaven, must they not have been called Paul's full Recantation of all that he had taught of a Christ crucified?

[Addr-84] The other Instance of Delusion from Book-learning, relates to Mr. Green, who wanting to write on Divine Inspiration, runs from Book to Book, from country to country, to pick up Reports wherever he could find them, concerning Divine Inspiration, from this and that judicious Author, that so he might be sure of compiling a Judicious Dissertation on the Subject. All which he might have known to be mere Delusion and lost Labour, had he but remembered, or regarded any one single Saying either of Christ or his Apostles concerning the holy Spirit and his Operations. For not a word is said by them, but fully shows that all Knowledge or Perception of the Spirit is nothing else but the Enjoyment of the Spirit, and that no Man can know more of him than that which the Spirit himself is, and does, and manifests of his Power in Man.

[Addr-85] "The things of God," says St. Paul, "knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God." Is not this decisive upon the Matter? Is not this Proof enough, that Nothing in Man but the Spirit of God in him, can know what the Spirit's work in Man is and does? The Fruits of the Spirit, so often mentioned in Scripture, are not Things different, or separate from the Spirit; and if the Spirit is not always working in us, his Fruits must be as absent from us as He is. St. John says, "Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." A Demonstration, that the Spirit can no other way make himself known to us, but by his dwelling and working in us. St. James says, "Every good and perfect Gift cometh from ABOVE": but now does not he in reality deny this, who seeks for the highest Gift of Knowledge from BELOW, from the poor Contrivance of a Common-Place Book? Again, "if any Man lacketh Wisdom, let him ask it of God"; St. James does not say, let him go ask Peter, or Paul, or John, because he knew that Divine Wisdom was Nothing else, but Divine Inspiration— But Mr. Green has got together his ingenious, his eminent writers, his excellent, learned, judicious Authors, his cool, rational- morality Doctors (a Set of Men whose glorious Names we read no more of in the Gospel, than of the profound Aristotle, or the Divine Cicero) and these are to do that for him, which the whole College of Apostles could do for nobody.— Now this Doctrine, that Nothing but the Spirit can know the Things that be of God, and that the Enjoyment of the Spirit, is all the Knowledge that we can have of him, is a truth Taught us, not only by all Scripture, but by the whole Nature of Things. For every Thing that can be seen, known, heard, felt, &c., must be manifested by itself, and not by another. It is not possible for any Thing but Light to manifest Light, nor for any Thing but Darkness to make Darkness to be known. Yet this is more possible, than for any Thing but Divine Inspiration to make Divine Inspiration to be known. Hence there is a Degree of Delusion still higher, to be noted in such Writers as Mr. Green; for his Collection of ingenious, eminent, rational Authors, of whom he asks Counsel concerning the Necessity or Certainty of the immediate Inspiration of the Spirit, are such as deny it, and write against it. Therefore the Proceeding is just as wise, as if a Man was to consult some ingenious and eminent Atheists, about the truth and certainty of God's immediate continual Providence; or ask a few selected Deists, how, or what he was to believe of the Nature and Power of Gospel Faith. Now there are the Holy Spirit's own Operations, and there are Reports about them. The only true Reports, are those that are made by inspired Persons; and if there were no such Persons, there could be no true Reports of the Matter. And therefore to consult uninspired Persons, and such as deny and reproach the Pretense to Inspiration, to be rightly instructed about the Truth of immediate continual Divine Inspiration, is a Degree of Blindness greater than can be charged upon the old Jewish Scribes and Pharisees.

[Addr-86] The Reports that are to be acknowledged as true concerning the Holy Spirit and his Operations, are those that are recorded in Scripture; that is, the scriptures are an infallible History, or Relation of that which the Holy Spirit is, and does, and works in true Believers; and also an infallible Direction how we are to seek, and wait, and trust in his good Power over us. But then the Scriptures themselves, though thus true and infallible in these Reports and Instructions about the Holy Spirit, yet they can go no further than to be a true History; they cannot give to the Reader of them the Possession, the Sensibility, and Enjoyment of that which they relate. This is plain, not only from the Nature of a written History or Instruction, but from the express Words of our Lord, saying, "Except a Man be born again of the Spirit, he cannot see or enter into the Kingdom of God." Therefore the new Birth from above, or of the Spirit, is that alone which gives true Knowledge and Perception of that which is the Kingdom of God. The History may relate Truths enough about it; but the Kingdom of God, being Nothing else but the Power and Presence of God, dwelling and ruling in our Souls, this can only manifest itself, and can manifest itself to Nothing in Man but to the New Birth. For every Thing else in Man is deaf and dumb and blind to the Kingdom of God; but when that which died in Adam is made alive again by the quickening Spirit from above, this being the Birth which came at first from God, and a Partaker of the Divine Nature, this knows, and enjoys the Kingdom of God.

[Addr-87] "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," says Christ: this Record of Scripture is true; but what a

Delusion, for a Man to think that he knows and finds this to be true, and that Christ is all this Benefit and Blessing to him, because he assents, consents, and contends, it may be, for the Truth of those Words. This is impossible. The new Birth is here again the Only Power of Entrance; every Thing else knocks at the Door in vain: "I know you not," says Christ to every Thing, but the New Birth. — "I am the way, the Truth and the Life"; this tells us neither more nor less, than if Christ had said, I am the Kingdom of God, into which Nothing can enter, but that which is born of the Spirit.

[Addr-88] Here again may be seen, in the highest Degree of certainty, the absolute Necessity of immediate Divine Inspiration through every Part of the Christian Life. For if a Birth of the Spirit is that alone that can enter into, or receive the Kingdom of God come amongst Men, that alone which can find Christ to be the Way, the Truth and the Life, then a Continual Life or Breathing of the Spirit in us, must be as Necessary as the first Birth of the Spirit. For a Birth of the Spirit is only to make a Beginning of a Life of the Spirit: Birth is only in order to Life; if therefore the Life of the Spirit continues not, the Birth is lost, and the Cessation of its Breathing in us is nothing else but Death again to the Kingdom of God, that is, to every Thing that is or can be Godly. Therefore the immediate continual Inspiration of the Spirit, as the only possible Power and Preservation of a Godly Life, stands upon the same Ground, and is as absolutely necessary to Salvation, as the new Birth.

[Addr-89] Take away this Power and working Life of the Spirit from being the one Life of all that is done in the Church, and then, though it be ever so outwardly glorious in its Extent, or ever so full of learned Members, it can be Nothing else in the sight of God but the wise Greeks and the carnal Jews become a Body of water-baptized Christians. For no one can be in a better State than this, the Wisdom of the Greek, the Carnality of the Jew, must have the whole Government of him, till he is born of and led by the Spirit of God; this alone is the Kingdom of God, and every Thing else is the Kingdom of this World, in which Satan is declared to be the Prince. — Poor, miserable Man! that strives, with all the Sophistry of human Wit, to be delivered from the immediate continual Operation and Governance of the Spirit of God, not considering, that where God is not, there is the devil, and where the Spirit rules not, there all is the Work of the Flesh, though nothing be talked of but Spiritual and Christian matters. I say talked of; for the best Ability of the natural Man can go no further than Talk, and Notions, and Opinions about Scripture Words and Facts; in these, he may be a great Critic, an acute Logician, a powerful Orator, and know everything of Scripture, except the Spirit and the Truth.

[Addr-90] How much then is it to be lamented, as well as impossible to be denied, that though all Scripture assures us, that the Things of the Spirit of God are and must, to the end of the World, be Foolishness to the natural Man, yet from one end of learned Christendom to the other, nothing is thought of as the true and proper means of attaining Divine Knowledge, but that which every natural, selfish, proud, envious, false, vain-glorious, worldly Man can do. Where is that Divinity Student who thinks, or was ever taught to think, of partaking of the Light of the Gospel any other Way, than by doing with the Scriptures that which he does with Pagan Writers, whether Poets, Orators, or Comedians, viz., exercise his Logic, Rhetoric, and critical Skill, in descanting upon them? This done, he is thought by himself, and often by others, to have a sufficiency of Divine apostolical Knowledge. What Wonder therefore, if it should sometimes happen, that the very same vain, corrupt, puffing Literature, that raises one Man to be a Poet-Laureate, should set another in a Divinity Chair?

[Addr-91] How is it that the logical, critical, learned Deist comes by his Infidelity? Why just by the same Help of the same good Powers of the Natural Man, as many a learned Christian comes to know, embrace, and contend for the Faith of the Gospel. For, drop the Power and Reality of Divine Inspiration, and then all is dropped that can set the Believer above, or give him any Godly Difference from the Infidel. For the Christian's Faith has no Goodness in it, but that it comes from above, is born of the Spirit; and the Deist's Infidelity has no Badness in it, but because it comes from below, is born of the Will of the Flesh and the Will of Men, and rejects the Necessity of being born again out of the Corruption of fallen Nature. The Christian therefore that rejects, reproaches, and writes against the Necessity of immediate Divine Inspiration, pleads the whole cause of Infidelity; he confirms the Ground, on which it stands; and has Nothing to prove the Goodness of his own Christianity, but that which equally proves to the Deist the Goodness of his Infidelity. For without the New Birth, or which is the same Thing, without immediate continual Divine Inspiration, the Difference between the Christian and the Infidel is quite lost; and whether the uninspired unregenerate Son of Adam be in the Church, or out of the Church, he is still that Child of this World, that fallen Adam, and mere natural Man, to whom the Things of the Spirit of God are and must be Foolishness. For a full Proof of this no more need be seen, than that which you cannot help seeing, that the same shining Virtues, and the same glaring Vices are common to them both. For the Christian, not made such by the Spirit of God continually inspiring and working in him, has only a Christianity of his own making, and can have only such Appearances of Virtues, and will have such Reality of Vices, as natural Self wants to have. Let him therefore renounce what is called natural Religion as much as he will, yet unless he is a new born and Divinely inspired Christian, he must live and die in all his natural Corruption.

[Addr-92] Through all Scripture nothing else is aimed at or intended for Man, as his Christianity, but the Divine Life, nor any Thing hinted at, as having the least Power to raise or beget it, but the holy Life-giving Spirit of God. How gross therefore is that Blindness, which reading the Gospel, and the History of Gospel Christians, cannot see these two fundamental Truths, (1) "That Nothing is Divine Knowledge in Man, but the Divine Life": (2) "That the Divine Life is Nothing else but a Birth of the Divine Nature within him"?

[Addr-93] But this Truth being lost or given up, vain Learning and a worldly Spirit, being in Possession of the Gospel-Book, set up Kingdoms of Strife and Division.Â— For what End? Why, that the Unity of the Church may not be lost. Multiply Systems of empty Notions and Opinions: for what? Why, that Words and Forms may do that for the Church now, which to the first Church, of Christ's own forming, could only be done by being born of the Spirit.

[Addr-94] Hence it is, that the Scripture-Scholar is looked upon as having Divine Knowledge of its Matters, when he is as ready at Chapter and Verse, as the Critic is at every Page of Cicero. And nothing is looked upon as defective in Divinity Knowledge, but such supposed Mistakes of the Genius of the Hebrew, or Greek Letter, as the sublime Students of the immortal Words of a Milton, or a Shakespeare, charge as Blunders upon one another.

[Addr-95] Now to call such Scripture Skill Divine Knowledge, is just as solid and judicious, as if a Man was said, or thought to know, that which St. John knew, because he could say his whole Gospel and Epistles by Heart, without missing a Word of them. For a literal Knowledge of Scripture is but like having all Scripture in the Memory, and is so far from being a Divine Perception of the Things spoken of, that the most vicious wicked Scholar in the World may attain to the highest Perfection in it. But Divine Knowledge and Wickedness of Life are so inconsistent, that they are mutual Death and Destruction to one another; where the one is alive, the other must be dead.Â— Judas Iscariot knew Jesus Christ, and all that he said and did to his Crucifixion; he knew what it was to be at the Lord's Table, and to partake of his Supper of Bread and Wine. But yet, with much more Truth it may be said, that he knew nothing of all this, and had no better Knowledge of it than Pontius Pilate had. Now all Knowledge of Christ, but that which is from Divine Inspiration, or the New-Birth, is but as poor and profitless, as Judas' Knowledge was. It may say to Christ, as he did, Hail Master; but no one can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Spirit.Â— This empty Letter-learned Knowledge, which the natural Man can as easily have of the Sacred Scripture and Religious Matters, as of any other Books or human Affairs, this being taken for Divine Knowledge, has spread such Darkness and Delusion all over Christendom, as may be reckoned no less than a general Apostasy from the Gospel State of Divine Illumination. For the Gospel State is in its whole Nature nothing else; it has but one Light, and that is the Lamb of God; it has but one Life, and that is by the Spirit of God. Whatever is not of and from this Light, and governed by this Spirit, call it by what high Name you will, is no more a Part of the Gospel State, nor will have a better End, than that which entereth into the Mouth, and corrupteth in the Belly.

[Addr-96] That one Light and Spirit, which was only one from all Eternity, before Angels or any heavenly Beings were created, must to all Eternity be that one only Light and Spirit, by which Angels or Men can ever have any Union or Communion with God.Â— Every other Light is but the Light whence Beasts have their Sense and Subtlety; every other Spirit, is but that which gives to Flesh and Blood all its Lusts and Appetites. Nothing else but the Loss of the one Light and Spirit of God turned an Order of Angels into Devils.Â— Nothing else but the Loss of that same Light and Spirit took from the Divine Adam his first Crown of paradisaical Glory, stripped him more naked than the Beasts, and left him a Prey to Devils, and in the Jaws of eternal Death.Â— What therefore can have the least Share of Power towards Man's Redemption, but the Light and Spirit of God making again a Birth of themselves in Him, as they did in his first glorious Creation? Or what can possibly begin, or bring forth this Return of his first lost Birth, but solely that which is done by this eternal Light and Spirit.Â— Hence it is, that the Gospel State is by our Lord affirmed to be a Kingdom of Heaven at Hand, or come among Men, because it has the Nature of no worldly Thing or creaturely Power, is to serve no worldly Ends, can be helped by no worldly Power, receives nothing from Man but Man's full denial of himself, stands upon nothing that is finite or transitory, has no Existence but in that working Power of God that created and upholds Heaven and Earth, and is a Kingdom of God become Man, and a Kingdom of Men united to God, through a continual immediate Divine Illumination. What Scripture of the New Testament can you read, that does not prove this to be the Gospel State, a Kingdom of God, into which none can enter but by being born of the Spirit, none can continue to be alive in it but by being led by the Spirit, and in which not a Thought, or Desire, or Action, can be allowed to have any Part in it, but as it is a Fruit of the Spirit?

[Addr-97] "Thy Kingdom come, thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven." What is God's Kingdom in Heaven, but the Manifestation of what God is, and what He does in his heavenly Creatures? How is his Will done there, but because his Holy Spirit is the Life, the Power, and Mover of all that live in it.Â— We daily read this Prayer,

we extol it under the Name of the Lord's Prayer, and yet (for the Sake of Orthodoxy) preach and write against all that is prayed for in it. For nothing but a continual, essential, immediate Divine Illumination can do that which we pray may be done.

[Addr-98] For where can God's Kingdom be come, but where every other Power but his is at an End, and driven out of it? How can his Will only be done, but where the Spirit that wills in God wills in the Creature?

[Addr-99] What now have Parts, and Literature, and the natural Abilities of Man, that they can do here? Just as much as they can do at the Resurrection of the Dead; for all that is to be done here is nothing else but Resurrection and Life. Therefore, that which gave Eyes to the Blind, cleansed the Lepers, cast out Devils, and raised the Dead, that alone can and must do all that is to be done in this Gospel Kingdom of God. For even the smallest Work or Fruit of Grace must be as solely done by God, as the greatest miracle in Nature; and the Reason is, because every Work of Grace is the same overcoming of Nature, as when the Dead are raised to Life.Â— Yet vain Man would be thought to be something, to have great Power and Ability in this Kingdom of Grace, not because he happens to be born of noble Parents, is clothed in Purple and fine Linen, and fares sumptuously every Day, but because he has happened to be made a Scholar, has run through all Languages and Histories, has been long exercised in Conjectures and Criticisms, and has his Head as full of all Notions, theological, poetical, and philosophical, as a Dictionary is full of all Sorts of Words.

[Addr-100] Now let this simple Question decide the whole Matter here: has this great Scholar any more Power of saying to this Mountain, "Be thou removed hence, and cast into the Sea," than the illiterate Christian has? If not, he is just as weak, as powerless, and little in the Kingdom of God as he is. But if the illiterate Man's Faith should happen to be nearer to the Bulk of a Grain of Mustard-Seed, than that of the prodigious Scholar, the illiterate Christian stands much above him in the Kingdom of God.

[Addr-101] Look now at the present State of Christendom, glorying in the Light of Greek and Roman Learning (which an Age or two ago broke forth) as a Light that has helped the Gospel to shine with a Lustre, that it scarce ever had before. Look at this, and you will see the Fall of the present Church from its first Gospel State, to have much likeness to the Fall of the first Divine Man from the Glory of paradisaical Innocence and heavenly Purity into an earthly State, and bestial Life of worldly Craft and serpentine Subtlety.

[Addr-102] In the first Gospel Church, heathen Light had no other Name than heathen Darkness; and the Wisdom of Words was no more sought after, than that Friendship of the World which is Enmity with God. In that new born Church, the Tree of Life, which grew in the Midst of Paradise, took Root and grew up again.Â— In the present Church, the Tree of Life is hissed at, as the visionary Food of deluded Enthusiasts; and the tree of Death, called the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, has the Eyes and Hearts of Priest and People, and is thought to do as much Good to Christians, as it did Evil to the first Inhabitants of Paradise.Â— This Tree, that brought Death and Corruption into human Nature at first, is now called a Tree of Light, and is Day and Night well watered with every corrupt Stream, however distant, or muddy with Earth, that can be drawn to it.

[Addr-103] The Simplicity indeed, both of the Gospel Letter and Doctrine, has the Shine and Polish of classic Literature laid thick upon it.Â— Cicero is in the Pulpit, Aristotle writes Christian Ethics, Euclid demonstrates Infidelity and Absurdity to be the same Thing.Â— Greece had but one Longinus, Rome had but one Quintilian; but in our present Church, they are as common as Patriots in the State.

[Addr-104] But now, what follows from this new risen Light? Why Aristotle's Atheism, Cicero's Height of Pride and Depth of Dissimulation, and every refined or gross Species of Greek and Roman Vices, are as glaring in this new enlightened Christian Church, as ever they were in old Pagan Greece or Rome.Â— Would you find a Gospel-Christian in all this Mid-day Glory of Learning, you may light a Candle, as the Philosopher did in the Mid-day Sun, to find an honest Man.

[Addr-105] And indeed, if we consider the Nature of our Salvation, either with Respect to That which alone can save us, or That from which we are to be saved, it will be plain, that the Wit and Elegance of classic Literature, brought into a Christian Church to make the Doctrines of the Cross have a better Salvation-Effect upon fallen Man, is but like calling in the Assistance of Balls and Masquerades, to make the Lent-Penitence go deeper into the Heart, and more effectually drive all Levity and Impurity out of it. How poorly was the Gospel at first preached, if the Wisdom of Words, and the Gifts of natural Wit and Imagination had been its genuine Helps? But alas, they stand in the same Contrariety to one another, as Self-denial and Self-gratification. To know the Truth of Gospel Salvation, is to know that Man's natural Wisdom is to be equally sacrificed with his natural Folly; for they are but one and the same Thing, only called sometimes by one Name, and sometimes by the other.

[Addr-106] His intellectual Faculties are, by the Fall, in a much worse State than his natural animal Appetites, and want a much greater Self-denial. And when own Will, own Understanding, and own Imagination have their natural strength indulged and gratified, and are made seemingly rich and honorable with the Treasures acquired from a Study of the Belles Lettres, they will just as much help poor fallen Man to be like-minded with Christ, as the Art of Cookery, well and daily studied, will help a Professor of the Gospel to the Spirit and Practice of Christian Abstinence. — To know all this to be strictly the Truth, no more need be known, than these two Things: (1) That our Salvation consists wholly in being saved from ourselves, or that which we are by Nature; (2) That in the whole Nature of Things, nothing could be this Salvation, or Saviour to us, but such an Humility of God manifested in human Nature, as is beyond all Expression. — Hence, the first unalterable Term of this Saviour to fallen Man, is this, "Except a Man denies himself, forsakes all that he has, yea and his own Life, he cannot be my Disciple." And to show, that this is but the Beginning, or Ground of Man's Salvation, the Saviour adds, "Learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly of Heart." What a Light is here, for those that can bear, or love the Light! Self is the whole Evil of fallen Nature; Self-denial is our Capacity of being saved; Humility is our Saviour. This is every Man's short Lesson of Life; and he that has well learned it, is Scholar enough, and has had all the Benefit of a most finished Education. Then old Adam with all his Ignorance is cast out of him; and when Christ's Humility is learnt, then he has the very Mind of Christ, and that which brings him forth a Son of God.

[Addr-107] Who then can enough wonder at that Bulk of Libraries, which has taken the Place of this short Lesson of the Gospel, or at that Number of Champion Disputants, who from Age to Age, have been all in Arms to support and defend a Set of Opinions, Doctrines, and Practices, all which may be most cordially embraced, without the least degree of Self-denial, and most firmly held fast, without getting the least degree of Humility by it?

[Addr-108] What a Grossness of Ignorance, both of Man and his Saviour, to run to Greek and Roman Schools to learn how to put off Adam, and to put on Christ? To drink at the Fountains of Pagan Poets and Orators, in order more Divinely to drink of the Cup that Christ drank of? — What can come of all this, but that which is already too much come, a Ciceronian-Gospeller, in Stead of a Gospel-Penitent? In Stead of the Depth, the Truth and Spirit of the humble Publican, seeking to regain Paradise, only by a broken Heart, crying, "God, be merciful to me a Sinner," the high-bred Classic will live in daily Transports at the enormous {See Milton's Enormous Bliss.} Sublime of a Milton, flying thither on the unfeathered Wings of high sounding Words.

[Addr-109] This will be more or less the Case with all the Salvation-Doctrines of Christ, whilst under Classical Acquisition and Administration. Those Divine Truths, which are no further good and redeeming, but as they are Spirit and Life in us, which can have no Entrance, or Birth, but in the Death of Self, in a broken and contrite Heart, will serve only to help classic Painters (as Dr. W. {As this Address was wrote some time ago, in which are certain Strictures upon Dr. Warburton's Writings, who has lately been consecrated a Right Reverend Lord Bishop; I thought it more candid not to alter my Style, than to take the Advantage of charging such gross Errors on a Bishop of Gloucester, which I only found in a Mr. and Dr. Warburton.} calls them) to lavish out their Colours on their own Paper Monuments of Lifeless Virtues.

[Addr-110] How came the learned Heathens by their Pride and Vanity, by their Inability to come under the Humility of the Cross? It was because the natural Man shined in the false Glory of his own cultivated Abilities. Have Wit and Parts, an elegant Taste, any more good or redeeming Virtue in Christians, than they had in Heathens? As well might it be said, that own will is good, and has a redeeming Virtue in a Christian, but bad and destructive in a Heathen. I said a redeeming Virtue in it; because nothing is or can be a religious Good to fallen Man, but that which has a redeeming Virtue in it, or is, so far as it goes, a true Renewal of the Divine Life in the Soul. Therefore, said our only Redeemer, "Without me, ye can do nothing." Whatever is not his immediate Work in us is at best but a mere Nothing with Respect to the Good of our Redemption. — A tower of Babel may to its Builders' Eyes seem to hide its Head in the Clouds, but as to its reaching of Heaven, it is no nearer to that, than the Earth on which it stands. — It is thus with all the Buildings of Man's Wisdom and natural Abilities in the Things of Salvation; he may take the Logic of Aristotle, add to that the Rhetoric of Tully, and then ascend as high as he can on the Ladder of Poetic Imagination, yet no more is done to the reviving the lost Life of God in his Soul, than by a Tower of Brick and Mortar to reach Heaven.

[Addr-111] Self is the Root, the Tree, and the Branches of all the Evils of our fallen State. We are without God, because we are in the Life of Self. — Self-love, Self-esteem, and Self-seeking, are the very essence, and Life of Pride; and the Devil the first Father of Pride, is never absent from them, nor without Power in them. — To die to these essential Properties of Self, is to make the Devil depart from us. But as soon as we would have Self-Abilities have a Share in our good Works, the Satanic Spirit of Pride is in Union with us, and we are working for the Maintenance of Self-love, Self-esteem, and Self-seeking.

[Addr-112] All the Vices of fallen Angels and Men have their Birth and Power in the Pride of Self, or I may better say, in the Atheism and Idolatry of Self; for Self is both Atheist and Idolator. It is Atheist, because it has rejected God; it is an Idolator, because it is its own Idol.Â— On the other Hand, all the Virtues of the heavenly Life are the Virtues of Humility. Not a Joy, or Glory, or Praise in Heaven, but is what it is through Humility. It is Humility alone that makes the unpassable Gulf between Heaven and Hell.Â— No Angels in Heaven, but because Humility is in all their Breath; no Devils in Hell, but because the Fire of Pride is their whole Fire of Life.

[Addr-113] What is then, or in what lies the great Struggle for Eternal Life? It all lies in the Strife between PRIDE and HUMILITY: all other Things, be they what they will, are but as under Workmen; Pride and Humility are the two Master Powers, the two Kingdoms of Strife for the Eternal Possession of Man.

[Addr-114] And here it is to be observed, that every Son of Adam is in the Service of Pride and Self, be he doing what he will, till a Humility that comes solely from Heaven has been his Redeemer. Till then, all that he doth will be only done by the right Hand, that the left Hand may know it. And he that thinks it possible for the natural Man to get a better Humility than this from his own right Reason (as it is often miscalled) refined by Education, shows himself quite Ignorant of this one most plain and capital Truth of the Gospel, namely, That there never was, nor ever will be, but one Humility in the whole World, and that is the one Humility of Christ, which never any Man, since the fall of Adam, had the least Degree of but from Christ.Â— Humility is one, in the same Sense and Truth, as Christ is one, the Mediator is one, Redemption is one. There are not two Lambs of God that take away the Sins of the World. But if there was any Humility besides that of Christ, there would be something else besides him that could take away the Sins of the World.Â— "All that came before me," says Christ, "were Thieves and Robbers": We are used to confine this to Persons; but the same is as true of every Virtue, whether it has the Name of Humility, Charity, Piety, or any Thing else; if it comes before Christ, however good it may pretend to be, it is but a Cheat, a Thief, and a Robber, under the Name of Godly Virtue. And the Reason is, because Pride and Self have the all of Man, till Man has his all from Christ. He therefore only fights the good Fight, whose strife is, that the Self-Idolatrous Nature which he hath from Adam may be brought to death, by the supernatural Humility of Christ brought to Life in him.

[Addr-115] The Enemies to Man's rising out of the Fall of Adam, through the Spirit and Power of Christ, are many. But the one great Dragon-Enemy, called Antichrist, is SELF-EXALTATION. This is his Birth, his Pomp, his Power, and his Throne; when Self-Exaltation ceases, the last Enemy is destroyed, and all that came from the Pride and Death of Adam is swallowed up in Victory.

[Addr-116] There has been much sharp looking out, to see where and what Antichrist is, or by what Marks he may be known. Some say he has been in the Christian World almost ever since the Gospel Times, nay, that he was even then beginning to appear and show himself. Others say he came in with this, or that Pope; others that he is not yet come, but near at Hand. Others will have it, that he has been here, and there, but driven from one Place to another by several new risen Protestant Sects.

[Addr-117] But to know with certainty, where and what Antichrist is, and who is with him, and who against him, you need only read this short Description which Christ gives of himself. "(1) I can do nothing of myself. (2) I came not to do my own will. (3) I seek not my own glory. (4) I am meek and lowly of heart."Â— Now if this is Christ, then Self-Ability or Self-Exaltation, being the highest and fullest Contrariety to all this, must be alone the one great Antichrist, that opposes and withstands the whole Nature and Spirit of Christ.

[Addr-118] What therefore has everyone so much to fear, to renounce and abhor, as every inward Sensibility of Self-Exaltation, and every outward Work that proceeds from it.Â— But now, at what Things shall a Man look, to see that working of Self which raises Pride to its strongest Life, and most of all hinders the Birth of the humble Jesus in his Soul? Shall he call the Poms and Vanities of the World the highest Works of Self-Adoration? Shall he look at the Fops and Beaux, and painted Ladies, to see the Pride that has the most of Antichrist in it? No, by no means. These are indeed Marks, shameful enough, of the vain, foolish Heart of Man, but yet, comparatively speaking, they are but the Skin-deep Follies of that Pride which the Fall of Man has begotten and brought forth in him.Â— Would you see the deepest Root, and Iron-Strength of Pride and Self-Adoration, you must enter into the dark Chamber of Man's fiery Soul, where the Light of God (which alone gives Humility and meek Submission to all created Spirits) being extinguished by the Death which Adam died, Satan, or which is the same Thing, Self-Exaltation became the Strong Man that kept Possession of the House, till a Stronger than he should come upon him.Â— In this secret Source of an eternal fiery Soul, glorying in the astral Light of this World, a swelling Kingdom of Poms and Vanities is set up in the heart of man, of which, all outward Poms and Vanities are but its childish transitory Playthings. The inward Strong Man of Pride, the diabolical Self, has his higher Works within; he dwells in the Strength of the Heart, and has every Power and Faculty of the Soul

offering continual Incense to him.Â— His Memory, his Will, his Understanding, his Imagination, are always at work for him, and for no one else.Â— His Memory is the faithful Repository of all the fine Things that Self has ever done; and lest any Thing of them should be lost or forgotten, she is continually setting them before his Eyes. His Will, though it has all the World before it, yet goes after Nothing, but as Self sends it. His Understanding is ever upon the Stretch for new Projects to enlarge the Dominions of Self; and if this fails, Imagination comes in, as the last and truest Support of Self, she makes him a King and mighty Lord of Castles in the Air.

[Addr-119] This is that full-born natural Self, that must be pulled out of the Heart, and totally denied, or there can be no Disciple of Christ; which is only saying this plain Truth, that the apostate Self-idolatrous Nature of the old Man must be put off, or there can be no new Creature in Christ.

[Addr-120] Now what is it in the human Soul that most of all hinders the Death of this old Man? What is it that above all other Things strengthens and exalts the Life of Self, and makes it the Master and Governor of all the Powers of the Heart and Soul? It is the fancied Riches of Parts, the Glitter of Genius, the Flights of Imagination, the Glory of Learning, and the Self-conceited Strength of natural Reason: these are the strong Holds of fallen Nature, the Master-Builders of Pride's Temple in the Heart of Man, and which, as so many Priests, keep up the daily Worship of Idol-Self.Â— And here let it be well, and well observed, that all these magnified Talents of the natural Man are started up through his miserable Fall from the Life of God in his Soul.Â— Wit, Genius, Learning, and natural Reason, would never have had any more a Name among Men, than Blindness, Ignorance, and Sickness, had Man continued, as at First, an holy Image of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.Â— Every Thing then that dwelt in him, or came from him, would have only said so much of God, and nothing of Himself, have manifested nothing to him but the heavenly Powers of the triune life of God dwelling in him.Â— He would have had no more Sense or Consciousness of his own Wit, or natural Reason, or any Power of Goodness in all that He was, and did, than of his own creating Power, at beholding the created Heavens and Earth.Â— It is his dreadful Fall from the Life of God in his Soul, that has furnished him with these high intellectual Riches, just as it has furnished him with the substantial Riches of his bestial Appetites and Lusts. And when the Lusts of the Flesh have spent out their Life, when the dark thick Body of earthly Flesh and Blood shall be forced to let the Soul go loose, all these bright Talents will end with that System of fleshly Lusts, in which they begun; and that of Man which remains will have nothing of its own, nothing that can say, I do this, or I do that; but all that it has or does, will be either the Glory of God manifested in it, or the Power of Hell in full Possession of it.Â— The Time of Man's playing with Parts, Wit, and Abilities, and of fancying Himself to be something great and considerable in the intellectual World, may be much shorter, but can be no longer, than he can eat and drink with the Animals of this World.Â— When the Time comes, that fine Buildings, rich Settlements, acquired Honours, and Rabbi, Rabbi, must take their Leave of him, all the stately Structures, which Genius, Learning, and Flights of Imagination, have painted inwardly on his Brain and outwardly on Paper, must bear full Witness to Solomon's Vanity of Vanities.

[Addr-121] Let then the high accomplished Scholar reflect, that he comes by his Wit, and Parts, and acute Abilities, just as the Serpent came by his Subtlety; let him reflect, that he might as well dream of acquiring angelic Purity to his animal Nature by multiplying new invented Delights for his earthly Passions and Tempers, as of raising his Soul into Divine Knowledge through the well exercised Powers of his natural Reason and Imagination.

[Addr-122] The finest intellectual Power, and that which has the best Help in it towards bringing Man again into the Region of Divine Light, is that poor despised Thing called Simplicity. This is that which stops the Workings of the fallen Life of Nature, and leaves room for God to work again in the Soul, according to the good Pleasure of his holy Will. It stands in such a waiting Posture before God, and in such Readiness for the Divine Birth, as the Plants of the Earth wait for the inflowing Riches of the Light and Air. But the Self-assuming Workings of Man's Natural Powers shut him up in himself, closely barred up against the inflowing Riches of the Light and Spirit of God.

[Addr-123] Yet so it is, in this fallen State of the Gospel Church, that with these proud Endowments of fallen Nature, the Classic Scholar, full fraught with Pagan Light and Skill, comes forth to play the Critic and Orator with the simplicity of Salvation Mysteries; Mysteries which mean nothing else but the inward Work of the triune God in the Soul of Man, nor any other Work there, but the raising up of a dead Adam into a living Christ of God.

[Addr-124] However, to make way for Parts, Criticism, and Language-Learning, to have the full Management of Salvation Doctrines, the well-read Scholar gives out, that the ancient Way of knowing the Things of God, taught and practiced by Fishermen-Apostles, is obsolete. They indeed wanted to have Divine Knowledge from the immediate continual Operation of the Holy Spirit, but this State was only for a Time, till Genius, and Learning

entered into the Pale of the Church.Â— Behold, if ever, "the Abomination of Desolation standing in the holy Place!"Â— For as soon as the Doctrine is set up, that Man's natural Parts and acquired Learning have full Right and Power to sit in the Divinity Chair, and to guide Men into that Truth which was once the only Office and Power of the Holy Spirit, as soon as this is done, and so far as it is received, it may with the greatest Truth be said, that the Kingdom of God is entirely shut up, and only a Kingdom of Scribes, Pharisees, and Hypocrites, can come instead of it. For by this Doctrine the whole Nature and Power of Gospel Religion is much more denied, than by setting up the Infallibility of the Pope; for though his Claim to Infallibility is false, yet he claims it from and under the Holy Spirit; but the Protestant Scholar has his Divinity Knowledge, his Power in the Kingdom of Truth, from himself, his own Logic, and learned Reason.Â— Christ has nowhere instituted an infallible Pope; and it is full as certain, that he has nowhere spoke one single Word, or given the least Power to Logic, Learning, or the natural Powers of Man, in his Kingdom. He has never said to them, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven"; never said to them, "go ye and teach all Nations," no more than he has ever said to Wolves, "go ye, and feed my sheep."Â— Christ indeed said of himself, according to the Flesh, it is expedient for you that I go away. But where has he said of himself according to the Spirit, "It is also expedient for you that I go away, that your own natural Abilities and learned Reason may have the Guidance of you into all Truth?" This is nowhere said, unless Logic can prove it from these Words, "Without me ye can do nothing," and, "Lo, I am with you to the end of the World."

[Addr-125] The first and main Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles was, to tell the Jews, "that the Kingdom of God was at Hand," or was come to them. Proof enough surely, that their Church was not that Kingdom of God, though by God's Appointment, and under Laws of his own commanding. But why not, when it was thus set up by God? It was because it had human and worldly Things in it, consisted of carnal Ordinances, and had only Types, and Figures, and Shadows of a Kingdom of God that was to come.Â—Of this Kingdom, Christ says, "My Kingdom is not of this World"; and as a Proof of it, he adds, "if it was of this World, then would my Servants fight for me"; which was saying, that it was so different in Kind, and so superior in Nature to this World, that no Sort of worldly Power could either help, or hinder it. But of this World, into which the Kingdom of God was come, the Holy One of God says, "In the World ye shall have Tribulation, but be of good Comfort, I have overcome the World." Now how was it that Christ's Victory was their victory? It was, because he was in them, and they in Him, "Because I live, ye shall live also; in that Day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you."

[Addr-126] This was the Kingdom of God come to them, the same Kingdom of God in which Adam was born and begun his first glorious Life, when the Image and Likeness of the holy Trinity had an outward Glory, like that which broke through the Body of Christ, when on "Mount Tabor his Face did shine as the Sun, and his Raiment was white as the Light."Â—To the Children of this Kingdom, says its Almighty King, "When they bring you before Magistrates and Powers, take no Thought how, or what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say unto them, for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in that same Hour what ye ought to say. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."

[Addr-127] No higher, or other Thing is here said, than in these other Words, "Take no Thought, what ye shall Eat, or Drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed, but seek first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, and all these Things shall be added unto you." This is the Truth of the Kingdom of God, come unto Men, and this is the Birth-right Privilege of all that are living Members of it, to be delivered from their own natural Spirit which they had from Adam, from the Spirit and Wisdom of this World, and through the whole Course of their Lives only to say, and do, and be that, which the Spirit of their Father worketh in them.

[Addr-128] But now, is not this Kingdom gone away from us, are we not left comfortless, if instead of this Spirit of our Father speaking, doing, and working every Thing in us and for us, we are left again to our own natural Powers, to run to every Lo here, and Lo there, to find a Share in that Kingdom of God, which once was, and never can be any Thing else but God, the Wisdom and Power of God manifested in our Flesh? Had it not been as well, nay better for us, to have been still under Types and Figures, sacrificing Bulls and Goats by Divine Appointment, than to be brought under a Religion that must be Spirit and Life and then left to the jarring Interests of the Wisdom of the Greek, and the Carnality of the Jew, how to be living Members of it? For where the Spirit of God is not the continual immediate Governor of spiritual Things, nothing better can come of it. For the Truth and full Proof of this, no more need be appealed to than all the Libraries and Churches of Christendom for many Ages to this Day.

[Addr-129] What is the Difference between Man's own Righteousness and Man's own Light in Religion? They are strictly the same Thing, do one and the same Work, namely, keep up and strengthen every Evil, Vanity, and Corruption of fallen Nature. Nothing saves a Man from his own Righteousness, but that which saves and delivers him from his own Light.Â—The Jew that was most of all set against the Gospel, and unable to receive it

was he that trusted in his own Righteousness; this was the rich Man, to whom it was as hard to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven as for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle.Â— But the Christian, that trusts in his own Light, is the very Jew that trusted in his own Righteousness; and all that he gets by the Gospel, is only that which the Pharisee got by the Law, namely, to be further from entering into the Kingdom of God than Publicans and Harlots.Â— How comes it, that a Beast, a scarlet Whore, a horned Dragon, and other, the most horrible Descriptions of diabolical Power, have been by the Spirit of God made Descriptions of the Christian Church? How comes it, that the Spirit describes the Gospel-Church as driven into a Wilderness; the two faithful witnesses, Moses and Jesus, as prophesying so many Ages in Sackcloth, and slain in the Streets of spiritual Sodom and Egypt? It is because Man's own natural Light, Man's own conceited Righteousness, his serpentine Subtlety, his Self-love, his sensual Spirit and worldly Power, have seized the Mysteries of Salvation that came down from Heaven, and built them up into a Kingdom of envious Strife and Contention, for learned Glory, spiritual Merchandise, and worldly Power.Â—This is the Beast, the Whore, and Dragon, that has governed, and will govern in every private Christian, and public Church, till, dead to all that is Self, they turn to God; not to a God that they have only heard of with their Ears, and their fathers have told them, but to a God of Life, Light, and Power, found living and working within them, as the essential Life, Light, and Power of their own Lives. Â—For God is only our God, by a Birth of his own Divine Nature within us. This, and nothing but this, is our whole Relation to, our only Fellowship with him, our whole Knowledge of him, our whole Power of having any part in the Mysteries of Gospel-Salvation. Nothing can seek the Kingdom of God, or hunger and thirst after his Righteousness, Nothing can cry, Abba Father, Nothing can pray, "Thy Kingdom come," Nothing can say of Christ, "My Lord, and my God," but That which is born of God, and is the Divine Nature itself become creaturely in us. Nothing but God in Man can be a Godly Life in Man.Â— Hence is that of the Apostle, "The Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life." But you will say, can this be true of the Spiritual Divine Letter of the Gospel? Can it kill, or give death? Yes, it kills, when it is rested in; when it is taken for Divine Power, and supposed to have Goodness in itself; for then it kills the Spirit of God in Man, quenches his holy Fire within us, and is set up instead of it.Â—It gives Death, when it is built into Systems of Strife and Contention about Words, Notions, and Opinions, and makes the Kingdom of God to consist, not in Power, but in Words. When it is thus used, then of Necessity it kills, because it keeps from That which alone is Life and can give Life.Â— This then is the Whole of the Matter; all the literal Truths, and Variety of Doctrines and Expressions of the written Word, have but one Nature, one End, and one Errand, they all say Nothing else to Man but that one Thing which Christ said, in these Words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you"; just the same, as when it is said, "Jesus Christ, who is of God made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, and Sanctification"; this is the only Refreshment from Christ. Again, "But ye are washed, but ye are cleansed in the Name of our Lord Jesus"; just the same as when it is said, "Except ye abide in me, and I in you, ye have no Life in you." Again, "By Grace ye are saved, by Faith ye are saved," says neither more nor less than this, "He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal Life"; the same as when Christ says, "Without me ye can do nothing"; the same as the Apostle says, "Yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me"; the same as "Christ in us the Hope of Glory; if Christ be not in you, ye are Reprobates."Â— Therefore to come to Christ, to have our heavy laden, fallen Nature refreshed by him, to be born Spirit of his Spirit, to have his heavenly Flesh and heavenly Blood made living in us, before we put off the bestial Body and Blood of Death which we have from Adam, is the one only Thing taught and meant by all that is so variously said in the Scriptures of the Merits and Benefits of Christ to us.Â— It is the SPIRIT, the BODY, the BLOOD of Christ within us that is our whole Peace with God, our whole Adoption, our whole Redemption, our whole Justification, our whole Glorification; and this is the one Thing said, and meant by that new Birth, of which Christ says, "Except a Man be born again from above, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Now, the true Ground why all that is said of Christ in such a Variety of Expressions has only one Meaning, and points only to one and the same Thing is this, it is because the whole State and Nature of fallen Man wants only one Thing, and that one Thing is a real Birth of the Divine Nature made living again in him, as at the first; and then all is done, that can be done, by all the Mysteries of the Birth, and whole Process of Christ, for our Salvation.Â— All the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel are fulfilled, when there is in Christ a new Creature, having Life in and from him, as really as the Branch has its Life in and from the Vine.Â—And when all Scripture is thus understood, and all that either Christ says of himself, or his Apostles say of him, are all heard, or read, only as one and the same Call to come to Christ, in Hunger and Thirst to be filled and blessed with his Divine Nature made living within us; then, and then only, the Letter kills not, but as a sure Guide leads directly to Life. But Grammar, Logic, and Criticism knowing nothing of Scripture but its Words, bring forth nothing but their own Wisdom of Words, and a Religion of Wrangle, Hatred, and Contention, about the Meaning of them.

[Addr-130] But lamentable as this is, the Letter of Scripture has been so long the usurped Province of School-Critics, and learned Reasoners making their Markets of it, that the Difference between literal, notional, and living Divine Knowledge, is almost quite lost in the Christian World. So that if any awakened Souls are here or there found among Christians, who think that more must be known of God, of Christ, and the Powers of the World to come, than every Scholar can know by reading the Letter of Scripture, immediately the Cry of

Enthusiasm, whether they be Priests, or People, is sent after them.Â— A Procedure, which could only have some Excuse, if these Critics could first prove, that the Apostle's Text ought to be thus read, The Spirit killeth, but the Letter giveth Life.

[Addr-131] The true Nature, and full Distinction between literal and Divine Knowledge, is set forth in the highest Degree of Clearness in these Words of our Saviour, "The Kingdom of God is like a Treasure in a Field": Thus far is the true Use and Benefit, and utmost Power of the Letter, it can tell us of a Treasure that we want, a Treasure that belongs to us, and how and where it is to be found; but when it is added, that a "Man goes and sells all that he has, and buys that Field," then begins the Divine Knowledge, which is nothing else, but the Treasure possessed and enjoyed. Now what is here said, is the same that is said in these other Words of Christ, "Except a Man denies himself and forsakes all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple"; that is, he cannot partake of my Mind, my Spirit, and my Nature, and therefore cannot know Me; he is only a Hearer of a Treasure, without entering into the Possession and Enjoyment