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I. THE TESTIMONY OF GOD.*

WHEN Paul wrote to Timothy concerning "the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," adding in the next verse the supplementary statement, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," the Old Testament had been completed, and the New Testament was in process of composition. These two Testaments are the Holy Scriptures—the sacred writings—of the Christian church. They are the product of the inspiration of God. They are able to make wise unto salvation. They are infallibly and inerrantly correct in every detail of statement. These are high claims for these particular writings.

I. As to literary form, these Scriptures are a *record of testimony*. They purport to be testamentary documents—the authentic record of the witness-bearing of the Three Persons in the Godhead upon the questions which are embraced as their subject-matter. (1). They are the testimony of the Father: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God." (1 Cor. ii. 1.) (2). They are the testimony of the Son: "Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you." (1 Cor. i. 6.) (3). They are the testimony of the Spirit: "And it is the Spirit that

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beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." (1 John v. 6; John xv. 26; 1 Cor. ii. 10-13.) The Bible is thus the conjoint and concurrent testimony of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It is, in the language of our civil courts, their sworn statement as to their personal knowledge and belief. Behind the Bible lie both the competency and the credibility of the Trinity as witness-bearers.

The respective personal agency of the Three in the production of the Bible is to be determined by their general economic relations to each other. Creation, providence, and redemption are equally ascribed to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father creates, the Son creates, the Spirit creates; the Father is the God of providence, the Son is the God of providence, the Spirit is the God of providence; the Father redeems, the Son redeems, the Spirit redeems; the Bible is the testimony of the Father, the testimony of the Son, the testimony of the Spirit. This statement of the relation of the Three Persons of the Godhead may be generalized into a universal proposition, covering all God's extrinsic and transient acts. As to those acts which are immanent and intrinsic in the Godhead, that circle is too holy for speculation, and the pious mind is too reverent and timid to attempt a reduction. But as to the operations of the Trinity *ad extra*, they are all alike and invariably, both for their being and for their well-being, said to be dependent upon the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Each person of the Trinity has an agency in production, preservation, government, and redemption. The formula which expresses these personal relations is: *Of the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit*. The Father is always represented as the primal source, the Son as the universal medium, and the Spirit as the universal efficient. The prepositions, *of*, *through*, *by*, express the idea. The Son, *as such*, as he is the consubstantial and coëqual Second Person in the Godhead, is the universal mediator of all divine energy *ad extra*, the middle term everywhere between the thought of the Father and the execution of the Spirit. The Son, as *Christ*, as the Theanthropic Person of the covenant of grace, is the specific mediator of the redemptive purpose and power of God. The conditions of the problem

of redemption required a mediator peculiarly constituted, a mediator unifying humanity and divinity upon one Personality, an *Incarnate God*. These mediatorial requirements are fully met in the *Christ* of the gospel, but the Christ of the gospel, while the same person as the Son of the Godhead, is not exactly coincident with the Second Person of the Trinity. The failure to recognize this distinction has given rise to the *Christo-centric* theology. The Son, *as such*, may be regarded as a universal mediator, but Christ, *as such*, is the mediator of grace. Creation was of the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit; providence is of the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit; redemption is of the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit; the Bible is of the Father, through the Son, by the Spirit. With the Father the Bible was a *mental* word, with the Son it was a *personal* word, with the Spirit it was a *written* word. The word that was in the thought of the Father is the same word which was personalized in the Incarnation: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." (John i. 1, 14.) This personalized Word is the same word which was translated by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. The Scriptures are the word of God, spoken through the Son, by the power of the Holy Ghost, into the ear of the world. Christ is a *personal Bible*; the Bible is an *impersonal Christ*. Personalize the gospel, and the result would be the historic Christ; depersonalize the historic Christ into a book, and the result would be the Bible. This testimony, which is delivered to the world for its salvation, takes its rise in the Father's mind, is lifted by the Son out of the infinite abysses of the Father's thought, and revealed to the world in personal, incarnate form, and by the Spirit that personal word is interpreted, and the interpretation is finally recorded in the Scriptures by certain select human personalities who are employed as the Spirit's stenographers.

This testimony was not delivered all at once and recorded at a single sitting. There were sixty-six different depositions. They were made at different times during a period of some sixteen hundred years. These depositions relate to a great variety of subjects, and yet they are all pertinent to the case between God and

man. In recording these sixty-six depositions the services of some forty (?) different writers were employed, under the infallible guidance of the Holy Ghost. "God, who at sundry times and, in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." But these witnesses—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—have concluded their testimony. There remains nothing more to be said. They have told "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," and the Holy Spirit has sealed up the volume of testimony, and forbidden the addition to it or the subtraction from it of one single statement: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

That influence of the Holy Spirit by which he secures a correct record of the testimony of God is technically called inspiration. There are five theories as to the mode by which this influence is exerted upon the human employees of the Holy Ghost—the personal clerks who make the record of the testimony of God.

1. The mechanical, or dictation, theory. It maintains that the human writers were but the "pens," the "hands," the "amanuenses" of the Spirit; that the human authors were but so many typewriters, whose keys were struck by the finger of the Holy Ghost. This theory is *too divine*, in that it leaves small place for the human personality, and fails to explain the individuality of style in the different compositions. It depersonalizes the employees.

2. At the opposite pole is the naturalistic theory. It denies the supernatural element in inspiration, and does not distinguish it generically from the ordinary operations of the Holy Ghost upon the minds and hearts of men. The writers of the Bible are highly-gifted thinkers and accomplished *litterateurs*, and the Bible is the product of their genius. This theory is *too human*. It

makes the writers not the recorders of the testimony of God, but the authors of a volume on the subject of religion.

3. Between these two is the partial theory. It assumes that the writers are afforded such spiritual assistance as the exigencies of the case may require, such as the elevation of their faculties, the superintendence and direction of their ideas, and the suggestion to them of seminal thoughts. This view is to be discarded as *neither sufficiently divine nor human*.

4. Another middle theory is the degree theory. This is the theory which denies that "the Bible is the word of God," and affirms that "the Bible contains the word of God." It is to be rejected because it permits the recorders of the testimony of God to inject into the record their own personal ideas and statements, and to make editorial comments, without marking them, upon what they write. The theory is *too mixed* of human and divine elements. Only the genius of the higher critics can detect the human and divine statements in a volume which purports to be the testimony of God.

5. The dynamical theory is the most satisfactory. It embodies all the truth that is in the foregoing four hypotheses. It holds that, as there is a divine sovereignty and a human free agency, both operative in the world without contradiction of each other, so in the production of the record of the testimony of God there is such a coöperation of the divine and human agency as that neither is transfused into the other, nor in any way mixed and confused, yet so as the result is an infallible and inerrant record of the mind of God. "As a skilful musician, who has to execute a long score, will avail himself by turns of the funereal flute, the shepherd's pipe, the dancer's bagpipe, or the warrior's trumpet, thus the Almighty God, to proclaim to us his eternal word, has chosen of old the instruments into which he would successively breathe the breath of his Spirit. He chose them before the foundation of the world. . . . It was sometimes the sublime and untutored simplicity of John, sometimes the excited, elliptical, startling argumentative energy of Paul; sometimes the fervor and solemnity of Peter; it was the majestic poetry of Isaiah, or the lyrical poetry of David; it was the simple and majestic narra-

tive of Moses, or the sententious and royal wisdom of Solomon. Yes, it was all that; it was Peter; it was Isaiah; it was Matthew; it was John; it was Moses; but it was God." (*Gaussen.*) The divine and human elements, blending in the production of the record of the testimony of God, result in our infallible and inerrant *Theanthropic* Bible.

The foregoing is a general statement of the method of the delivery of the testimony of God.

II. The next question relates to the *confirmation* of the testimony of God. Is it confirmable? Are we bound to believe the contents of the Bible to be true upon the naked and unassisted affirmation of God, or are there some collateral or supplementary evidences which we may employ to fortify and encourage faith in its truths?

1. From the nature of the case there can be no rebutting testimony by which to disprove the statements made in the Bible. The Bible is a revelation of the consciousness of God. Where is the witness who can say of his personal knowledge that its thoughts are not God's thoughts? Testimony must be set aside by testimony. Where are the witnesses who can affirm, not upon ethical and speculative grounds, but upon the grounds of personal knowledge, that the testimony of God contains false and inaccurate statements? The first collateral fact which sustains the testimony of God is this: It cannot be disproved. Some minds may not like the allegations of God in the Scriptures; some of these allegations may be inconsistent with some human theories and sentiments; but the opposition is challenged to parole one solitary witness who can furnish a testamentary evidence against the testamentary evidence of God.

The reliability of testimony depends upon two things: (1), The competency of the witness; (2), The credibility of the witness.

(1). In civil nomenclature *competency* has a narrow and technical meaning. It signifies the legal admissibility of the testimony. If, for example, the statutes prohibited a near kinsman from testifying in favor of his relative, that kinsman would be an incompetent witness, albeit he might know more about the case than any being alive. Outside the courthouse, competency has a far wider signification. It covers the whole question of the ability of the

witness to make the statements which he does make. Manifestly an idiot would be an incompetent witness. Obviously that witness, who is so conditioned at the time the event is alleged to have occurred that he could not possibly have known it, is an incompetent witness. Within the realm of his ignorance no man can testify. Is the witness, as to mental endowment and circumstantial surroundings, able to make the statements which he makes? This question covers the ground of competency.

(2). The credibility of testimony depends upon the character of the witness. No liar can be believed. Contradictory testimony cannot be credited, for of two contradictories one or the other must be false. Contradictions in testimony are due to ignorance or to wickedness.

These two—competency and credibility—ground the reliability of testimony.

To disprove the testimony of God, it must be shown to be unreliable either because he is incompetent or incredible. His knowledge or his character must be destroyed. Where are the witnesses who can prove either ignorance or wickedness? The testimony is everywhere self-consistent and homogeneous; it nowhere crosses itself; it survives the severest cross-examination. The testimony of God in nature at no point contradicts the testimony of God in the Bible. Sometimes the two testimonies are upon different points, but when the witness speaks to the same point he is everywhere self-consistent and nowhere self-contradictory. All attempts to disprove the Bible are attempts to make God deny himself—attempts to tangle the witness. His enemies do not, for they cannot, oppose testimony with testimony. They seek to overturn testimony with speculative theories. It is as if one party to a cause before our civil courts offered the testimony of three competent and credible witnesses, while the other party, without adducing one single witness, risks his whole case upon an effort to theorize away the testimony of the three able and reputable witnesses. Such a procedure would disclose desperation. So the world's attempt to set aside the testimony of God by *a priori* and intuitional speculations is an attempt to destroy facts by theories.

The first great fact confirmatory of the testimony of God is the

fact that the learned world has for weary centuries been doing its utmost, by every species of searching and cross-searching—critical, historical, scientific, philosophic, sentimental—to “pick a fatal flaw” in the testimony of the Three in One, and has up to this date wholly and miserably failed. Testimony which cannot be contradicted and destroyed must influence the jury. Until destroyed, the world, upon the lowest principles of fairness and common honesty, must believe the statements which are in the Bible.

2. The testimony of God is incidentally, yet forcibly, confirmed by the effects which follow it. “By their fruits ye shall know them,” is, under some circumstances, an unimpeachable maxim of judgment. Men do not gather grapes from bramble-vines, nor figs from thistle-bushes. If this testimony is false, how comes it to pass that it has possessed such peculiar attractions for some of the greatest men that have ever lived either in ancient or modern times—men whose minds were strong, whose sentiments were highly refined, whose consciences were acute, whose scholarship was extensive, whose investigations were thorough, and whose conclusions were honest—men of philosophical spirit and accomplishment, men of scientific tastes and exactitude, *littérateurs* of the highest grade, and poets of the finest grace? If the testimony of God is a fabrication, how is it that the Jewish rabbi, the Greek philosopher, the modern free-thinker cannot expose the imposture, and disillusionize a large and the best portion of mankind? How comes it to pass that the intelligent class which rejects the testimony is, as to numbers, a “beggarly element”? How comes it to pass that this Bible story—God’s story told on the witness-stand—so easily “lifts empires off their hinges, and turns the stream of centuries out of their channels,” changing the political and moral face of the whole world? How comes it to pass that this record of what purports to be the testimony of God—the Bible—is everywhere such a potent and potential factor in the world’s best civilization? How comes it to pass that this narrative of God transforms and transfigures so many individual characters, turning them from vice and deformity to virtue and beauty, causing lives that once broke in malediction upon their homes and their communities to break in benediction and blessing everywhere? How is it that this story,

upon the supposition that it is not the word of God, has the power to take the gloom out of sorrow, the despair out of life, and the sting out of death for increasing millions as they track their way across the world, sun-browned, burden-bent, foot-sore, dusty travelers, to the mysterious boundaries of eternity? This is the problem. This Bible, which purports to be the testimony of God, commands the humble discipleship of increasing millions of earth's greatest and most learned sons, transforms nations, societies, and individuals into brighter and better conditions, and carries after it, like a starry train, the best virtues of the best civilization. Do men gather figs from thorn-bushes? Do they gather grapes from the bramble-vine? Let the traducers of the Bible point to some true testimony that can do half as much for the world as is done by the testimony of God, alleged by them to be false and incredible. The highest honor ever paid to Satan was paid when the Jews called Christ Beelzebub; and the highest compliment ever paid to error is paid when men call the Bible—the mightiest of all benevolent and beneficent agencies in all our civilization—false.

The Bible is the testimony of God as to the state of his own mind—as to his plans and purposes in creation, providence, and redemption—as to his knowledge of the past, the present, and the future of man—as to his views of sin and the conditions upon which he is willing to be reconciled to transgressors—as to the state of his heart as he contemplates his guilty and miserable creatures who have opposed themselves to his will—as to immortality, resurrection, judgment, heaven, and hell. Upon these matters—states and views of the divine mind—what witness can either confirm or deny the statements of God? Those other matters in the Bible—matters of historical fact—their external nature is nothing, their value is in their bearings upon the plan and purpose of God, their exposition of the state of the divine mind. What witness can, of his own knowledge, either confirm or deny the bearings of these historical events upon the mind of God? God's consciousness belongs exclusively and sacredly to himself. There is no witness who can come out of the consciousness of the Trinity and report it to us, save Jesus and the Spirit. Only through these can we know that consciousness, and their

story is the story of the Bible. Our faith in their story may be strengthened by the fact that it cannot be disproved, and by the fact that the fruits are of such a character that they cannot be borne upon a corrupt tree.

III. Having considered the method of the delivery of the testimony of God, and the reliability of that testimony, the third topic is *the reliability of the record of that testimony*. The testimony itself and the record of that testimony are two very different things. The statement which is made by the lips of the witness is one thing; the record of that statement which the clerk makes with his pen is another thing. The two ought to be exactly coincident. They may differ materially. They may contradict each other outright. There are those who tell us that there are differences and disagreements between the original testimony of God and the biblical record of that testimony. Drawing a distinction between infallibility and inerrancy, they affirm that the testimony is infallible and that the record of the testimony is errant—made errant because the stenographers were not infallibly guided in the preparation of the original autographs; or were not prevented from injecting into the record as they prepared it their own thoughts, opinions, and assertions; or through the creeping in of corruptions in the transmission of the record down the centuries. Our record, according to this allegation, is a mixed record, like the Samaritan people, a mongrel of truth and error; and the detection of the true and the false statements in the Bible must be by human genius and critical scholarship.

It deserves to be noted as one of the evidences of original sin that man presumes to review the testimony of God when much of that testimony, if not all of it, relates to the mental states of the divine being. That pure rationalism which boldly denies the possibility, or the probability, or the fact of divine testimony, is not so hard to overthrow as that dogmatic and ecclesiastical rationalism which masquerades under the name of "higher criticism," and which, admitting the fact that the Bible is the record of the testimony of God, proceeds to pass judgment upon it upon *a priori* grounds, and according to ethical and sentimental and literary dicta. This form of rationalism assumes an editor's

rights over the sacred page, and runs its deleting pen through statements here and there, until, as children say, "the book is all marked up." This form of rationalism ought to meet with toleration by no friend of the Bible. It is presumptuous and treacherous. Unmasked in theological seminaries and elsewhere, it ought to be expelled from the pale of the church, and be compelled to occupy the position of an enemy on the outside. The Holy Spirit is responsible for the original record of the testimony of God. If there be mistakes in the autographs of his employees, he is blameworthy. Hence the allegation that the original manuscripts of the writers of the Old and New Testament Scriptures is a judgment of censure upon the Holy Spirit, and an accusation of incompetency or unfaithfulness to his trust. The old position of the Bible's enemies was: Both the testimony and the record are fabrications. The modern position is: The testimony is infallible, but the record is errant.

Under this head of the reliability of the record of the testimony, two topics fall to be considered: (1), The making of the original record; and (2), The transmission of the record to successive generations.

1. The original record was so made, under the dynamical influence of the Holy Ghost, as to be not only substantially, but *verbally*, exact. The expression, "God said," and its equivalents, are used in the Pentateuch *five hundred* times, in the Psalms *three hundred* times, and in the prophets *twelve hundred* times. The expression is like oft-recurring quotation marks, calling the reader to remember that the language is the exact language of God. Moses told God that he could not speak of himself, and the Almighty assured him that he would be mouth and wisdom to him. David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." (2 Sam. xxiii. 2.) Inspiration touched the *tongue* of the sweet psalmist of Israel, and the *word* of the Spirit was put upon that tongue. In a similar manner Jeremiah declares that he was "touched" in his *mouth*, and that the *words* of the Lord were put into it: "Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, I have put my words in thy mouth." (Jer. i. 9.) When the Lord put

forth his hand to touch the son of Hilkiah, he did not touch alone his mind to arouse his genius, or to elevate his faculties, or to suggest ideas, but he touched his *mouth*, the organ of words, and the result of that touch was the putting of the *words* of his prophecy into his mouth. The New Testament endorses the Old: "O fools and slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken." (Luke xxiv. 25.) The prophets spoke words, and all that they spoke Christ declares was credible. The Revised Version translates Matthew i. 22, "which was spoken by the Lord through the prophets." Words alone are spoken, and the Old Testament was the word of Christ spoken through the prophets. In sending out the twelve, our Lord said, "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." (Matt. x. 20.) The Spirit spoke the speech to them which they spoke to the world. This expression is often employed, "Wherefore the Holy Ghost saith." (Hebrews iii. 7.) Concerning himself, that apostle who had been brought up at Gamaliel's feet said, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (1 Cor. ii. 13.) The "things" were revealed by the Spirit, as the context shows, and Paul uttered those things, not in human language, but in the language of the Holy Ghost. The argument for a plenary verbal inspiration in the production of the original record of the testimony of God rises high when it discovers that Christ himself did not venture to use his own language, but spake the words which had been put into his mouth. Concerning the predicted Messiah, Moses quotes the Lord as saying, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." (Deut. xviii. 18.) Concerning this same Prophet, Isaiah quotes the Lord as saying, "I have put my words in thy mouth." (Isa. li. 16.) When this Prophet became incarnate he said, "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." (John xiv. 24.) But the argument for verbal inspiration rises to its climax when it is discovered that even the Holy Spirit did not employ language that was original with him: "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:

for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John xvi. 13, 14.) Who, then, is the original author of the language of the original record of the testimony of God? The human writers disclaim that authorship; Christ disclaims it; the Spirit disclaims it. They all refer it to the Father. The very phraseology of the record is the phraseology of God, when, as a witness on the stand, he delivered his testimony through his Son and by his Spirit. It is difficult for us to see how this language, originating with the Father, and coming through the Son and by the power of the Spirit into the mind of the human writer, took upon itself the stamp of each writer's personality without altering the original words; but it is no more mysterious than are all the operations of the divine will upon and through the human will without destroying or interfering with its freedom. In making up the record, the clerical employees of the Holy Spirit quoted the language of God. The inspiring grace of the Spirit secured accuracy.

2. The second question has reference to the *transmission* of the record, and inquires as to the reliability of that record to-day. The original records are lost. We have only copies; and worse than that, we have only copies of copies. How far are our copies reliable? How far do they deviate from the originals, and can the deviations be traced? Have we to-day an infallible Bible? And if it is not infallible, have we a reliable Bible?

(1). There are "various readings" and many superficial "discrepancies" in the various copies of the record of the testimony which are in our hands to-day. We can gain nothing by denying these results of textual criticism. But the inferences drawn from these variations and discrepancies against the integrity of our canon and against the reliableness of our Bible are illogical and unnecessary. An honest and fair criticism reduces both the quantity and the quality of these variations and discrepancies to a minimum.

(2). These variations and discrepancies do not affect the doctrine of inspiration, of plenary verbal inspiration. That doctrine

affirms that the original autographs which came immediately from the human employees of the Spirit were plenarily and verbally exact reproductions of the testimony of God. These original manuscripts, thus prepared, were committed to the custody of the church, as "the oracles of God" were entrusted to Israel. The grace of inspiration and the grace of preservation are different. The one is special, supernatural, and miraculous; the other is natural and providential. Inspiration made the record of the testimony; providence preserves that record. Inspiration pledged inerrancy; providence pledged substantial preservation. That pledge has been fulfilled, else the Bible would not be existent to-day.

(3). Though the variations and discrepancies in our copies are many, the copies substantially reproduce the originals. "We do not need the wood of the true cross that we may have redemption through the blood of Christ; nor do we need the identical manuscripts that proceeded from the apostles and their companions, since we have the contents of these manuscripts handed down to us without corruption in any essential particular. This appears from various considerations. *First*, Several hundred manuscripts of the gospels, or of portions of them, have been examined, two of them belonging to the fourth century, and two, with some fragments, to the fifth. All these, though written in different centuries and coming from widely different regions, contain essentially the same text. In them, not one of the great facts or doctrines of the gospel history is mutilated or obscured. *Secondly*, The quotations of the church fathers from the last part of the second to the end of the fourth century are so copious that from them almost the entire text of our present gospels could be reconstructed. . . . *Thirdly*, We have two versions of the New Testament—the old Latin or Italic, and the Syriac called Peshito—which learned men are agreed in placing somewhere in the last half of the second century. The testimony of these witnesses to the uncorrupt preservation of the sacred text, from the time when they first appeared to the present, is decisive. . . . The substantial identity of the sacred text, as we now have it, with that which has existed since about the middle of the second

century, is thus shown to be a matter not of probable conjecture, but of certain knowledge." (*Barrow's Companion*, pp. 61, 62.)

(4). Are there any facts to prove the substantial integrity of our text, or copy, backwards from the middle of the second century? The same author quoted above gives the following: "The first fact to be noticed is the public reading of the gospels in the Christian churches, a custom which prevailed from the earliest times. . . . Intimately connected with the above is a second fact, that of the great multiplication of copies of the books of the New Testament, especially of the gospel narratives, since these contain the great facts which lie at the foundation of the Christian system. Every church would, as a matter of course, be anxious to possess a copy. . . . A third fact is the value attached by primitive churches to the gospel narratives, and their consequent zeal for their uncorrupt preservation. . . . A still further fact is the want of time for essential corruptions. . . . Finally, no evidence exists that the text of the gospel narratives has been essentially corrupted." (*Barrow's*, pp. 63-65.)

(5). The New Testament endorses the Old. The New Testament copy in the hands of the church to-day is essentially exact. Therefore, the Bible which is in use to-day is a reliable copy of the original testimony of God.

(6). The variations and discrepancies, when examined as to number, and when the list is honestly purged, are greatly reduced, many of them being only apparent.

(7). When considered as to their quality, nearly all these variations and discrepancies are trivial, such as any transcriber uninspired is liable to make in copying. For example: differences in dates, in methods of computation, in the view-points of the writers, in peculiarities of oriental idiom, in the plurality of names, whether *and* ought to be omitted or inserted, whether the original was *but* or *for*. None of them seriously modify any statement in the testimony. Worse discrepancies occur in every original record of testimony in our civil courts, and they do not destroy or invalidate that record. These Scripture discrepancies are in their nature trifling; they are not in the original record; they are in copies of the original; they are in copies of copies of the original; they

are unintentional; they do not materially change the meaning of the testimony; they do not fairly and justly destroy the reliability and practical utility of that record.

(8). Translations and copies of the Bible are not verbally inspired, but they are substantially inspired.

(9). The Scriptures discover their own discrepancies. They are self-detective. This proves them honest.

(10). They are self-corrective. Put all the copies into comparison, and there is circumstantial evidence as to which reading is correct.

Put all these facts together, and the attempt to invalidate our record of the testimony is nothing less than childish and cowardly. The wonder is, not that there are some discrepancies in a record which has been copied and re-copied (parts of it) for more than two thousand years, but that these discrepancies are not more in number and worse in kind. *No other record as old even exists.* The Bible, in this respect, has not fared as badly as other books of more recent date. The Latin and Greek classics exhibit a great variety of readings and many discrepancies. Notwithstanding all the alleged discrepancies, the text of the New Testament is better established than that of any other book—than that of Shakespeare.

IV. A few practical inferences will close this paper.

1. The Bible is not, in form, a philosophy, a rationalized system of the fundamental and causative principles of religion, formulated by the thought of God, and delivered to the world by his inspiration. It does indicate the primary grounds of all being and the essential principles of all certitude; but it does not give them in philosophic form. Neither is the Bible a science, an organized classification of the facts and phenomena of religion. It furnishes the materials for such a science, but does not deliver them in scientific form. But the Bible, precisely and exactly, is a *record of the testimony of God*. The witness delivers testimony; the attorney handles the testimony, endeavoring to weave all the statements together in such a manner as to form a consistent and satisfactory theory of the case, with which theory he hopes to unify the mind of his jury. The figure is not strained. The

Bible is the solemn deposition of the Trinity. The prophets and apostles were the clerical recorders of those depositions under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. As the attorney is bound by law and honor to handle the whole testimony, and nothing but the testimony; as he is rigidly forbidden to amend the testimony in any particular, by way of addition or subtraction; so the theologian and the preacher are bound to deliver the testimony of God as it is, construe it into a consistent theology, and argue the cause before the world, and plead for a judgment according to the record. The record must furnish the materials of all theologizing and sermonizing. The statements of the record are ultimate facts in the case. Every fact has a bearing upon the cause, and must be duly considered in the formulation of a theory of the case of God against the sinner.

2. Faith, in the widest sense of the word, is the belief that a thing is true. This conviction, or belief, may be set up in the mind either by *testimony* or by *reasoning*. These two heads cover the whole case. We believe some things as the result of some inductive or deductive reasoning process; that is, the psychological result of the reasoning process is the setting up in the mind, with some degree of certitude, the belief that the conclusion is true. We believe other things upon testimony: the testimony of our senses, or the testimony of our natures (all *a priori* beliefs are such), or upon the testimony of men, or upon the testimony of God. Testimony furnishes all original facts and truths, which become the materials of our reasoning processes. The intellectual convictions which result from testimony are primary, and those from reasoning are secondary. Some witness must furnish to thought the materials which it manipulates, and that witness may be the senses, the consciousness, the constitution of the soul, for authority is expert testimony, men, or God. All the facts of nature are delivered by the testimony of God. All the facts of revelation come in the same way. It is irrational not to receive the results of sound reasoning. It is equally irrational not to receive the facts of competent and credible testimony. Saving faith, as a specific sort of faith, is the reception of the Bible as the testimony of God. We believe it and act upon it precisely as the jury receives the testimony of witnesses

in the courthouse, and makes up its verdict according to that testimony. Saving faith, therefore, is not a speculative, but a testamentary product—a psychological result, not of reasoning upon metaphysical, scientific, or literary data, but of the authoritative testimony of God delivered through the Son, and recorded in the Bible by the Spirit through human employees of his sovereign selection. The jury is not permitted to deal with the human testimony upon *a priori* grounds and after *a priori* methods, but is required to accept the statements in the testimony as so many facts, or to reject them as false. In a similar manner we are bound to accept the contents of the testimony of God as so many facts, or we must reject that testimony as false. They are facts, or they are not facts. Saving faith rests upon authority, or it has no basis at all, and cannot exist. It is a testamentary product, not a speculative or theorized product.

3. Criticisms upon the Bible are assaults upon the competency and veracity of God as a witness. Criticism upon copies of the Bible, when restricted to the clerical work of the copyists, are both legitimate and important in order to furnish us with a correct text; but that "destructive criticism" which alleges that there are errors in the original record, as it was prepared by the Holy Spirit, or which pronounces false some of the statements which that Spirit made to his employees, is an impeachment of the intelligence or the character of the Three in One, who made these statements as matters of their personal knowledge. To "tamper with" a court-record of testimony is a high crime. To "break down the character of a witness" is serious business, and ruins that witness. To prove that a witness has blundered, is to that witness, if he have the proper regard for himself, grievous, and his only comfort is in the fact that "it is human to err." Do the rejecters of the Bible understand the logic of discarding "the testimony of God"?

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