

## Moral Tendency

The second branch of the internal evidence of the Scriptures consists of their *moral tendency*; and here, as in doctrine, the believer may take the highest and most commanding ground.

If, as to the truths revealed in them, the before "*unknown God*," unknown even to the philosophers of Athens, has been "declared" unto us; if the true moral condition, dangers, and hopes of man have been revealed; if the "*kindness and good will of God our Saviour unto man*" has appeared; if the true propitiation has been disclosed, and the gates of salvation opened; if, through the promised influences of the Holy Spirit, the renewal of our natures in the image of God originally borne by man, the image of his holiness, is made possible to all who seek it; if we have, in the consentaneous system of doctrine which we find in the Scriptures, every moral direction which can safely guide, every promise which can convey a blessing suitable to our condition, and every hope which can at once support under suffering, and animate us to go through our course of trial, and aspire to the high rewards of another life; the moral influence of such a system is as powerful as its revelations of doctrine are lofty and important.

One of the most flagrant instances of that malignity of heart with which some infidel writers have assailed the Scriptures, and which, more than any thing, shows that it is not the want of evidence, but a hostility arising from a less creditable source, which leads them, in the spirit of enmity and malice, wilfully to libel what they ought to adore, – is, that they have boldly asserted the Bible to have an immoral tendency. For this, the chief proof which they pretend to offer is, that it records the failings and the vices of some of the leading characters in the Old and New Testaments.

The fact is not denied: but they suppress what is equally true, that these vices are never mentioned with approbation; that the characters stained with them are not, in those respects, held up to our imitation and that their frailties are recorded for admonition.

(Theological Institutes: Or, A View of the Evidences, Doctrines, Morals, and Institutions of Christianity, Vol. I. by Richard Watson, New York: Published by Lane & Scott, 1851, ebook, 225-226, Text Modified)