

The Unconverted Cannot Know

The apostle lays down a principle upon this subject which is of universal application, and ought never to be overlooked or forgotten, when he says, 2 Cor. ii. 14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

We know that even the spiritual man—the man who has been born again of the word of God, through the belief of the truth, receiveth the things of the Spirit of God only as they are set forth in the word; and clearly as they are set forth there, no one can receive them so as fully to know and comprehend them, except through the agency of the Holy Ghost.

Hence it follows that the apostle's declaration that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, and that he cannot know them, implies that no man in his natural state, without the renovation of his nature and the indwelling of the Spirit, really knows or comprehends, in any proper sense, the leading and most important declarations of the sacred Scriptures.

If it be the clear doctrine of Scripture, that a man still unconverted cannot know the things of the Spirit, however fully and plainly they are stated in the word of God, then by whatever name the information he may have acquired concerning scriptural and theological subjects may be designated, he ought not to be called a theologian.

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