

to fall on a certain passage of scripture, recorded in the epistle of James, which says that if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth liberally to all men and upbraideth not. Now this youth, this "old Joe Smith," that we have heard so much about, was just simple enough to believe that that passage really meant what it said. He went out into a little grove near his father's house, in the town of Manchester, Ontario County, State of New York, and there he knelt down in all the simplicity of a child and prayed to the Father in the name of Jesus that He would show him which, among all the churches, was the true one. Said he, "Show me, Father, who are in possession of the truth, let me know, O Lord, the right way, and I will walk therein."

He had now come to a Person who was able to teach him. All his inquiries previously had been futile and vain, but he now applied to the right source. Did the Lord hear him? Yes. But he had to exercise faith. This young man, while thus praying, was not discouraged because he was tempted; but he continued praying until he overcame the powers of darkness which tried to prevent him from calling upon God. The Lord hearkened. Being the same God who lived in ancient times, He was able to hear and answer prayers that were offered up in this sincere manner, and He answered the prayers of this youth. The heavens, as it were, were opened to him, or in other words, a glorious pillar of light like the brightness of the sun appeared in the heavens above him, and approached the spot where he was praying; his eyes were fixed upon it and his heart was lifted up in prayer before the Most High. He saw the light gradually approaching him until it rested upon the tops of

the trees. He beheld that the leaves of the trees were not consumed by it, although its brightness, apparently, was sufficient, as he at first thought, to consume everything before it. But the trees were not consumed by it, and it continued to descend until it rested upon him and enveloped him in its glorious rays. When he was thus encircled about with this pillar of fire his mind was caught away from every object that surrounded him, and he was filled with the visions of the Almighty, and he saw, in the midst of this glorious pillar of fire, two glorious personages, whose countenances shone with an exceeding great luster. One of them spoke to him, saying, while pointing to the other, "This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him."

Now here was a certainty; here was something that he saw and heard; here were personages capable of instructing him, and of telling him which was the true religion. How different this from going to an uninspired man professing to be a minister! One minute's instruction from personages clothed with the glory of God coming down from the eternal worlds is worth more than all the volumes that ever were written by uninspired men.

Mr. Smith, this young man, in the simplicity of his heart, continued saying to these personages, "which church shall I join, which is the true church?" He then and there was commanded, in the most strict manner, to go not after them, for they had all gone out of the way; he was told there was no Christian church on the face of the earth according to the ancient pattern, as recorded in the New Testament; but they had all strayed from the ancient faith and had lost the gifts and power of the Holy Ghost; they had lost the