

giveth it understanding." There is not a man born into the world but has a portion of the Spirit of God, and it is that Spirit of God which gives to his spirit understanding. Without this, he would be but an animal like the rest of the brute creation, without understanding, without judgment, without skill, without ability, except to eat and to drink like the brute beast. But inasmuch as the Spirit of God giveth all men understanding, he is enlightened above the brute beast. He is made in the image of God Himself, so that he can reason, reflect, pray, exercise faith; he can use his energies for the accomplishment of the desires of his heart, and inasmuch as he puts forth his efforts in the proper direction, then he is entitled to an increased portion of the Spirit of the Almighty to inspire him to increased intelligence, to increased prosperity and happiness in the world; but in proportion as he prostitutes his energies for evil, the inspiration of the Almighty is withdrawn from him, until he becomes so dark and so benighted, that so far as his knowledge of God is concerned, so far as the future or hopes of eternal life are concerned, he is quite as ignorant as a dumb brute.

I was remarkably struck upon this point only a short time ago by the expressed opinion of an individual who is considered to be very intelligent—a philanthropist, going about the country, and said to be doing a great deal of good, who remarked in my hearing that the future was a blank; that we knew nothing about it; that we knew nothing as to the condition of the spirit after death; nor as to the pre-existence of spirits; and that all these things must be left without consideration as matters wholly beyond our reach. This, in substance, was the opinion expressed

by this very intelligent person who is going about the country doing so much good. I do not doubt that individuals may go about doing good, relieving present necessities, throwing out practical ideas and suggestions, as to temporal concerns and administering reproof that will be greatly beneficial to very many in their present worldly condition. But in view of the possibilities of the great and eternal hereafter, and the important contingencies of the past, involving our origin and our destiny, some of us are so constituted that we cannot content ourselves to rest such vital matters here, in the midst of so much ignorance, uncertainty and doubt. We desire to know something about the future and the past, as well as of the present. What is the object of our being? Whence have we come? Whither are we going? What consequences are dependent upon this life? What is to be gained or lost? To whom are we responsible, seeing we do not owe our existence to our earthly parents alone, nor to chance or hazard? Is there any reward or punishment hereafter for good or evil committed in the flesh? We desire to know something about these things, if it is possible to know anything about them. What is the standard of right and truth, and who is the great example? Those who say in their hearts that it is impossible to learn anything about these things; that it is sufficient to content ourselves with that which we can see and hear and handle, and with that which only materially affects our present existence; that that is all we have to concern ourselves about, can be but little removed beyond the brutes, or the animal creation. Such may be classed with those whom the Savior referred to in the parable of the rich man