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# The testimony of the soul to the existence and character of God

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The Testimony of the Soul to the Existence  
and Character of God.

## I

The design and perfection of the soul.

To confirm our confidence in any truth it  
is our custom to rely upon the testimony of  
trustworthy witnesses.

When we are certain of a theory or fact  
we feel a delight in summoning be-  
fore us the reasons of such confidence.

The general feels his patriotism revive  
and his courage grow stronger, as he re-  
views the solid columns of his veter-  
an soldiers.

We may be sure, but we shall not  
be less sure, and more intelligent  
by so, if we ask the question why?  
and what?

Why have I given my sanction to this  
principle? and what are the grounds

of my confidence?

No. Truth fears careful investigation.

Faith reaches beyond reason, is the first element of all thought and action; but reason follows hard after the march of faith, and garrisons the ground conquered by her abler ally.

When I ask, why do you believe the gospel? I do not mean that you should believe less, but that heart and intellect should be united in that belief and trust.

I do not ask that you should shut the Bible, but simply to stop a moment and listen to God's voice within, to turn the pages of thought and feeling and then to read with fuller assurance God's written word.

I do not ask that you should puzzle over the musty pages of men's speculations but ~~to~~ "Know thyself."

There is a glorious hope within us, reach-

sing beyond the veil of sorrow, sickness, death and the grave.

This hope rests upon solid foundations, let us measure these supports that our confidence may be unshaken and that our joy may be full.

We sometimes stand like a man in the midst of darkness and storm, with the waves dashing at his feet, trembling through the long weary hours of night; fearful that his foothold may be swept away. Morning comes and lo! his feet are upon a rock, and the shore is but a step beyond.

We will not wait and tremble through the night, but by thought and research learn, if it be true, that the "Rock of Ages" is beneath our feet and that heaven is but a step beyond.

We laugh at the tempest and enjoy the storm when know that danger is past and that our refuge is sure.

We look at a beautiful picture, a perfect statue, and declare that no blind chance ever drew the brush, or guided the chisel to produce such beauty and excellence.

We study the design and adaptation of the laws of nature and think, we find in them proofs of an infinite intelligent Creator.

The human body, the most perfect of all material objects which we can study, most clearly reveals the intelligent care and love of its Creator.

If the testimony of these, show the existence and character of God, who can he blind to the testimony of the soul?

What world or system of worlds, ever showed such design and perfect adaptation, or so loudly declared that God, the infinite and holy, is my maker, as the soul?

What picture or statue ever so clearly revealed the skill and love which form.

ed them; as the outline, the earthly shadow, the heavenly light and the perfect form of the soul?

There is a divinity of the soul which links it with the divine.

The design and perfection of the soul ~~do~~ declare that the will, the wisdom, the love, that brought it forth, that were the source of all its powers and aspirations, could not be less than infinite.

I had been convinced from design in things, but here is design in myself.

God truly speaks in nature. His brand is seen in all the affairs of men, but much clearer is His word in the soul, upon whose wonderfully related powers of love, thought and choice, the very knowledge of all else depends.

We study the machine of some <sup>skilled</sup> ~~wonderful~~ inventor.

We come so near that we can feel the

breaths of the great-wheels as they turn  
with the roaring of angry demand.

He study it-carefully to find out-its  
plan and adaptation.

How perfectly-connected are belt-and wheel  
wheel and lever.

How perfectly adjusted are all its parts.

How each wheel-and every supports the other  
and all work together to grind the grain,

to crush the ore, to form some instrument  
as perfectly as could the human hand.

How grand, how wonderful, how perfect-is  
the design and execution of this machine.

How it-promotes the skill of the inventor in  
whose mind belt-and lever, wheel and  
 cog, knife and saw, were given their prop-  
er place before the first-model was  
cast.

How wonderful is this machine, how

much more wonderful was the plan, --  
how much more wonderful <sup>than</sup> ~~that~~ all was the  
mind that-conceived the plan.

I began by saying "know thyself", but  
 no thought has ever fittingly <sup>compass-</sup> ~~express-~~  
 ed, no word has ever fittingly expressed,  
 the perfect design of the soul.  
 Consciousness grasps the first-light,  
 feels the first-touches of the world about  
 us.

Reason takes these raw materials of con-  
 sciousness and classifies and names  
 them.

Memory holds ~~these~~ thoughts and plans  
 subject to our call.

The will commands, marshals and puts  
 into execution, for good or evil, for joy or  
 sorrow.

Deas inspires all the powers of the mind  
 with new energy and throws its own  
 halo of joy and purity about the common  
 things of life.

The soul with these mighty powers perfect-  
 ly related and adapted to rule the world  
 is not simply a well adjusted machine.

but the image of God.

The soul is not the result of accident, or of material force, or of mechanical organization.

No result can surpasses its cause, as the soul towers above force and accident.

The soul with perfect design for all circumstances of time and fitted for eternal development, bears undeniable testimony to the eternal and divine character of God as its Creator.

## II.

The idea of belief is innate to the soul.

Doubt has been the starting point of modern Philosophy and Science.

Men once believed tradition without thought or question.

As a result they became the slaves of superstition.

A few <sup>leading</sup> ~~wise~~ minds ruled the mass.

This state of ignorance and credulity was taken advantage of by unscrupulous and designing men to bind the common people to their will.

But men began to doubt, began to question, began to demand a reason for belief and then superstition, tyranny and priestcraft lost their magical powers.

When I thus honor and welcome doubt, I refer to the questioning of our earnest active mind.

so much as I honor the doubts of such a mind, I despise irrational doubting. The man who doubts simply because he is too lazy to think, or to find some simple practice, is certainly to be despised. Honest, earnest doubt breaks down the defences of error and gives impulse to all investigation.

The founder of modern Philosophy began and based his system upon doubt. He said, I will doubt everything about which there is a possible question, until I come to a perfectly clear truth and that shall be my starting point.

He analyzed everything we call knowledge. He doubted the testimony of his own senses, the existence of the outer world, all that reason had before told him as true.

But there was one thing he could not doubt - the existence of himself the doubter.

The next fact he was compelled to admit was - the necessity of relying upon

the truthfulness of his own consciousness  
And he puts as the second admission  
this principle - "what is clearly known is  
true".

The first idea he found was the existence  
of himself, but - second only to this, was the  
idea of the existence of God.

Mind is the most fruitful and reliable  
field we can study.

It is not like a sheet of paper upon  
which events are stamped, but is a self-  
acting and intelligent power.

Study your own mind and you will find  
fixed in it - the idea of God.

If this idea of God is not innate to  
the mind where came it - ?

By education ?

Who or what was our educator ?

How did the first teacher get his idea of  
God ?

How has the idea of God become so uni-  
versal, found in ancient thoughts and

modern research, in enlightenment and barbarism?

One may say that the idea of God came from a study of nature and that it is not natural to the soul.

But if so, how is it that all men read alike the name of God in nature? or how come the idea so irresistible?

If the idea came from nature it must be the result of long and careful observation and study of law and design.

But how much study does the savage give to nature's laws and design?

It is sometimes said that there are tribes that have no religion; but further investigation has found this to be false in every case.

There is not on this globe a tribe without a religion, a city without a temple, or a language without prayer and praise. Now the central idea of all religions is the idea of God.

The expression of this idea is often very imperfect.

The service rendered to God, may contain many foolish and impure rites.

Nevertheless the idea of God is in every soul. So far from learning this idea from nature I believe that it first has been a mental fact - and then men have found design and law in nature in accordance with, and worthy of the idea.

As we read the pages of thought and feeling, we see constantly the name of God. If we listen his voice comes to us from within with words of power and love.

We close the pages of this Chapter of God's revelation - The Testimony of the Soul - Confessing that all things within us, tell of the Infinite Father and call for endless praise.