

Part III: Showing What Are Distinguishing Signs of Truly Gracious
and Holy Affections (Signs 4-5)

1. Review from previous weeks

2. Fourth Sign: Enlightened Understanding

a. Description

b. Relationship to previous signs

3. Fifth Sign: Certainty of Divine Things

a. Description

b. Certainty alone is not the sign

4. Applications of both of these signs

a. Application to self

b. Application to others

c. Application to ministries

5. *Miscellanies*: #350 **Christian Religion. Divine Revelation**

Were it not for divine revelation, I am persuaded that there is no one doctrine of that which we call natural religion [but] would, notwithstanding all philosophy and learning, forever be involved in darkness, doubts, endless disputes, and dreadful confusion. Many things, now they are revealed, seem very plain, and as if we could easily arrive at a certainty of them if we never had had a revelation of them. It is one thing to see that a truth is exceedingly agreeable to reason, after we have been told it and have had it explained to us, and have been told the reasons of it; and another to find it out, and clearly and certainly to explain it, by mere reason. 'Tis one thing to prove a thing after we are showed how, and another to find it out and prove it of ourselves.

If there never had been any revelation, I believe the world would be full of endless disputes about the very being of a God, whether the world was from eternity or not and whether the form and order of the world don't result from the mere nature of matter: ten thousand schemes there would be about it. And if it was allowed that there was a first cause of all things, there would be endless disputes and abundance of uncertainty, to determine what sort of a thing that first cause was. ...

We hardly can have a conception [of] how it would be if there never had been any revelation. For we are bred up in the light of revelation from our very infancy. If there was a nation of philosophers, where all were taught philosophy as soon as they came to be capable of understanding anything, and so they were bred up in it, they would be surprised at the ignorance, the thoughtlessness of a people that did not meddle in it. ... Knowledge is easy to us that understand by revelation, but we do not know what brutes we should have been, if there never had been any revelation.