**37—39.]** The connexion of these  
verses has been much disputed. I believe  
it will be found to be this: ‘The works of  
which I have spoken, are only *indirect*testimonies ; the Father Himself, who sent  
Me, has given *direct* testimony concerning  
Me. Now that testimony cannot be derived by you, nor any man, by direct *communication* with Him; for ye have never  
heard His voice nor seen His shape. (Or  
perhaps,—have not heard His voice, as your  
fathers did from Sinai,—nor seen His  
visional appearance, as the Prophets did.)  
Nor (ver. 38), *in your case*, has it been  
given by that *inward witness* (ch. iii. 33 5  
1 John iv. 13, 14) which those have (and  
had in a measure, even before the gift of  
the Spirit—see, among other places, Ps. li.  
11), in whom His word abides ; for ye have  
not His word abiding in you, not believing  
on Him whom He hath sent. Yet (ver. 39)  
there is a form of this direct testimony  
of the Father, accessible even to you;—  
“*Search the Scriptures*,” &c.’ Chrysostom  
and others understand the word **voice** to  
refer to *the voice at our Lord’s baptism*:  
but, as Lücke observes, the addition, **at  
any time**, forbids this. Observe that the  
testimony in the Scriptures is not the only,  
nor the chief one, *intended* in ver. 37, but  
the direct testimony *in the heart of the  
believer*;—which, as the Jews *have not,*they are directed to *another form* of the  
Father’s testimony, *that in the Scriptures*.

**39.]** The word **Search** may be *indicative*,   
**Ye search**: then the sense will be, ‘*Ye  
search the Scriptures, for ye believe ye  
have &c., and they are they that testify of  
Me: and (yet*, ver. 40) *ye will not come  
to Me that ye may have life:*’ or *imperative*, as in the text, in which case generally  
a period has been placed after me, and a  
fresh sentence begins at **And yet ye are  
not willing ....** Authorities are very  
divided between these: the Greek Fathers,  
who should best understand their own language, took them (with one remarkable  
exception, Cyril of Alexandria) as *imperative*. And I believe the *imperative sense only* will be found to cohere with the previous verses :—see above, where I have given the context. And no other sense will suit  
the word **search**: which cannot be used, as  
in the indicative it would be, with blame  
attached to it,—‘*ye make nice and frivolous search into the letter of Scripture*;’  
but implies *a thorough search* (see also  
1 Pet. i. 11) *into the contents and spirit of  
Seripture*.

*Ye* (emphatic) **imagine  
that** *in them* (emphatic) **ye have eternal  
life**. We may find testimonies to this  
from the Rabbis: “*He who acquires the  
words of the law, acquires for himself  
eternal life*,” &c. But they, like all  
other secondary ordinances, have a spiritual  
end in view, and that end is to testify,  
from first to last (it is *their office*); *they  
are they that testify* of ME.

**40.]** I would connect these words with the former,  
and regard them as describing the inconsistency of those who think that they *have  
life* in the Scriptures, and yet will not  
come to Him of whom they testify, *that  
they may have life*.

Observe, this  
command to the Jews to *search* their  
Scriptures, applies even more strongly to  
Christians; who are yet, like them, in  
danger of idolizing a mere written book,  
believing that *in the Bible* they have  
eternal life, and missing the personal  
knowledge of Him of whom the Scriptures  
testify.

The words *Ye are not* **willing***to come* here set forth strikingly *the free  
dom of the will*, on which the unbeliever’s  
condemnation rests : see ch. iii. 19.

**41—44.]** The connexion seems to be ;—  
the standing-points of our Lord and of the  
Jews were not only *different*, but were  
*inconsistent with* and *exclusive of* one  
another. He sought not glory from below,  
from man’s praise or report: *the Father  
testified to Him*, in all the ways which have