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## Bible Lectures

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## THE SUPREME AUTHORITY IN RELIGION, OR HOW GOD NOW SPEAKS TO MAN.

M. C. KURFEES.

"To him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you" (Acts 3:22).

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For more than three thousand years the question of authority in religion, in one form or another, has been fraught with the profoundest interest to serious and thoughtful men. The peculiar interest attaching to the question in its relation to Christianity began when "the chief priests and elders" of our Lord's time, not satisfied with their general and very unreasonable opposition to his cause, assailed the authority upon which He acted and confronted Him with their imperious demand: "By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?" In and of itself, there was nothing wrong with this question and nothing wrong in propounding such a question to Jesus, and it would doubtless have been directly and unequivocally answered if it had been prompted by correct motives; but the whole case, with a complete exposure of their insincerity, is recorded as follows: "And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one question, which if ye tell me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of

John, whence was it? from heaven or from men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, from heaven, he will say unto us, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, From men, we fear the multitude; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus and said, We know not. He also said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things" (Matt. 21:23-27).

Thus, with matchless wisdom, He met the situation, tore the mask from these haughty hypocrites, completely foiling their unholy purpose, and laying bare their insincerity to the gaze of the world.

It is no part of my purpose in this opening address to discuss the subject of authority in religion from the standing point of unbelief or the Higher Criticism of the Bible. On all proper occasions, this phase of the subject is of the profoundest interest and is eminently worthy of the vast amount of critical attention bestowed upon it by scholars for the past century and a half, and particularly since the days of Ferdinand Christian Baur and the Tübingen school of rationalistic philosophy. But I wish now to present the subject in its relation to those who accept the Bible as the inspired word of God. In fact, it shall be the aim to present, in principle, in this introductory address, the foundation and underlying reason for the five others which are to follow. Even among those who accept the Bible as the inspired word of God, including the conservatives in the school of Biblical Criticism, there is great confusion over what is, and what is not, of binding authority upon men today. Adventism and some other sects seem to proceed on the assumption that the church of God is indiscriminately under Moses, the prophets, and the Lord Jesus Christ. This mistake is both fundamental and vital; and hence, the purpose now



is to refute it by pointing out, as indicated by the explicit teaching of the word of God, THE SUPREME AUTHORITY IN RELIGION, OR HOW GOD NOW SPEAKS TO MAN.

I submit first of all the following simple proposition :

I. GOD NOW SPEAKS TO MAN THROUGH HIS SON JESUS CHRIST. This means that neither the word of Moses, nor that of the prophets, nor that of any other being in the universe, that is not stamped with the authority of the divine Son, is of authority among men today. Hence, I desire that we now note some passages contrasting Christ with Moses and all the prophets, showing that God now speaks through Him and that His word is the only authority. "God, having of old time, spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1, 2). This is a most instructive passage. The same Jehovah God, who spoke to the fathers in the olden time through Moses and the prophets and whose word, as thus spoken, was of the same authority that His word is today, now speaks to men, our passage declares, through His Son. Again: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Heb. 2:1-3). Thus, as a solemn enforcement of the divine obligation to hear all that is spoken through the Son, the apostle declares that "every transgression and disobedience," when God spoke through Moses and the prophets, was swiftly punished,

and in view of that solemn fact he propounds the searching question: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" Again cries the same voice of Inspiration: "A man that hath set at naught Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:28, 29). Again, the same explicit requirement is put in the form of the following solemn admonition: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not when they refused him that warned them on earth, much more shall we not escape who turn away from him that warneth from heaven" (Heb. 12:25). Here a vivid contrast is drawn between the severity with which God exacted implicit obedience from men when He spake through Moses "that warned them on earth," and the still greater severity with which He exacts obedience from them now that He speaks through His Son that warneth from heaven. I close this list with a passage which depicts one of the sublimest scenes recorded in the Bible. Jesus, taking with Him Peter, James and John, went up into a high mountain, supposed to have been Mount Hermon, and "was transfigured before them." This not only means that the earthly form in which He moved about as other men was changed, but in this particular place that it was so changed as to reflect the light and glory of God. In terms of matchless eloquence, Matthew, the sacred historian, says: "His face did shine as the sun, and his garments became white, as the light" (Matt. 17:2). Or, as expressed by Mark: "His garments became glistening, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten

them" (Mark 9:3). Or, as still further expressed by Luke: "As he was praying, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white and dazzling" (Luke 9:29). We are further informed that, in the midst of this sublime scene of glory rivaling in splendor the brightness of the sun, there appeared with these four persons—Jesus, Peter, James and John—"Moses and Elijah talking with" Jesus; and the historian, though leaving us in the dark as to what they said, nevertheless, tells us the interesting theme on which these illustrious personages conversed, saying that they "spoke of his decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." What a tragic, yet glorious theme!—a theme worthy of the attention of men and angels discussed by glorified denizens of two worlds. Moses, the ancient law-giver of God, and Elijah, the ancient prophet of God, who, hundreds of years before, had passed to the world beyond, reappeared on the glory-lit mountain and joined in holy conversation about the approaching death of Him who was to supersede them both and all other divine messengers as God's Law-giver, Prophet, King and Priest. So far the scene is witnessed by six persons—Peter, James, John, Jesus, Moses and Elijah—but a little later the voice of the seventh person was heard. Peter said: "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if thou wilt, I will make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But while Peter "was yet speaking," a bright cloud floated in splendor above them, and a voice coming from the cloud said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Thus, according to the appointment and declaration of Jehovah God himself, the world is commanded to hear His Son. Hence to refuse to hear the Son in any requirement is to refuse to hear Jehovah God himself.

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Now, in addition to this array of passages, just before the cloud-chariot bore Him back to His heavenly home, Jesus, appearing by appointment to His apostles, said: "All authority in heaven and on earth hath been given unto me" (Matt. 28:18). No wonder Inspiration says: "To him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you." He is heaven's Ambassador to earth, the mouthpiece and representative of Jehovah God himself. No one, aside from Him, has authority to speak. He is supreme over all, and His word is the only authority. Hence, no declaration of angels, of prophets or of apostles, that does not bear the stamp of His authority, is binding upon men today. Not only is His word supreme, but we must hear Him "in all things whatsoever he shall speak." Hence, no matter what He commands, we must either hear it and obey it, or be in rebellion against God himself who now speaks through Him. We are now prepared to consider a second proposition:

II. WHAT HAS HE SPOKEN? He goes to the very bottom of all human need and tells men what they must do to climb to the zenith of spiritual development and power.

1. He declares that men must believe on Him as the Christ and the Son of God. "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). They are not required to understand the philosophy of all that may be involved in these great matters, but they are required to believe and accept, upon the divine testimony, the fundamental fact that He is the Christ and the Son of God, and hence the world's Redeemer.

2. He declares that men must repent. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Men must not only be sorry for sin, but turn wholly away from it and follow the Lord.

3. He declares that men must confess Him. "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32). No stereotyped formal confession is given in the Scriptures, but in some way, men must acknowledge Him as their Lord. Paul distinctly states the great fact involved in the confession. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord and shall believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:9, 10). There we have it in a nutshell. The confession means a solemn avowal that we take "Jesus as Lord." That is, while, before that confession, we followed other lords or other leaders, now we take "Jesus as Lord"—take Him as our Lord, our Leader, and our Guide, thus promising that we will hold ourselves in readiness ever afterwards to sing and to exemplify in our lives the sentiment of the song: "Where He leads I will follow, I will follow all the way."

Why then  
do we tend  
to stop at  
baptism?

4. With the same authority and solemnity, He commands men to be baptized in water. "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you, and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:19, 20). "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Those who are thus brought into His kingdom are, as just quoted from His own words, to continue in His service by faithfully observing all things whatsoever He commands. The whole



matter of the Christian life is comprehended, in principle, in the following words of Inspiration: "For this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness; and in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love; . . . for if ye do these things, ye shall never stumble; for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:5-11).

Now, all these things he has distinctly spoken; and not only did Jehovah God appear on Hermon's holy height and say "Hear ye him," but He afterwards had the mandate placed on record for the guidance of men in all future ages: "To him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you." Hence, the very thought of attempting to harmonize these passages with the lax and indifferent claims of Christian Science and some other cults that such commands as baptism and the Lord's Supper may be omitted with impunity, is preposterous. According to the great principle which we have now incontestably established by the word of God, all such tampering with what Jesus has spoken is rebellion against God himself. On this very point Jesus distinctly says: "Why call ye me Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). Hence, with the clarion note of a trumpet blast, let the word ring from every pulpit and from every platform: "To him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you."

FAITH AND OPINION, OR THE DIVINE CREED  
VERSUS HUMAN CREEDS.

M. C. KURFEES.

"If any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11).

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The very fact that not even any two men, much less great multitudes of men, ever have the same opinion on all subjects, ought to be accepted as conclusive proof that human opinion has no place in the foundation on which union among men is divinely required. At the very beginning of this discussion, I should be glad to get this fact clearly and firmly fixed in our minds.

Let it be observed, then, first of all, that, even without one syllable of proof from the Bible, common sense teaches us that an intelligent, all-wise, gracious and good Being, such as we know our heavenly Father to be, could not and therefore would not require of men an impossibility; but it is a fact that our God and heavenly Father *does* require of men, in the plainest and most explicit terms, that they be united and harmonious in both speech and action on the one foundation on which He has established us and in the work which He has called us to do. He even carries the required unity and harmony to the significant extent that we shall "all speak the same thing" and that we shall all "be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." His requirement on this point is solemnly and explicitly stated in the following words of the inspired apostle: "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in

the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10).

Here are broad and significant premises from which conclusions the most vital and fundamental to the highest interests of Christianity follow, and they challenge our most serious and thoughtful consideration. Not only does it follow from such a requirement that all division and all lack of fellowship and harmony among us are wrong, but that whoever in the way of speculation or otherwise adds to, or takes from, or in any way modifies the one foundation on which we are called to speak and to act so that our oneness is destroyed or even marred, is responsible for, and incurs all the guilt involved in, such disruption of peace and harmony. Surely such baleful results call for serious thought and reflection.

Profoundly convinced, as I am, that human creeds, whether written or unwritten, whether formally adopted or informally held and taught, are the prolific source of division and strife among the people of God, and that nothing short of an unreserved acceptance of the one divine creed unmodified will ever restore and preserve union and harmony among them, I am to speak to you this evening on "Faith and Opinion, or The Divine Creed Versus Human Creeds." That is, we are to consider both creeds in general and the divine creed in particular. Let us, therefore, briefly consider:

#### I. CREEDS IN GENERAL.

All the harm that has ever come to Christianity and to the unity of the church from ecclesiastical councils, conclaves, assemblies, synods, diets and conventions, was, in principle, either directly or indirectly the legitimate outcome of human creeds. It is true that the councils themselves were often called to formulate the creed, but, nevertheless, the creed, in essence and fact and acting as a moving cause, had prior existence in the minds of those

calling the council, while the latter only served to give the creed expression in literary form and to stamp it with ecclesiastical authority as a future guide for the faith and practice of men. If the creed had not been originated and virtually formulated in the minds of its adherents, no council for its formulation otherwise would ever have been called and the world would have been saved from all the attendant evils of such institutions. The pages of ecclesiastical history are dotted all over with them and with the multiplied evils growing out of them.

Speaking in general terms, the creeds of Christendom fall into four classes: the Greek, the Latin, the Evangelical, and the Common Parent of all. By the last named are meant what are called the Oecumenical Symbols of the Ancient Catholic Church, as it is sometimes styled, which were the common property of all creeds. A few historical facts in this connection will help us to appreciate the influence of all such departures from the word of God. As Dr. Philip Schaff, in one of his learned works expresses it, there is a "vast difference between Catholicism and Romanism. The former embraces all Christians, whether Roman, Greek or Protestant; the latter is in its very name local, sectarian and exclusive. The Holy Catholic Church," in the sense in which the author uses that designation, "is an article of faith" in all the creeds, while, as he continues, "the Roman Church is not even named in the creeds. Catholicism extends through all Christian centuries; Romanism proper dates from the Council of Trent."

But the great division between the East and the West was prior to this. The Arian and Athanasian controversy did not die in the fourth century, but the stream of contention, strife and alienation, riverlike, continued to deepen and widen in its flow. The Eastern advocates,



who gave their body the high-sounding name of "The Holy Oriental Orthodox Catholic Apostolic Church," were immovable in their stand against the West. They included the Greek Church in Turkey, the National Church in Greece, and the National Church of the Russian Empire—the same religious body which is said to have, at this time, over one hundred millions of members. In spite of the bitter and relentless controversies which mark its history, "it remained," according to the Catholic Encyclopedia, "in union with the West until the great schism of Photius and then that of Caerulius, in the ninth and eleventh centuries." There were four Eastern patriarchates located respectively at Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople and Jerusalem. The student who would like to become familiar with the operations and progress of such ecclesiastical organizations will find an account of them with a full statement of the creed question in the large three-volume work of Dr. Philip Schaff entitled "The Creeds of Christendom."

As an indication of the gradual growth and spread of such departures from the simple ecclesiastical order revealed in the New Testament, it will help us to note carefully merely the dates and places of the origin of some of these organizations. There were seven Oecumenical Councils called by Greek Emperors, as follows:

I. The first Council of Nicaea, A. D. 325, called by Constantine the Great.

II. The First Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381, called by Theodosius the Great.

III. The Council of Ephesus, A. D. 431, called by Theodosius II.

IV. The Council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451, called by Emperor Marcian and Pope Leo I.

V. The Second Council of Constantinople, A. D.,



553, called by Justinian I.

VI. Third Council of Constantinople, A. D. 680, called by Constantine Pogonatus.

VII. The Second Council of Nicæa, A. D. 787, called by Irene and her son Constantine.

The first four of these councils settled, or claimed to settle, the orthodox faith on the Trinity and the Incarnation; the fifth was a supplement to the third and fourth; the sixth condemned, as it is styled, Monothelitism; and the seventh sanctioned the worship of images. To speak accurately here, they did not mean by this that they worshiped images as they worship God; but they attempted to make a distinction between the two kinds of worship and to indicate them by different words. They said the worship of images was *douleia* ( ), but not *aleethinee latreia* ( ).

One more significant fact may be noted here with profit, namely, that the Council of Trent, which opened on December 13, 1545, and closed on December 4, 1563, and is received by the Roman Church as the eighteenth (some say the twentieth, but the Catholic Encyclopedia says the nineteenth) Oecumenical Council, was also the last one with the exception of the Vatican Council of 1870 which declared the infallibility of the Pope, and of course, by that "divine (?) decree," superseded the necessity for any future council unless, as Dr. Schaff says, it would be "for unmeaning formalities."

Finally, on the matter of creeds in general, we have here the curious fact in ecclesiastical history that human creeds gave birth to human councils, and that human councils in turn not only became the hotbeds of heresy in all ages, but the fertile soil in which human creeds have always flourished. Thus, creeds and councils among the largest and most influential religious bodies of history

exerted a reciprocal influence upon each other in the perpetuation of both through the centuries, until their advocates became the deluded victims of the dogma that one mere mortal man had become clothed with infallibility! We come now to consider—

## II. THE DIVINE CREED.

According to the literal meaning of the word, a creed is what one *believes*, and it is human or divine according as what one believes is human or divine. Moreover, a creed may be either written or unwritten, but it can not affect others than those who hold it until it is formulated or otherwise reduced to practice. In this view of the matter, a creed, however human and erroneous, might be held without injury to others aside from its adherents. Of course, it stands to reason that no creed should be imposed by one man upon another against the will of the latter. Hence, we may very appropriately ask the question here, are there any marks of differentiation by which we can distinguish the divine creed from human creeds? If there are not, we are, of course, in hopeless confusion. But there are such marks, and these we now undertake to point out and define.

1. The Divine Creed *must be exactly what God says*. Properly speaking, the divine creed can not be anything more or less than what God says on a matter; and we must never overlook the fact that what are ordinarily called the interpretations of men are frequently in no sense what God says. They are simply what men think, their own unverified speculations, and of course they are no part of the divine creed. Hence, before we have the divine creed on any matter to which all men ought to subscribe, we must have exactly what God says, nothing more and nothing less.

2. From these considerations, it follows that the

Divine Creed can never be an unnecessary inference or merely what man thinks. This, according to the etymology of the term, would make it merely man's *opinion*. But how can we tell, in a given case, whether a thing is what God says or merely what man *thinks*? Here again, if we have no infallible rule for our guidance, we are in hopeless confusion. That we may make no mistake in the effort to find such a rule, let it be carefully observed here that, so far as the Christian is concerned, the science of Hermeneutics is a false science unless it seeks, by its principles, laws and rules, to ascertain, and is willing to be satisfied with, what an author says, and this fact especially applies in the case of religion where the search is for what God says. In fact, when we have learned by absolutely correct translation from one language to another, exactly what God says, we have reached the limit of legitimate interpretation and are justified in saying that we have found what God *means* by finding what God *says*. He who repudiates this position has only the alternative of committing himself to the lax and latitudinarian position of *guessing* at what God means beyond what he says; and that means, of course, that we can never know, this side of God's own revelation on the subject, whose guess is right, or whether anybody's guess is right or not. But the position here taken is sustained by the universal New Testament use of the term from which the science of Hermeneutics derives its name. *Hermes* among the Greeks "was held to be the god of speech, writing, eloquence, learning," and the Greek verb derived from this proper name, while used by Sophocles, Euripides, Xenophon, and Plato, in the sense of explaining or expounding, is, nevertheless, universally used in the New Testament to mean, according to Thayer and other high authorities, "to interpret, *i. e.*," adds Thayer,

"to translate what has been spoken or written in a foreign tongue into the vernacular," and he cites examples from Xenophon besides its occurrences in the New Testament. The latter are all found in John 1:38; 9:7; Heb. 7:2.

The same Greek verb, modified only by the use of a prefix, is found in Luke 24:27; Acts 9:36; I Cor. 12:30; 14:5, 13, 27; and, so far as the effort to learn what God means is concerned, has practically the same meaning. An example of it as used by Paul is found in the words: "If any man speaketh in a tongue, let it be by two, or at the most three, and that in turn; and let one interpret" (I Cor. 14:27). That is, let what is spoken in an unknown tongue be translated into a known tongue.

According to Gesenius, the same idea attaches to the Aramaic term *targame*, which, with slight vowel modification, is the word *Targum*, meaning a translation or paraphrase of the Old Testament into Chaldee or Aramaic. The point here insisted on is that, when we have ascertained God's own statement on a matter—what God himself says on it and all that He says on it—then we have the unquestionable right to say that we have found, in full, the divine creed on that matter; and no man has the right, in the way of speculation or otherwise, to inject into it any view or opinion of his own, or to say that the divine creed is either more or less than that. Hence, according to all the facts in the case, when God says a thing on any subject, we may well ask the question, if God did not mean what He said, then why did He not say what He meant? Or, if God meant for us to say more, then why did He not say more himself? This principle completely knocks out as irrelevant, impertinent, presumptuous and sinful all the speculations of men, both ancient and modern, that have disturbed the harmony, peace and tranquility of the church. And we are



limited in precisely the same way in all cases of figurative language, except where God himself, as in some notable instances, explains the meaning of the figure employed. Why, for example, should finite man underake to explain a symbol where the infinite God himself has not seen fit to explain it? Since God is content to say (Rev. 21:8) that, "for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone," without any further explanation, why should not a fallible preacher say the same thing without any further explanation? And as our Lord speaks of those who are "to be cast into hell where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:48), why should not we say the same thing and let it go at that? At no time and under no circumstances whatever does either the church or the world need the speculative opinions of prophetic wiseacres on any Biblical subject at all, no matter whether it be such symbols, unfulfilled prophecy, or anything else; and all those who disturb the peace and unity of the church with such opinions are as certainly under the condemnation of God as that God means what He says. No matter what a symbol may finally prove to have meant, why not preach it to the people, and everything else exactly as God gave it, and keep our opinions to ourselves? We may therefore unhesitatingly say that, when we have found what God says on a matter, we may safely take our stand on it as the divine creed, rally all our forces to its defense, and defy all comers against the position.

Of course any such divine statement may touch on, involve, or in some way imply mysteries wholly beyond our comprehension or power to explain, but they in no wise affect the divine creed as to what we are required



to believe and accept. "Before Abraham was born, I am" (John 8:58). The simple statement of fact which we are there called upon to believe and which is to us the divine creed on that point, implies mysteries unfathomable to men—mysteries which God has nowhere, in His word, explained and on which we should reverently maintain the silence of the Scriptures. Again: "This is my body," "This is my blood" (Matt. 26:26, 27). If there had been nothing either in these statements themselves, in their context, or anywhere else explaining the figurative language used, even then there would have been no just ground for either the Romanist doctrine of transubstantiation or the Lutheran doctrine of consubstantiation. As the matter stands in the sacred record, both doctrines are clearly shown to be of human origin, the mere and unnecessary inferences of men, with nothing whatever that God says to sustain them; and hence, they are no part of the divine creed.

3. Finally, summing up the whole matter in its simplest form, if we would find and preserve the divine creed in its fullness, the one divine and infallible rule to guide us in our search, always and everywhere, and which is revealed in explicit terms by the inspired apostle, is to *speaking oracles of God*. And this is precisely what God, in so many words, requires. Here it is as given in the most solemn entreaty by the inspired apostle: "If any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God" (I Pet. 4:11). Hence, if any man in any capacity presumes to speak in the name of Christianity, note carefully here how he is distinctly commanded to speak. Not only must he teach what God says, but he must teach nothing else. He must not, when speaking for God, preach or teach on any question his own opinions or the opinions of anybody else, but he must preach or teach what God says on it.

If God is silent on it, so should he be silent. He must speak oracles of God, and nothing but oracles of God. "If any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God." No more was it the word of God that was heard when, amid "the thunderings and the lightnings," the voice of God pealed from the smoking summit of Mount Sinai, than it is to be now when we speak in the name of Christianity; and when all men who presume to speak, speak oracles of God and nothing but oracles of God, then all will "speak the same thing" and all will "be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

Hence, we reach the safe and sound conclusion—and here our feet rest on the solid rock—that the divine creed on any subject whatsoever, is what God says on the subject and all that he says on it, nothing more, nothing less, and nothing otherwise. This principle applies indiscriminately to any and all subjects alike—to God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church of God, the kingdom of God, the people of God, the law, the Gospel, faith, repentance, confession, baptism, grace, prayer, the Lord's Supper, music in the worship, good works, missionary work, unfulfilled prophecy and every other solitary theme on which God has spoken in the sacred record. In short and in fine, whatever God says on a matter is the divine creed to which all men everywhere should gladly and unitedly subscribe.

"No creed but Christ,  
No law but the Lord's,  
No book but the Bible,  
No name but the Master's."

THE CHURCH REVEALED IN THE NEW  
TESTAMENT.

M. C. KURFEES.

"Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18).

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The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and thus far the twentieth century have been pre-eminently an age of denominations and denominationalism. In the midst of such an environment, there has come to be great confusion among the people in their conception and use of the term "church." As a matter of fact, there are comparatively few persons who, always and under all circumstances, use the term in its strictly Biblical sense, while the great majority of persons of every name and creed are constantly using it in senses wholly foreign to the Bible.

This confusion grows out of the very common and not altogether unnatural tendency of men to form their conception of Bible terms from the circumstances and usages current among the people around them rather than from the Bible itself. They seem to take their religious environment to be an exponent of what is in the Bible, whereas between that environment and what is in the Bible there is often a diametrical contradiction. It is quite true that the speech of those professing to follow the Bible really ought to be a true exponent of the Biblical usage of terms, but often it is not. This is true in the current use of many Biblical terms, but pre-eminently true of the use of the term "church."

The purpose in this address is to call attention to plain passages in the Bible, showing the senses, and the

only senses, in which the term is used in the inspired volume, and hence the only senses in which it may properly be used today. We shall consider, in their order, the meaning and comprehension of the term church, the unity of the church, and the divine designations of the church.

I. THE MEANING AND COMPREHENSION OF THE TERM.

1. The original term, translated "church" in the Authorized and Revised versions, is *ecclesia*. This term literally means "called out," and prior to and during the New Testament period it meant an assembly of persons called together for some purpose regardless of what the purpose might be. It sometimes meant an assembly to hear an oration, and sometimes an assembly such as a mob. In this classic sense it is used three times in the New Testament. These are in Acts 19:32, 39, 41.

2. What, then, is Christ's *ecclesia*, and why is it so called? The facts of the New Testament clearly answer both of these questions. (1) Touching the first, we are distinctly told that the church which Christ said He would establish is nothing more nor less than the people of God who become such by virtue of their obedience to the gospel of Christ. They are God's people, not God's people under Moses, but God's people under Christ; and throughout the New Testament wherever they might be located they were called the church in that locality. Hence, writing to Christians as God's children in Corinth, the apostle said: "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, and Sosthenes, our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth" (I Cor. 1:1, 2). "And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for



even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need" (Phil. 4:15, 16).

(2) But why are God's people in Christ called an *ecclesia*, or church? Are they, in any sense, "*called out*" so as to justify the application? The inspired answer is clear and conclusive. The Founder of the church himself says: "If the world hateth you, ye know that it hath hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18, 19). Again, in His memorable prayer, referring to His followers, He said: "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16). Echoing the sentiment of his Master, the inspired apostle, addressing scattered members of the church, said: "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (I Pet. 2:9). Hence, God's people in Christ being called out of the world and placed under the solemn obligation to maintain their separation therefrom, are, with pre-eminent appropriateness, called an *ecclesia* or a called-out people—the church.

In this connection we may note six New Testament facts which throw a flood of light on the question.

(a) God's people are God's *church*. See passages already cited and many others.

(b) God's people are God's *tabernacle*. "We have such a high priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man" (Heb. 8:1, 2). The context shows it is God's people in Christ who are called his "tabernacle."



Contrasting it still further with the Jewish tabernacle, the same writer says: "But Christ having come a high priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation" (Heb. 9:11).

(c) God's people are God's *temple*. "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye" (I Cor. 3:16, 17). Again: "We are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them and walk in them" (II Cor. 6:16).

(d) God's people are God's *house*. "But Christ as a son, over his house, whose house are we" (Heb. 3:6). "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 2:5). "But if I tarry long that you mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15).

(e) God's people are God's *building*. "Ye are God's husbandry, God's building" (I Cor. 3:9).

(f) God's people are God's *habitation*. "In whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:21, 22).

Now, in addition to these significant facts showing that God's house or temple is no longer a material structure, there are two New Testament passages which distinctly declare that God does not now dwell in such a house or temple. In the immortal speech of Stephen in which he mentioned Solomon's temple as God's dwelling

place under the Old Covenant, he immediately adds: "Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in houses made with hands" (Acts 7:48), and in the great speech of Paul in Athens amid material temples of heathen worship, he said: "The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24).

Hence, it is a mistake to dedicate a material house as God's house today, since, under the New Covenant, He no longer dwells in such a house. For comfort and convenience, God's people may build and meet in such houses, but God's people themselves, and not such a material structure, are now God's house.

## II. THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

The Lord said: "Upon this rock I will build my church." He did not say "churches," but "church." Hence, the church was established as one undivided institution, and it was the divine purpose that its unity should be maintained through the ages. Moreover, the Lord said: "Upon this rock I will build my church." He said "*my* church," and hence, it is not man's church, but Christ's church. It is also said to be "the church of God" (I Cor. 1:2); but the Lord himself, addressing the Father, said: "All things that are mine are thine, and thine are mine" (John 17:10); and Paul says: "All are ours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (I Cor. 3:22, 23).

Hence, all modern religious parlance that recognizes "different churches" and a multiplicity of churches is a distinct departure from New Testament parlance and is proof that an ecclesiastical situation now exists that is utterly contrary to the New Testament. "For even as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, who are many, are one

body in Christ and severally members one of another" (Rom. 12:4, 5). This is a positive declaration that the many members were to constitute and to remain the one church of the Living God. "We, who are many, are one bread, one body" (I Cor. 10:17). "In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body" (I Cor. 12:13), and he further declares that "the body" and "the church" are the same thing. "And gave him to be the head over all things to the church which is his body" (Eph. 1:22, 23). Hence, the admonition: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all" (Eph. 4:1-6). Here are *seven* distinct unities, and God's children are solemnly commanded to maintain them all. One body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God. In the face of such teaching whoever assumes the right to contend for more than "one body" may properly assert the same right to contend for more than "one Lord," or more than "one Spirit." If not, why not? Hence, in all legitimate ways, it is the duty of all God's children today, as they may have opportunity, to stand out against division in the body of Christ, and to plead for a return to its original oneness and harmony.

### III. THE DIVINE DESIGNATIONS OF THE CHURCH.

Under the leadership of inspired apostles, it is designated in four different and distinct capacities. It will help us to a still further appreciation of its oneness to carefully observe these different designations.

1. The *house church*. "Aquila and Prisca salute you much in the Lord with the church that is in their house" (I Cor. 16:19). Of course, this meant those who were God's children in Christ who were in their house.

2. The *city church*. "Paul . . . and Sosthenes . . . unto the church of God which is at Corinth" (I Cor. 1:1, 2). "And the report concerning them came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem" (Acts 11:22). "Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there," etc. (Acts 13:1).

3. The *district church*. "So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace being edified" (Acts 9:31).

4. The *general church*. "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). "And gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body" (Eph. 1:22, 23). "And he is the head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18). "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and the church of the first born who are enrolled in heaven" (Heb. 12:22, 23).

Now, there is one fact which is characteristic of, and runs without exception through all these designations of the church, namely, the term always and everywhere, under all circumstances, includes all the children of God in the territory to which it is applied. In all the New Testament there is not a solitary exception to this rule. When applied to a house, it included all the children of God in the house; when applied to a city, it included all the children of God in the city; when applied to a district, it included all the children of God in the district; and when applied in the general sense without local specification, it included all the children of God in the whole



world.

Finally, if we would speak in accordance with Biblical usage, we must always and everywhere use the term to include all the children of God in any territory to which we apply it; and to use it otherwise is to be guilty of using it in a sectarian sense. There is simply no escape from this conclusion. To speak as the Bible speaks, the term "church" without any qualifying adjunct, or "church of God," or "church of the Lord," or any other Bible designation, when applied to New York, Cincinnati, Louisville, Nashville, or Abilene, Texas, must include all the children of God in the place or places to which it is applied. In the present divided state of the church and under the influence of parlance growing out of a denominational environment, it is difficult to avoid being sectarian or denominational in our speech; and hence there is a growing tendency today to sectarianize even the term "church of Christ." This is invariably the case when it is used, as it frequently is nowadays, to mean merely those people of God who do not work through missionary societies and do not use instrumental music in the worship, and to exclude other children of God who make the mistake of working and worshiping in the said ways. The church of Christ in any city today, using the term in accordance with Biblical usage, includes all the children of God in the said city; and until these principles are observed, the primitive church, in its constitution, its doctrine, its faith, and its practice will never be fully restored. Let us plead for the spread and recognition of these principles and for the complete restoration of the primitive church.

THE UNION MOVEMENT—SEEING THINGS  
ALIKE, OR WHAT IT IS THAT  
DIVIDES THE PEOPLE.

M. C. KURFEES.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10).

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Among all the facts in the religious world of today, none, perhaps, is more prominent than the fact of division. There are not only numerous denominations, as they are popularly styled, but oftentimes each denomination is divided and subdivided into warring factions and parties, some crying "Lo here," and others "Lo there," the people, in the meantime, greatly confused, until we have all around us, in the graphic language of Milton—

"A universal hubbub wild  
Of stunning sounds and  
Voices all confused."

The very popular and plausible reason usually assigned for this state of things is: "We can not all see alike, and hence are compelled to be divided." It is here freely admitted that people do not see things alike, and hence, that the fact thus stated becomes a specious and plausible, though misleading, reason or excuse for the divisions in question.

But over against that specious reasoning, let us place the plain and unequivocal language of Inspiration just

read. It not only distinctly requires, in the most positive terms, that we avoid all division contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures, but it announces the requirement in the most solemn way: "I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you." The inspired apostle could well say, "through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," because in the Lord's memorable prayer for union and which from the depths of His soul He poured forth when He was in the shadow of the cross, He had said, in pleading terms, to the Father: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word, that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17:20, 21). Here are three solemn requirements: (1) That there be "no divisions among" Christians. (2) That they "all speak the same thing." (3) That they "be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Hence, we are here brought face to face with two, and only two, alternatives: Either Christians *can* be one and all speak the same thing with no divisions among them; or God requires of them an *impossibility*, one or the other. There is no alternative. Let us face the facts without evasion. But no properly thoughtful person will accept the latter conclusion; and hence, we are compelled to adopt the conclusion that Christians *can* be one and undivided, and that they will be held responsible for any failure to carry out the divine requirement.

The purpose now is to show that the people do see alike what is *in* the Bible, and that it is things *outside* of the Bible which they do not see alike and over which they are divided. The only way to properly test the matter is

to look at the things over which there is division, and to see if the fact here stated is not verified. It is the purpose to present the matter under two leading heads:

I. THE ONE DIVINE RULE BY WHICH MEN ARE  
REQUIRED TO WALK IN THE SERVICE OF GOD.

I. This rule is substantially given in many passages, but we find it clearly and fully stated in three. (1) "The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29). This passage divides the things of God into two classes—"the secret things" and "the things that are revealed," and it distinctly tells us that the latter are ours, but that the former belong unto Jehovah. Hence, we may preach and teach the things of the latter class, but should not attempt to teach those of the former, because they belong to Jehovah and we know nothing about them. (2) "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word" (II Tim. 4:1, 2). This passage distinctly tells us what to preach—"preach the word"—preach "the things that are revealed." (3) "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18, 19). With equal distinctness, this passage forbids either adding to or taking from the word of God. It must be left precisely as God left it, and it must be preached without addition, without subtraction, and without modification. If this rule does not necessarily



and strictly confine us within the limits of a "thus saith the Lord" in all our religious teaching, then I do not see how it could be done.

2. Now we shall see (1) that whenever and wherever this divine rule is followed, the people see alike and there are no divisions among them. (2) That whenever and wherever they depart from this rule, they do not see alike and are divided. I call attention to two illustrations of the principle underlying the divine rule. (a) *God's appearance to Moses in the burning bush.* "And the angel of Jehovah appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush, and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned. And when Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush and said, Moses, Moses" (Ex. 3:2-4). Now, let two questions concerning this event be propounded to all the divided people of the religious world and let the result be noted. First: "Do you believe that God appeared to Moses in a burning bush?" The one universal and categorical response to this question would be *yes*. No two of them would be divided over it. Moreover, each and all would say they believe it because the word of God says so. Secondly: "What kind of a bush was it?" The only answer which even the most learned could properly give to this question would be the frank admission, "I do not know." But instead of pursuing this wise and proper course, both the learned and the unlearned usually proceed, in all such cases, to give their opinions, and then differences and divisions are inevitable. One says it was a cedar bush; another, an olive bush; another, a pine bush; and still another, a sycamore bush; and so on, each opinion advo-

cated finding adherents, until different parties are formed with the result that, instead of being united and all speaking the same thing, the people are divided into conflicting and warring parties with a perpetual jargon over their differences.

But why was there perfect union over the first question and widespread division over the second? Simply because the Bible was strictly followed in the one case and not in the other. On the first question, all took what the Bible says, nothing more and nothing less, and hence, all spoke the same thing; on the second, instead of remaining silent, precisely as the Bible is silent, and teaching nothing on it, they proceeded to give and teach their opinions with division the inevitable result. The word of God *says* that God appeared to Moses in a burning bush, but it does *not* say what kind of a bush it was; and "the secret things belong unto Jehovah."

(b) *Paul's "thorn in the flesh."* Referring to his being "caught up into Paradise" where he "heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter," he said: "That I should not be exalted overmuch, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, that I should not be exalted overmuch. Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he hath said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee; for my power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (II Cor. 12:7-9). Now, to the question, "Did Paul have a thorn in the flesh?" the whole religious world, with all its divisions, would answer with one voice in the affirmative. Precisely as in the other case, no two persons would be divided on the question. But why such unanimity of thought and expression? Because the word

of God *says* Paul had a thorn in the flesh and all accept what it says. It is not the opinion of anybody, but plainly what the word of God says. *But what was the thorn?* There would be precisely the same unanimity of thought and expression here as in the other case if the same divine rule were followed; but this, as a rule, is just what is not done. Instead of stopping where the Bible stops and refusing to say anything where it says nothing, men usually set forth their opinions. One says it was *sore eyes*; another that it was some other physical malady; whereas, as a matter of fact, the Bible says not a word on it. On this point, it is as silent as the grave. Hence, no mortal knows nor can know, until it is revealed, what the thorn in Paul's flesh was; and hence, the universal response that should come from all teachers of the Bible is, *we do not know*, and let it go at that. Why not? That is indisputably the *fact* in the case and no one is authorized to teach anything beyond that. This is a most vital point. In answer to the first question, all are a unit and speak the same thing; whereas, in answer to the second question, there is division and all do not speak the same thing. Why the difference? Because they followed the divine rule in the one case, and did not follow it in the other. God's word *says* there was given to Paul "a thorn in the flesh," but it does *not* say what the thorn was. This is another of "the secret things" which "belong unto Jehovah," and man should not attempt to say what it is. Again he should speak what God's word says and stop where God's word stops, adding nothing to it and taking nothing from it. We are now prepared to consider:

## II. THINGS OVER WHICH THE DENOMINATIONS ARE DIVIDED.

By a careful induction and examination of facts, it



will be seen that, among all the things over which there is division among God's people, in no instance, when the facts are all weighed with proper discrimination, are they divided over what is *in* the Bible or what the Bible *says*, but over what is *outside* of the Bible or what the Bible does *not* say.

1. *The act performed for baptism.* What are the facts here? If a man, under the teaching of any denomination whatsoever, should go "unto the water"; go where there is "much water"! should, in company with the administrator of baptism, "go down into the water"; be "buried" in it and so buried that his whole "body is washed," being raised up again; and should "come up out of the water," there is not a denomination on earth that would not accept the act, other things being equal, as valid baptism. No existing religious body, not even excepting the Catholics, would deny that he act here performed is baptism. Even the Quakers, who repudiate water baptism, admit that this act is valid if we are to have water baptism at all. Again: if a man under the teaching of any denomination whatsoever, should have a few drops of water poured or sprinkled upon his head by the proper administrator, a part of the religious world would say that the act in this case also is baptism; but an increasingly large part of the religious world would repudiate it as no baptism at all. Over the other act there is perfect unity without even one dissenting voice. Over this act there is division. Again, why the difference? Why is there universal agreement and union in the one case, and disagreement and division in the other? Simply because, in the first case, every step taken can be read in so many words in the New Testament, and the act there performed is not only *in* the New Testament, but every denomination on earth admits that it is. All



the steps taken are in the New Testament and there is universal agreement in the fact. No denomination on earth denies that the act of immersion, all things else being equal, is valid baptism. But what are the facts in the other case? There is only one correct answer that can be given, namely, there is not a solitary example among all the recorded instances of baptism in the New Testament where water was poured or sprinkled on the head of the candidate. Neither is there a solitary statement or fact in the New Testament from which the act of pouring or sprinkling is a necessary inference. Moreover, while because of the long historic record which can be pleaded in favor of pouring and sprinkling, a part of the world is willing to accept them as baptism, yet a vast part of it, not only because of the weight of the world's scholarship on the meaning of the word baptism, but pre-eminently because in the act of immersion, regardless of the discussion over Greek and Hebrew words, every step taken can be read in the word of God—because of these unanswerable facts, it repudiates pouring and sprinkling and will accept nothing but that about which there is no dispute and which is infallibly safe. Hence, it is here clear as a sunbeam that on what is *in* the Bible, there is union; on what is *outside*, there is division.

2. *Who should be baptized?* Over the baptism of penitent believers in the Lord there is universal agreement—nobody calls it in question; but on the baptism of infants, there is widespread division. Why is there unity on the one, but division on the other? Because the one is *in* the Bible, and the other is *not*. There are numerous examples of the baptism of penitent believers recorded in the New Testament, but not a solitary example of infant baptism. On the former there is union, on the latter division.

3. *Names for God's people.* No denomination is willing to wear any human name except its own; but no denomination objects to any name by which God's children are called in the New Testament. No matter what the name may be, whether Christian, disciple, saint, child of God, people of God, friends, brethren and sisters, the elect, the called of God, a holy nation, or what not, all the names by which the New Testament calls the people of God are acceptable to every denomination on earth, yet each and every denomination objects to every human name except its own. Here again on what is *in* the Bible God's people are united; on what is *outside* they are divided.

4. *Music in the worship of God.* In this worship during the Old Testament period, both vocal and instrumental music were divinely authorized, yet in the worship under Christ, as revealed in the New Testament, vocal music alone is used by divine authority. Hence, no denomination objects to vocal music in the worship of God under Christ; but there is strong objection to instrumental music in that worship. The former is divinely authorized by specific statement of inspired men; the latter is not once mentioned by them in the worship of a single church. Here again there is union on what is *in* the New Testament, but division over what is *outside*.

5. *The board of supervision and control in mission work.* Among all the controversies over the question of boards and societies in missionary work, no religious body ever objected to the board of bishops or overseers divinely provided for in each local church. But when the matter of supervision and control is transferred from this board appointed by God to a general board appointed by man, there is objection, controversy and division. Here again as long as God's people stay *in* the Bible

they are one; when they go *outside* they divide.

6. *Human interpretations of unfulfilled prophecies.* Aside from specific statement by inspired men as to what will be and when it will be, it is vain for even learned men to speculate on such things. In all such cases, the guesses of one are liable to clash with those of another, and nobody knows nor can know whether either one is right or not. God will fulfill his prophecy at the right time and in the right way without the speculations of men. In all such cases let the prophecy be faithfully taught precisely as God spoke it through his prophet, but leave its fulfillment and the manner thereof strictly to the Lord, and all will be well. No two believers in the Bible ever divide as long as they both teach exactly *what God says* on a prophecy, adding nothing to it and taking nothing from it; but the moment they teach their opinions or fanciful interpretations of it, strife, controversy and division begin. Here again there is union on what is *in* the Bible; division on what is *outside*. If those leading the little speculative movement which has ruthlessly divided the body of Christ and destroyed its peace and harmony in a few localities the past few years had possessed sufficient grace and reverence to respect this divine rule, their unholy work would not have been done, and "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" would have been preserved. As the matter stands, the divine rule has been violated, and a fearful sin lies at their door.

7. Finally, denominational federation is not the union taught in the New Testament. There is no divine authority for the perpetuation of denominations with their conflicting tenets and practices in any form whatever, whether separately or in a great confederation. All that each of them is teaching and practicing that is *in* the Bible should be retained; all that each of them is

teaching and practicing that is *not* in the Bible should be laid aside; and all that is in the Bible that they are *not* teaching and practicing should be promptly adopted; and this process faithfully followed out would soon put an end to all denominations and to all divisions with nothing left but the one church of the New Testament so united in faith and practice that its members everywhere and under all circumstances would "all speak the same thing" with "no divisions among" them, and all would "be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Whether such a "consummation devoutly to be wished" is ever realized or not, certain it is that this is the basis of union that is taught in the New Testament.



## THE NEW TESTAMENT LAW OF WORSHIP.

BY M. C. KURFEES.

"We walk by faith, not by sight" (II Cor. 5:7).  
"Not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day dawning nigh" (Heb. 10:25). "Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing to God" (Heb. 11:6).

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According to these passages, the children of God are not only to assemble themselves together at stated times for divine worship, but whatever they do as worship to God must be done by faith. Probably no other fact is more clearly set forth in the word of God. In all such matters, not only are God's children to "walk by faith," but "without faith it is impossible to please God."

Hence, it must follow that, unless there is some rule by which to determine when we are and when we are not worshiping by faith, it is utterly impossible to tell when we are and when we are not pleasing God. All that is necessary to make this plain is simply to note the facts. If, as the inspired apostle declares they do, Christians must walk by faith; and if, as he also declares, without faith it is impossible to please God, then such a rule becomes an indispensable necessity, if we would worship so as to be well-pleasing to God.

The purpose of this lecture, therefore, is to set forth the Biblical facts and principles which constitute the New Testament law of worship; and these I shall now endeavor to present under three divine rules for the government and regulation of God's children in their worship under Christ.

### I. THE DIVINE RULE BY WHICH TO DETERMINE WHEN OUR WORSHIP IS BY FAITH.

This rule is clearly deducible from a single New Testament passage. We are distinctly told by Inspiration how Gospel faith is produced in the human heart. In terms that are clear and unequivocal the apostle declares: "So belief or faith cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). According to this declaration, faith may be exactly coextensive with the word of God, or, to express the same thought differently, the word of God is the exact measure and limit of faith. Wherever the word of God speaks, there may be faith; beyond that, no faith at all. As far as the word of God speaks, men can have faith; beyond that, all is mere human opinion or speculation. That is to say, the word of God produces faith. Hence, no word of God, no faith; no faith, no walking by faith; no walking by faith, no pleasing God. For example, the word of God says Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea (Matt. 2:1), but it does not say what day of the month nor what hour of the day He was born. The former we may accept as a matter of faith because the word of God distinctly declares it; the latter is not revealed, and hence, to settle on some specific day of the month or some specific hour of the day, would be a mere matter of human opinion or speculation, and not a matter of faith, which comes by hearing the word of God. We should believe and teach the former; the latter we should leave without any teaching just where God has left it.

### II. THE DIVINE RULE BY WHICH TO DETERMINE WHEN OUR WORSHIP IS VAIN.

Here again, the rule may be learned from a single New Testament passage. The Lord says: "In vain do thy worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts

of men" (Matt. 15:9). According to this plain and significant declaration, vain worship consists in doing the precepts or commandments of men. That is, it consists in doing things as worship to God which rest on nothing but the word of man. All worship to be acceptable to God must consist in doing what God himself has appointed for that purpose. This conclusion follows inevitably from the Lord's words in the passage under review; for, if "teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men" is vain worship—and this is exactly what the Lord says—then any act taught and rendered as worship to God, which God himself has not appointed, but which rests simply on man's word, is vain worship. This is why it is improper to burn incense in Christian worship or to have instrumental music in that worship. They are not there by the appointment of God, but rest merely on the word of man. Neither piety nor sincerity in rendering them can make either of them acceptable worship in the absence of divine appointment. Hence, while they are indeed worship, and sometimes beautiful and attractive worship, they are, nevertheless, vain worship. We are now prepared to consider:

### III. THE DIVINE RULE WHICH ENJOINS THE TRUE, AND FORBIDS THE VAIN, WORSHIP.

A great principle for the government of God's people and running through all dispensations is laid down in Deut. 29:29. "Secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever." The same principle is substantially repeated and enjoined in the New Testament in the following passage: "I charge thee in the sight of God and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word" (II Tim. 4:1, 2). "I testify unto every man

that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18, 19).

Now, in accordance with this principle, it has been required in all ages that when God commands a specific thing to be done, that thing itself must be done and not something else. For example, when God commanded Noah: "Make thee an ark of gopher wood" (Gen. 6:14), that settled the question as to the kind of wood that must go into the construction of the ark. Hence, he could not use ash, cedar, hickory, oak or pine. It must be gopher and not something else. The fact that God did not tell him *not* to use any other timber did not give him license to use any other. He must use the kind which God specified and not some other kind.

The same principle is illustrated in God's command to offer a sheep or a bullock in sacrifice. The sheep or the bullock, whichever might be commanded, must be offered, and not some other kind of an animal. The command to offer a sheep would not be obeyed if one should offer a bullock, a horse, a deer or a hog. If God should merely command that an animal be offered in sacrifice without specifying the kind, then any kind of an animal would do; but when he specifies the kind, the kind becomes a part of the command, and it must be observed, else the command is not obeyed.

Now, on precisely the same principle, Christians are restricted in what they do in the worship of God. They are not to do in that worship anything and everything that may suit their taste. The worship of God is not a



matter of taste, nor is it to be regulated according to man's wishes or inclinations at all. It is a matter of doing the will of God. That will, as expressed in the New Testament, is what I mean by the New Testament law of worship, and his law must be respected in the same way in which Gods people in all ages have been required to respect His law. Just as the Jew, when commanded to offer a sheep in sacrifice, must not offer a bullock or any other kind of an animal except a sheep, so when God tells Christians what to do in His worship, they must do that, and not something else. Following this principle with the New Testament open before us, we read of six things which, under the leadership of inspired men, the churches of the New Testament times did in the worship of God. They are as follows:

1. *Reading the word of God.* "And when this epistle hath been read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea" (Col. 4:16). "I adjure you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the brethren" (I Thess. 5:27). "Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching" (I Tim. 4:13). We may profitably compare these passages with Acts 13:14, 15, which says: "But they passing through from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the sabbath day and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."

2. *Prayer.* "Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour" (Acts 3:1). "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17). "In nothing be anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your re-

quests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6).

3. *Exhortation*. "Give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching" (I Tim. 4:13). "But exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called today" (Heb. 3:13). "He exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23).

4. *The Lord's Supper*. "And upon the first day of the week when we were gathered together to break bread," etc. (Acts 20:7). In I Cor. 11:17-34 Paul gives a full account of this item of the worship in his instructions to the Corinthian church for its observance.

5. *Singing*. "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives" (Matt. 26:30). "Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19). "In all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God" (Col. 3:16).

6. *The Contribution*. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). "Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper" (I Cor. 16:1, 2).

Now, all of these acts are distinctly specified in the New Testament. It is a matter of specific record that, under the guidance of inspired men, Christians did them in the worship of God in ancient times; and hence they should do them in the worship today, and not something else. Some of these acts were not confined to the worship on the first day of the week, but might be done at other times as well. For example, exhortation, prayer and

singing; but this in no wise interfères with the fact that they all have also a proper place in the worship on that day. Nothing can militate against the fact that, when we do these things in the worship on the Lord's day we are doing what has been divinely appointed, and not something which rests on the authority of man. Hence, all these acts can be done by faith and are, therefore, pleasing to God.

But the simple and unpretentious character of this order of worship does not ordinarily appeal to the ambition and tastes of men. On the contrary, it is often in open conflict with such ambition and tastes, and hence the temptation arises to modify it and to make it more attractive by making it more in harmony with the desires and tastes of men. Thus the way is opened for the introduction of such innovations as may at any time be called for by the will of man for any reason whatsoever.

But just here Christians, if they would pursue a course well pleasing to God, must act with wise discrimination. We have seen, from the rule laid down by Jesus himself, that any act of worship which rests on the mere will of man is vain worship. Hence, no matter what may suggest itself as proper in the worship of God, we must, first of all, settle the question whether it be something which God himself has appointed. If it is not, that fact alone should at once place it under the ban and forever bar it from our worship. The act itself might be perfectly sinless and harmless, yet it can not be lawfully done as worship to God if He himself did not appoint it. There is nothing wrong in the mere act of baptizing an infant. From the physiological and hygienic point of view, it is sometimes wholesome and necessary to plunge a child into the water; but no matter how wholesome it may be, it can not be acceptably done *as an act of service*



to God for the simple reason that He has not commanded it. The mere act of washing the hands is not only sinless and entirely proper, but sometimes necessary, yet it was sinful when the Jews did it as service to God in the absence of any command of God to thus do it, and Jesus solemnly condemned the act when done in this way. See Mark 7:1-7.

Eating meat is not only harmless, but sometimes necessary when eaten outside of the worship of God, but were it placed on the Lord's table along with the viands which the Lord himself appointed, namely, the loaf and the fruit of the vine, it would be sinful to partake of it. The same is true of instrumental music. It is sinless and harmless outside of the worship of God, but when done in that worship it is wrong, not because the act is wrong in itself, for it is not; but because nothing must be done in that worship except what God himself has appointed. The Roman Catholics and some others burn incense in the worship of God, and the mere act of burning incense, when done outside of the worship, is entirely sinless and harmless; but it is wrong in the worship for no other reason than that God has not placed it there. He did authorize it in the worship under the Old Testament, and it was therefore right to do it then; but He did not authorize it in the worship under Christ. It is there in modern times precisely as instrumental music is there, namely, by the word of man; and this, according to the rule laid down by Jesus himself, makes it vain worship.

Finally, those who would worship God with true and acceptable worship must worship, as good King Hezekiah acted in observing the passover, namely, they must worship "as it is written" (II Chron. 30:5). This safe conclusion is distinctly confirmed in the New Testament when the inspired apostle says: "These things, brethren,



I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written" (I Cor. 4:6).

MISSIONARY WORK IN NEW TESTAMENT  
CHURCHES.

M. C. KURFEES.

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations" (Matt. 28:19).

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Just before the Son of God ascended to heaven, He commanded His chosen apostles as expressed by Matthew to "make disciples of all the nations," or, as expressed by Mark, to "preach the gospel to the whole creation," and gave them the order in which they were to proceed. As reported by Luke, the author of Acts of Apostles, He said: "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Thus, the commission to preach the glad tidings to the lost of earth is world-wide in its embrace. It extends to our next-door neighbor, to our city, our county, our state, our nation, the islands of the sea—the whole world.

Now, it will not only show us how to do the work, but will help us to feel the weight of our own responsibility in the matter by taking a view of how the New Testament churches worked. In fact, it is impossible for truly thoughtful and serious persons to properly study these inspired examples of mission work and not feel their own responsibility in bearing the light of the Gospel to those who sit in the region and shadow of death. Moreover, as just intimated, it is equally impossible to properly study these examples without seeing how the work was done under the leadership of inspired men; and hence, how it should be done today. In this review of the New Testament missionary situation we shall discover that, while

the specific method of operation is not given in the New Testament, yet the one unvarying organization in direct control of the work was the local church through its divinely appointed board of overseers and managers.

Hence, the purpose of this address is to examine the New Testament record and see how New Testament churches conducted missionary work or the work of evangelizing the world. We shall see that, in the execution of their divine commission, the matter of supervision, management and control was in the local churches, where God himself placed it, and was never transferred to a general board. The authority divinely invested in the local church was everywhere strictly respected, which effectually blocked the war against the entanglements which have always marked the history of general ecclesiastical organizations in religion. We can see an exemplification of the work in the apostolic age by noting a series of facts.

I. THE JERUSALEM CHURCH, AS SUCH, SENT  
BARNABAS AS A MISSIONARY AND DEFINED  
THE TERRITORY OF HIS LABORS.

Referring to the action of the Jerusalem church when it learned that a door for the gospel had been opened in the city of Antioch in Syria, the historian says: "And the report concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem; and they sent forth Barnabas as far as Antioch; who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord; for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and much people was added unto the Lord" (Acts 11:22-24). Let it be carefully noted here that "the church," as such, is declared to have acted in the matter of sending Barnabas to an inviting

missionary field of which it had heard. This example alone is sufficient to show the churches anywhere, and at all times, how to act. When they learn of an open door for the gospel, the way is here made plain for the same action on their part. Let them "send" a Barnabas to enter the open door and preach the gospel that "much people" may again be "added unto the Lord."

II. UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE ANTIOCH CHURCH,  
BOTH PAUL AND BARNABAS WERE SENT AS  
MISSIONARIES AT THE SAME TIME.

"Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers, Barnabas and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts 13:1-3). The history of this tour is one of the most interesting parts of the book of Acts. It covered Seleucia, the towns of Salamis and Paphos in Cyprus, Perga in Pamphylia, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe and Attalia, from which point they returned to Antioch in Syria, the church that had sent them forth. The exact time is not given, but the tour embraced a number of years and resulted in turning great numbers of people to the Lord and the establishment of many churches. Why may not churches do the same way today? It is perfectly clear from the record that the church was the recognized authority and directing power in the transaction; and hence on the return of Paul and Barnabas to the church that had sent them forth, they made a report of their work to the church. The incident is recorded in the following lan-



guage: "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and that he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts 14:27).

Two other equally important missionary tours of Paul are recorded in the book of Acts in which many other places were visited, including the districts of Phrygia and Galatia, and the cities of Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Beroea, Athens and Corinth. It is a noteworthy fact that, as they established new churches, the latter at once were seized with the missionary spirit, entered the work and proceeded to the establishment of other churches. Hence:

### III. THE PHILIPPIAN CHURCH, AS SUCH, SUSTAINED PAUL AS A MISSIONARY IN THESSALONICA.

We learn this from his own testimony: "And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my need" (Phil. 4:15, 16). This authorizes any other church to do the same thing, and this is exactly what all the churches ought to do. These examples of mission work by individual churches should encourage the hundreds and thousands of churches in modern times to do the same work.

### IV. THE THESSALONIAN CHURCH, AS SUCH, SENT THE GOSPEL TO OTHER PARTS OF MACEDONIA, TO ACHAIA, AND TO THE REGION AROUND.

Writing subsequently his first epistle to the Thessalonian church, Paul himself testifies: "For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth; so that we need not to speak

anything" (I Thess. 1:8). Thus it is clearly revealed in the New Testament that churches of Christ, as such, conducted missionary work without any general ecclesiastical organization with its central board of control, and hence it is God's order that from every church "the word of the Lord" shall be "sounded forth." Unquestionably this is missionary work as it was conducted in the days of the apostles and the primitive churches.

In this connection there is a significant fact which I would have every student of the New Testament to carefully note. I refer to what might properly be termed a missionary chain of self-multiplying institutions called churches, each link in the chain creating one or more other links, and thus lengthening the chain indefinitely. For example, the Jerusalem church, through missionary Barnabas, as we have seen, established and confirmed the church in Antioch in Syria; the church in Antioch, in turn, through the labors of Paul and Barnabas and their companions, established, among others, the Philippian church; the Philippian church, in turn, through Paul and his companions, established the Thessalonian church; and the Thessalonian church "sounded forth the word of the Lord" to other parts of Macedonia, to Achaia, and to the regions around. Hence, with this principle of operation, the churches are continually multiplying themselves; and, should the work be thus faithfully continued, the chain of missionary churches would by and by belt the globe.

V. IN THESE EXAMPLES IT IS DISTINCTLY AND  
NECESSARILY IMPLIED THAT TWO OR MORE  
CHURCHES, IF NEED BE, MAY  
CO-OPERATE IN THE WORK.

Paul's testimony on this point is clear and explicit:  
"And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the

beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving and receiving but ye only." This clearly implies that, while the Philippian church, as a matter of fact, was the "only" church that contributed to sustain Paul in Thessalonica, yet other churches *could* properly have done so if they had so desired. This was an implied rebuke to non-contributing churches which could have contributed, though he distinctly informed them that he said this "not that" he sought "for the gift, but" because he sought "for the fruit that" might "increase to" their "account." Hence, the fact that one church is contributing to sustain a missionary is no reason why another church or other churches may not do so if one is too poor financially to sustain the work; and in such a case, each church maintains its own independence and sends directly to the support of the missionary in the field. Churches may communicate with other churches by means of "messengers," and thus make an arrangement at any time for two of them, or for any number that may be necessary, to thus co-operate in sustaining a missionary. Giving some account of missionary operations, Paul said to the Corinthian church: "Whether any inquire about Titus, he is my partner and my fellow worker to you-ward; or our brethren, they are the messengers of the churches, they are the glory of Christ" (II Cor. 8:23). Where one church can sustain a missionary, let it do so, of course; if two are needed, let them co-operate and do the work. Whatever number may be necessary may properly do so, and in such procedure there would be no interference with the independence of any local church.

Finally, we are now prepared to appreciate the crowning item in this apostolic missionary program;

VI. THESE INSPIRED EXAMPLES SHOW THAT REPORTS  
OF MISSIONARY WORK WERE MADE DIRECTLY  
TO THE CHURCH.

At the end of that memorable missionary tour, in which Paul and Barnabas, having been sent to the foreign field by the Antioch church in Syria, met with such signal success in establishing churches in many parts of the Roman Empire, we have this statement about the report made to the church by the returning missionaries: "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and that he had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles" (Acts 14:27). After their long absence and the splendid record of work they had left behind them in the mission field, we can but be deeply impressed with what must have been the mutual joy and happiness that would be experienced by the Antioch church and its returning missionaries as the latter recounted to them the thrilling record of their fiery and trying persecutions, their heroic sacrifices, their multifarious and arduous efforts, and the glorious success which crowned their labors. But the same work in the same way, both by single churches and by groups of churches, can be done today. Unquestionably it is God's way and should be upheld and magnified among His people until the Gospel message is heard in all the world. Hence, under the divine commission with its world-embracing command, let preachers and churches everywhere be imbued with the spirit of Bishop Heber's great hymn;

From Greenland's icy mountains,  
From India's coral strand;  
Where Afric's sunny fountains  
Roll down their golden sand;



From many an ancient river,  
From many a palmy plain,  
They call us to deliver  
Their land from error's chain.

Shall we, whose souls are lighted  
By wisdom from on high—  
Shall we, to man benighted,  
The lamp of life deny?  
Salvation! O salvation!  
The joyful sound proclaim,  
Till earth's remotest nation  
Has learned Messiah's name.

MUTUAL EDIFICATION IN THE CHURCH OF  
CHRIST.

BY W. G. MALCOMSON.

## TO THOSE WHO FOLLOW.

An old man, going a lone highway,  
Came at the evening, cold and gray  
To a chasm vast and deep and wide.  
The old man crossed in the twilight dim—  
The sullen stream had no fear for him;  
But he paused when safe on the other side,  
And restored a bridge to span the tide.

"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim near,  
"You are wasting your strength with working here;  
Your journey will end with the ending day.  
You never again will pass this way;  
You've crossed the chasm deep and wide;  
Why build you this bridge at evening tide?"

The traveler lifted his gray old head,  
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,  
There followeth after me today,  
A youth whose feet must pass this way.  
This chasm that has been as naught to me  
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be;  
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;  
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!"

—*Selected.*

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Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, writing to the saints at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus—referring to the distribution of various supernatural gifts for the

instruction, guidance and development of the church of Christ, which is his body, says, Eph. 4:11-16: (11) "And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (12) for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: (13) till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: (14) that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; (15) but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ: (16) from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in, due measure of each several part: maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love."

The foregoing verses (Eph. 4:11-16) are freely rendered by the scholarly commentator Macknight as follows: (11) "And he appointed some, indeed, apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some pastors, and teachers, and bestowed on them the supernatural gifts of inspiration, prophecy, miracles, languages; and on some the power of communicating these gifts to others: (12) to enable them to fit the saints, even the believing Jews and Gentiles, for the ordinary work of the ministry, in order to the building of the body of Christ, which is the church, by converting unbelievers in every age.

(13) These supernaturally endowed teachers are to continue in the church until, being fully instructed by their discourses and writings, we all, who compose the

church, come through one faith and knowledge of the Son of God to perfect manhood as a church, even to the measure of the stature which when full grown it ought to have; so that the church, thus instructed and enlarged, is able to direct and defend itself, without supernatural aids.

(14) So that having recourse at all time to their writings, we may no longer be children, who, having no sure guide, are tossed like a ship by waves, and whirled about with every wind of doctrine by the cunning arts of false teachers, and by craftiness formed into a subtle scheme of deceit: (15) but that, as faithful ministers, teaching the truth of the Gospel from love to our people, we may make all the members of the body increase in him who is the head, or chief teacher and director, even Christ. (16) By whom the whole body of his disciples being aptly joined together into one harmonious church, and firmly knit, through the exercise of the gifts proper to each individual he maketh his body to grow, in proportion to the inward operation, of each particular part, so as to build himself, by the love his members have for each other leading them to exercise their gifts for the good of the whole."

It seems clearly evident that the supernatural endowments were to be limited to a time described as "till we (the members of the body) all attain unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

In other words, the apostle having represented the church as Christ's body, in a state of childhood (as it were), being few in number and incomplete in knowledge, he now informs these Ephesian brethren that the supernaturally endowed individuals were to continue in



the church, till it became so enlarged and so well instructed that it would be able to sustain itself without such supernatural aid. Such advanced state of the church the apostle refers to as that of a "full-grown man," to which state when the church shall arrive the supernatural gifts of the Spirit are to be discontinued, as being no longer necessary.

That the church of Jesus Christ was to be sustained and perpetuated through the co-operative efforts of the individual members of the body is clearly indicated by plain apostolic directions. Paul writes the brethren at Rome (Rom. 14:19): "So then let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another." And in writing to Timothy, who had been left at Ephesus for the specific purpose of guiding the church, Paul says (II Tim. 2:2): "And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

These instructions are in accord with those given by the Apostle Peter in his letter (I Pet. 4:10): "According as each hath received a gift ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

That the mutual exercise of the various qualifications of respective members were designed to be manifested not only in life's common activities, but that they were to be individually manifested in the public worship, for the edifying or building up of the church, seems also clearly evident.

I Cor. 11:18: "For first of all, when you come together *in the church*." I Cor. 11:22: "What have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the *church of God*?" I Cor. 11:33: "Wherefore, my breth-

ren, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another." I Cor. 14:19: "Howbeit, *in the church* I had rather speak five words with my understanding that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue."

While we may readily understand that, though there might be many occasions where members of the body, either few or many in number, would meet together incidentally or by arrangement, yet we may also understand that there were certain stated occasions when the church, as so designated, came together for the purpose of divinely directed worship.

Some of the ideal activities of worship in the church of Jesus Christ are portrayed in Acts 2:42: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."

In the absence of the direct personal teaching by the apostles there became available to the church, as time passed on, the various letters written by these inspired instructors for use in building up the church.

So Paul, in an epistle to his faithful brethren at Colosse, directed that they procure and read a letter sent by him to the church at Laodicea, and that the Laodicean church have read to it his epistle, sent primarily to the Colossians (Col. 4:16). And writing to the church of the Thessalonians, he says: "I adjure you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the brethren" (I Thess. 5:27). Also, "So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours" (II Thess. 2:15).

As we today, after a lapse of many centuries, are enabled to read portions of this same apostle's teaching, we can not but note how, with a solicitude similar to that shown by the Lord Jesus, in imparting to His disciples

His kindly instructions and exhortations before leaving them, Paul, up to the very eve of his own departure, continued to indite words of timely instruction, kindly rebuke, helpful exhortation, and wise guidance, for individual Christian conduct, and specific injunctions as to various named items to be observed in the public assembly, in order to the much-desired building up of the body of Christ, which is the church.

In this connection we refer to the words of Paul written to his brethren at Rome (Rom. 12:4-8). (4) "For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office. (5) Commenting on verse 5, Macknight says: "The meaning of the figure is that Christians depend on one another for their mutual edification and comfort, as the members of the human body depend on one another for nourishment and assistance." "So we who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another, (6) and having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; (7) or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry or he that teacheth to his teaching, (8) or he that exhorteth to his exhorting." Further, to the same brethren Paul writes (Rom. 15:14): "And I, myself, also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves, are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another." In Eph. 5:19, "Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord."

Paul enjoins the Thessalonian church (I Thess. 5:11): "Wherefore exhort one another and build each other up even as also ye do." In Heb. 10:24, 25 we read: "And let us consider one another to provoke unto



love and good works; (25) not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more; as ye see the day drawing nigh." Paul, writing to Timothy, directs him as follows: "Till I come give attention to reading, to exhortation, to teaching" (I Tim. 4:13). Commentators, without dissent, note this passage as referring to public worship. (See Macknight, and Conybeare and Howson.)

It is such co-operative efforts of the various members *in the church* as directed by the apostles which "maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16).

Scripture and secular history agree that the primitive disciples assembled statedly on the Lord's day "to break bread." The many quotations already submitted make plain to us that they were also enjoined to *mutually* attend to teaching, exhortation, the fellowship, to prayers, and the singing of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Further, that they were commended by the apostle for proper observance (Rom. 16:14): "And I, myself, also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another." And, as in the Corinthian epistle, that they were reprov'd, cautioned and exhorted, when their practice was out of accord with the Divine Will. I Cor. 11:22: "What have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God and put them to shame that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you? In this I praise you not." Also Heb. 5:12: "For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God."



A practical, intimate and illuminating reference to the history and conduct of one congregation in apostolic times is given to us in the epistle of Paul to the church at Corinth. That this church did not lack in apostolic guidance as to details of worship is shown by Paul's words to them as follows: "For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church" (I Cor. 4:17).

In regard to important incidents connected with this particular church and its strength, weakness and characteristics, the celebrated authors Conybeare and Howson in their well-known work, "The Life and Epistles of Paul," express themselves as follows:

"We are introduced as it were behind the scenes of the apostolic church, and its minutest features are revealed to us under the light of daily life. We see the picture of a Christian congregation as it met for worship in some upper chamber, such as the house of Aquilla or Gaius could furnish. We see the administration of the holy communion terminating "the feast of love," etc.

"But while we rejoice that so many of the details of the deepest historical interest have been preserved to us by this epistle, let us not forget to thank God who so inspired His apostle that in answer to questions of transitory interest he has laid down principles of eternal obligation."

It is universally agreed that beginning at least with the 20th verse of the 11th chapter of I Corinthians, the apostle distinctly refers to the conduct of the brethren in the public assembly on the first day of the week, and gives specific instructions in regard to observing the Lord's Supper, promising also to give the matter further

and personal attention, upon the occasion of his next visit (see verse 24). "And the rest will I set in order whensoever I come."

In the 12th chapter, still referring to the church, the apostle recognizes a condition of things which existed in the apostolic times, namely, the endowment of many of the members with various supernatural gifts, which were manifested in the public assembly.

It seems remarkable to us, in these days, when we think of the extent and variety of the gifts which were exercised by the different members of this church at Corinth.

Some were given the word of wisdom, some the word of knowledge, some a miraculous faith, some the ability to heal diseases, some the ability to work spiritual gifts and miraculous powers in others, some the gift of foretelling future events, some the faculty of speaking in various foreign languages, others were given the faculty of interpreting what was spoken, in order to the edification and exhortation and comfort of the church. Some were also gifted to pray, and others to sing.

It is more strange to us, however, to learn that there was a measure of dissension among even those spiritually endowed men, some who possessed what they considered inferior gifts envying others whose gifts seemed superior, and those who possessed gifts admitting of great personal display behaving with pride and even insolence towards others not so highly endowed.

In addition to the disorder in connection with the observance of the Lord's Supper, which was rebuked by the apostle, we are shown that great disorder also existed in the public exercise of the spiritual gifts. Some men were so proud of the gift of speaking in foreign languages that they vied with one another in oratorical

demonstrations, and, as several would insist on speaking at the same time, the result was frequent confusion, to the sacrifice of edification, and especially so in cases where no interpretation of the speaking was given.

In order to correct this deplorable condition, the apostle, in the 12th chapter, informs his Corinthian brethren that all these diversities of gifts proceeded from one Spirit, and that in the exercise of their various ministrations they were serving one Lord. That these wonderful gifts, with such apparent difference of importance, were intended to operate in harmony with each other, just as different parts or members of the human body co-operate to the proper development and exercise of its functions as a body, he refers to the foot, the hand, the ear, the eye, implying their mutual relation each to the other, and their associated relation to the body as a whole.

Then, applying this beautiful allegory to the church, the apostle tells these Corinthians that, in their collective capacity, they are the body of Christ, and each of them a particular member of that body, and he teaches the responsibility which each member should bear toward every other member in affording mutual assistance in the development one of another, also in a mutual manifestation of care and sympathy, and mutual participation of suffering, even, if necessary—and that all the members, though many, should have a common interest in the one body, of which each forms a vital part.

The apostle demonstrates the unwisdom and wrongfulness of any member or class of members exercising their God-given ability in such a way as to exalt themselves and their specific endowment to the extent that the operations of their less-gifted brethren are completely obscured, resulting in a practical assumption of the functions of the entire body. In this connection he inquires,

"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?" (v. 17). "If they were all one member, where were the body?" (v. 19).

The ability to speak in foreign languages was especially misused, and the selfish exercise of this God-given ability, together with other features of the public meeting condemned by the apostle, resulted in a method or a "way," if you please, of conducting the services which lacked not only the proper spirit, but prevented the mutual edification of the body.

So the apostle, by no means condemning the great gifts, because of their unrighteous abuse, says in effect to his brethren at Corinth: It is well for you to desire these spiritual gifts, but inasmuch as your present way of publicly exercising them is not conducive to the results which God designs for the upbuilding of the body of Christ, I will now show you a better, a more excellent "way" of manifestation.

It is Emerson who says, "Do not argue, illustrate." The value of such method of imparting instruction was well understood by the Apostle Paul.

As a teacher of a kindergarten class, after describing the general features of a class performance, steps out into the room, and, taking the place of a pupil, would say, "Now I show you," just so does the apostle to the church at Corinth, in the 31st verse of this 12th chapter, "But desire earnestly the greater gifts, and still a more excellent way show I unto you." Then, placing himself in imagination, among them as a fellow member, before imparting to them the specific instruction promised, like a wise teacher, he impresses upon them the absolute necessity not only of possessing, but also of mutually exercising, the eternal principle of "*Love*," without which, no matter how striking might be their wonderful



spiritual demonstrations, or exhibitions of religious fervor, either in or out of the public assembly, the result would prove absolutely profitless. (Chap. 13, vs. 1-3.) In verses 4-7 he personifies this indispensable acquirement, and portrays its unique characteristics. In the 8th to the 12th verses he announces that the time was coming when the public exercises of these marvelous, miraculous endowments in which the men of Corinth were glorifying themselves, would all be done away with, while, as he states in the 13th verse, the vital and eternal principle of "love" shall ever remain the gracious heritage of the faithful members of the body of Christ.

Assuming that love is indispensable, the apostle begins chapter 14 by exhorting his brethren to make "love" the object of their constant pursuit, but spiritual gifts the object of their earnest wish. And of the possible gifts, instead of those which made for personal display, he asks them to desire the gift of "Prophecy" (v. 1).

Webster defines the word prophecy as used here, "To give instruction in religious matters, to interpret or explain scripture, or religious subjects; to preach; to exhort; to expound." This meaning is made more evident in verse 3, "But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation and consolation." (See also v. 24.)

As a physical instructor in recommending exercises to qualify his pupils for the ordinary occupations of life, would say: "Run, jump, wrestle, spar, swim, etc., but rather walk," just so does this master instructor in spiritual things exhort his brethren, while desiring the extraordinary spiritual endowments, to prefer, rather, the more practical and ordinary gift of prophecy (v. 1), giving his reason therefor in verses 2, 3, 4.

The learned Macknight, in commenting on verse 3, chapter 14, says: "When the apostles, who were endowed with the *word of wisdom*, and the superior prophets, who were endowed with the *word of knowledge*, prophesied, they did it by inspiration, called (v. 6) revelation and knowledge. But there were other kinds of inspiration called in the same verse *prophecy* and *doctrine*, which belonged to the inferior prophet. These were said to *prophecy* when by inspiration they uttered prayers and psalms in which the church joined them; or delivered a discourse relative to some point of doctrine or practice. All being done in a known language, the church was edified, exhorted, and comforted."

In verses 5 to 25 of this 14th chapter, the apostle shows that the chief end to be served in the mutual exercise of these gifts is the edification of the body; and in verses 26 to 33 he gives a brief illustration of "a more excellent way," as he had previously promised.

In the "more excellent way" as expounded in these few verses, the apostle portrays a picture of the brethren mutually exercising these gifts in the public assembly, but under the law of love; and where each member in turn, with thoughtful consideration of the rights and benefit of the others, either offers, or withholds, the manifestation of his gift of song, or teaching, or language, or revelation, or interpretation, in such a manner and with such spirit that instead of the ill effects of rivalry and confusion, which had developed from the misuse of these great gifts, the result would be the mutual edification or building up of the body of Christ, *which God intended*.

In concluding his specific teaching to this church at Corinth in regard to public worship, and as emphasizing the fact that the more excellent "way" did not imply any

changes in the revealed items of worship, or in the character of the spiritual endowments, but mainly referred to the considerate, loving and orderly exercise of these endowments, the apostle says in verses 39 and 40: "Wherefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy and forbid not to speak with tongues. But let all things be done decently and in order." Which means, according to Webster, "becomingly and by arrangement."

A definite conception of what constituted the various items of public worship as approved by the apostle's teaching seems to have been thoroughly apprehended by many intelligent and devoted students of God's word during the early part of the past century, when a sincere attempt was made to return to New Testament teaching and practice.

It is a significant fact that though many such efforts were made at different periods, by various unassociated individuals, yet, in the main, the general results arrived at were practically the same, and the order of the public assemblies, whether in different parts of our own country or across the sea, were markedly similar as to the character and items of mutual observance, all based upon the scriptural teaching.

The general conception of divine worship thus independently arrived at could not perhaps be more plainly portrayed than in a quotation from an article published by Alexander Campbell on page 658 of the *Christian Baptist*, sixth edition, 1843. It is as follows:

"It is not alleged by me that there are no divinely instituted acts of Christian worship nor ordinances in the Christian Church; nay, the contrary I have undeviatingly affirmed. These are a part, an essential part, of the Institution of Favor. It is not discretionary with disciples whether they shall or shall not enter the king-

dom without obtaining the remission of their sins by immersion; whether Christian societies shall regard the first day of the week to the Lord; whether they shall show forth the Lord's death at the Lord's table till he come to raise the dead; whether they shall continue in the fellowship for the saints and the Lord's poor; whether they shall sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; unite in social prayers, and in reading the sacred writings in their regular meetings. These are the traditions of the holy apostles who were commanded to teach the disciples to observe all things which the King in his own person had commanded them. But they are not in these observances bound by a prescribed form. There is no law, command, nor precept, prescribing the form of immersion, the place where, nor the manner in which the subject shall be disposed of in the act. There is no mode of observing the Lord's day—no law upon that subject. There is no prescription concerning the time of meeting in the congregation; whether they shall first do this, and then that; or whether they shall eat the Lord's Supper standing, sitting, kneeling, or reclining; whether prayer and singing shall always succeed or accompany each other; whether all shall pronounce the same words after the speaker, or only say 'Amen' after his thanksgivings. In brief, there are no distinctions of this sort in the Institution. With regard to moral injunctions the great principle called the golden rule is a fair sample. Exhortations and admonitions concerning morals, found in the Epistles, grew out of the occasion, or were suggested by the inadvertencies of the disciples. But had these Epistles never been written, or only a part of them, the Christian Institution would have been perfect and entire, wanting nothing. The gospel, yes, the gospel, the proclamation of God's philanthropy, as it was uttered by the apostles on Pente-



cost, or in any one of their converting discourses, would have been, and still is, alone sufficient to produce those principles in the heart which issue in all holiness and in all morality."

The consensus of secular historic testimony is to the effect that the public worship of the early church followed the practice implied by the apostle's teaching, as indicated in the many scriptural references already submitted. Historians so testifying are Mosheim, Gieseler, Rothe, Neander, Coleman, McCulloh, Beverley, Tyndall, Haweis, Kurtz, Pressense and practically all others of repute.

To the intelligent and sincere follower of Christ, the fact that the practice of mutual edification is ordained by God for the development and perpetuation of the church of Christ, is sufficient reason for a faithful endeavor to cultivate it; but it is a demonstrated fact that no church can remain truly strong where it is systematically neglected. We say "truly" strong because apparent strength is not always true strength.

At the time the noted Beecher was in the zenith of his renown, and a seat in his great church at Sunday service could be obtained only by ticket previously secured, a gentleman met one of his congregation and said to him, "What will you do when Beecher dies, and what will become of this great congregation?" The man hesitated a moment and replied: "The church is not Mr. Beecher's church, it is God's church and God will take care of it regardless of the personality of Mr. Beecher."

Some time after this Mr. Beecher died, and at immense expense one of the most able preachers in the world was brought over from London, England, to take his place. Inside of a year there was no longer any difficulty in procuring a seat in the building, and the services lost

the unique popularity which prevailed under the ministrations of the great Beecher.

Suppose we take a number of narrow strips of steel such as we frequently see used in the forming of elevator enclosures in store and office buildings and lay them on the floor about an inch apart; then on top of and at right angles to those we lay an equal number of the same kind of strips. On top and across the center of this double layer of steel strips we lay a bar of iron, which upon being strongly magnetized so affects the steel strips that when the bar is raised to an upright position they retain their relative places and present when upright and surrounded by a frame the appearance of a substantial lattice steel fabric. Remove the magnetized bar and the detached strips fall at once in disorder upon the floor. Now take the same strips, but intertwine them in lattice form, apply the magnetized bar, raise the fabric and stand it against the frame, as formerly; remove the bar and the lattice fabric still stands, because of the relationship through which each strip is contributing support to the others, and all are vital factors in the unity of the completed fabric.

The first arrangement of the strips is a picture of the church where the operation of practically all of its vital functions are dependent upon one man. The second illustrates the condition when mutual responsibility is assumed by the various members in accordance with the New Testament teaching.

Is it not a well-known fact that too many assumed mature congregations today are in the habit of practices suspending prescribed items of divine worship in the church, on occasions of the absence of the professional teacher?

And too often the teacher, when present, by his nat-

ural assumption and performance of the major activities of the service, keeps closed the doors of opportunity to the exhortation, praise or prayer of the less insistent members.

Who is prepared to assume responsibility for such conditions, which are too common, in the face of the plain scriptural teaching—as to mutual duty and obligation in the church worship?

Wilful departure from divine directions has always been followed by disastrous results—and some years ago Mr. Francis E. Clark, a devoted Congregational minister, noting the depressed condition which was obtaining in the Congregational Church under the usual routine ministrations of the one-man system, and desiring to produce more individual interest and diversified service, organized "The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor," which, with its vital feature of mutual co-operation, filled such a widely-felt want that it spread *all over the world*, a humanly-wise attempted substitute for the divine plan which had already been provided but had been lost sight of in the mists of denominational systems.

Dr. Clark, in an interview in the city of Detroit on January 7, 192, said: "The first society came about from the need of young people in my church for means through which they could take active part in church work, and I see in the growth recognition of its need." It is claimed that the society in 42 years has established 80,000 branches and has a present world membership of 4,000,000.

The divinely sanctioned practice of mutual edification in the Church of Christ not only exemplifies the principles of unity and co-operation, but also produces the valuable result of developing the younger members, to take the places of the older in the family of God, in

harmony with Paul's instructions to Timothy (II Tim. 1:2), "Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, he same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also."

In view of the consideration now before us, some one may ask, would it be feasible in these days to introduce the practice of mutual edification in the church, in conformity to apostolic precept?

Would it answer to have a typical church "come together" and arrange a proper program for mutually conducting the public worship, and by some acceptable method decide upon certain assumedly qualified brethren to co-operate in the services and read, pray, sing, exhort, teach, etc.

It may be granted, perhaps, that after reasonable preparation some such selected persons would be able to read the scriptures intelligibly, some to offer prayer, some to sing, others to speak words of exhortation or comfort, and others to impart some measure of instruction.

It is assumed, of course, in this connection, that the "breaking of bread" is already a stated observance in the worship. Some one might reasonably ask, "Would not such a procedure be true and acceptable worship according to apostolic teaching?"

In reply to this query, it might be conceded that, so far as common observation could determine, such worship would be acceptable, and yet it might be so lacking in certain essentials as to render it more mechanical than spiritual.

In other words, the literal outward conformity to a certain divinely directed system of worship would not of itself make such worship acceptable to God.



"God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit," as well as "in truth."

Under the Mosaic law the various ceremonial items of public service were repeatedly and emphatically described, so that the worship of Jehovah might be unmis-takenly performed; but under the Gospel, the more glorious ministration, the better, clearer, the more lucid and life-giving system; the whole matter of church gov-ernment, and public worship is portrayed in such general though plain teaching as to evidently preclude the inten-tion of a servile, uniform ritual of observance.

Well-minded persons may seriously differ as to the relative importance of the various prescribed items, and also as to the order of their observance in the true wor-ship, but to the sincere student of God's word there can be but one conclusion in regard to the spiritual attitude required on the part of the mutual participants, in order that the worship may possess the vital elements of spirit-uality and truth.

While, as such, the church is not divinely directed as to relative order of personal co-operation in the worship, yet, in the apostle's teaching, we meet with many definite inspired directions, enjoining spiritual principles of gen-eral Christian conduct, which, when manifested by the brethren, will result in true and acceptable worshipers and worship.

Among such divinely inspired injunctions to the brethren are the following:

"If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk" (Gal. 5:25).

"Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his

glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbor. For each man shall bear his own burden. But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him, that teacheth in all good things" (Gal. 6:2-6).

"And walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell" (Eph. 5:2).

"Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—to God, even the Father; subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ" (Eph. 5:19-21).

"The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder, and a witness of the suffering of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, be subject to the elder. Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another; for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (I Pet. 5:1-5).

"And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long suffering toward all. See that none render unto any one evil for evil; but always follow after that which is good, one toward another, and toward all" (I Thess. 5:14, 15).

"Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities

of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Rom. 15:1).

"Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other, if any man have a complaint against any; even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye; and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness, and let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God. And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:12-17).

"And I, myself, am also persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another" (Rom. 15:14).

"Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus; that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God" (Rom. 15:5-7).

If a typical congregation in our day were to earnestly appropriate the apostle's teaching, some of which has just been quoted; if the members of such congregation, in an attitude of loving service, produced by the Spirit of God through His word, were striving to exemplify in character and life the injunctions so plainly given, there need be no possible doubt that the worship rendered by them would be acceptable to God.

"For such doth the Father seek to be his worshipers"

(John 4:23).

Can it be true, then, that failure on the part of many congregations to devoutly exemplify the worship of the primitive church is because the members do not realize their personal obligation to the body of Christ?

That, through lack of spiritual life or apprehension on the part of the individual members, who might be useful in consecrated service, the church, as a body, is hindered in its spiritual upbuilding, is sadly true of many congregations. Thus crippled, the church fails to manifest the characteristics necessary to development. But who can estimate the possibilities of an awakened church co-operating in spiritual worship? A picture of such intelligent, devout service is portrayed by the apostle in one of his letters (Eph. 4:15-16): "But speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which *every joint supplieth*, according to the working in due measure of *each several part*, maketh increase of the body unto the *building up of itself* in love."

Brethren beloved, and fellow members of the body of Christ: in view of the sacrifice which has been made on our behalf, and the love which prompted it, should we not endeavor to render in the public worship such service as will be pleasing to our Lord, and will tend to the building up of his body which is the church?

Why not, then, resolve to offer, humbly but willingly, in God's service, such gifts and acquirements as may be acceptable to the church, and in harmony with the apostles teaching, whether of reading, song, prayer, exhortation, teaching, or other enjoined service, conducted in order and to edification? By such action the church will prosper in its mutual interest and co-operation and be



better qualified to further and sustain the spread of the Gospel.

With consecrated intelligence let us perform our duty personally, and as a congregation, spiritually and willingly, following the apostolic injunction, and "in truth," according to revealed directions. The result must be true success, for all further responsibility rests with the Lord God Almighty, and He never fails.

"Now unto him that is able to guard you from stumbling and to set you before the presence of his glory without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory,, majesty dominion and power, before all time, and now, and for evermore. Amen" (Jude 24).

It has been conceded by many that though the practice of mutual edification in the church is in harmony with the Divine Will, yet there are many specific difficulties in the way of such practice, under present-day conditions.

In response to such suggested position are we not safe in assuming that, if God intends that divine worship is to be perpetuated "in the church," in accord with certain vital principles, then it is safe to infer that such necessary principles are revealed in the scriptures?

"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (II Tim. 3: 16-17).

It is clearly revealed that all worship acceptable to the Lord must be performed in accordance with His expressed will.

"God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

The observance of the primitive worship in the "more

excellent way" implied that love be an acquirement of the mutual participants. "And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" (I Cor. 13:2).

Some of the attributes of such love are set forth in the apostle's teaching as follows: "Love suffereth long and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (I Cor. 13:4-7).

It would seem evident, then, that true and sincere exemplification of "love" on the part of the participators is absolutely essential to acceptable worship.

Thus it is clearly implied that those who aspire to co-operate in the prescribed worship are expected to possess, and becomingly portray, the characteristics of kindliness, forbearance and humility to such extent that self is subordinated in the sincere effort to please the Lord. These and other like characteristics are embodied in the prescribed vital principle of "love."

In the light of scripture teaching, may we not wisely proceed to consider some difficulties suggested by our friends, which seem to be in the way of the practice of "mutual edification" in the public worship of the congregation under present-day conditions?

I. "The scriptures adduced as supporting the mutual edification system are of an hortatory and not of an obligatory nature, while the scriptures demand obedience to the "Episcopoi," and therefore to whatever system consonant with the written records that they set up."

In response to the above it will be pertinent to inquire

to what extent are we to construe the following references as merely "hortatory"?

Jesus said, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). The apostle said, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1-3).

"Not forsaking our own assembling together as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another" (Heb. 10:25). "Teaching and admonishing one another" (Col. 3:16). "Wherefore exhort one another, and build each other up, even as also ye do" (I Thess. 5:11). "Seek that ye may abound unto the edifying of the church" (I Cor. 14:12). Jesus said, "He that heareth you (the apostles) heareth me; and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me" (Luke 10:16). "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, *and do not the things* which I say?" (Luke 6:46). "Whoso heareth and doeth is pronounced a wise man; whoso heareth and doeth not is pronounced a foolish man, whose work resulted in failure—not being in accord with the Divine Will" (Luke 6:49).

It has been plainly shown that the practice of mutual edification is enjoined in the "written record." Obedience to any other practice by whomsoever "set up" would be out of accord with the will of the Lord.

2. "Difficulty of inducing members to mutual participation in various prescribed items of public worship."

Such members should be reminded of their privileges, duties, opportunities and personal responsibilities (Rom. 12:4-8; 15:14; Eph. 5:19; I Thess. 5:11; Heb. 10:24, 25; I Tim. 4:13).

3. "Assumed inability of members in many instances to personally function in desired public activities."

They also should be led to realize their privileges and responsibilities as outlined under No. 2 and exhorted and assisted in every way to develop such qualities as should be manifested in the revealed worship. "Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves" (Rom. 15:1).

4. "Conditions where members may have the ability to publicly participate, but have poor judgment as to proper division of the available time. Cases also where some may be disposed to take part too frequently and at too great length."

The Apostle Paul enjoins that "all things be done decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:40). With the spirit of love and forbearance dominating, there should be no difficulty in observing a mutual deference such as was enjoined by Paul in the days of miraculous endowments, where it is taught that members were to publicly function, *in turn*, that they should defer one to another, and if necessary individually refrain from the public service even though prepared to speak (I Cor. 14:29-33).

5. "Conditions where members may be willing, but with limited education and experience. Zeal and proper spirit, but lacking cultivation and suitable development."

The more gifted and better informed members should co-operate in the instruction and development of their less advanced brethren (I Pet. 4:10), and all should apply themselves to advancement in divine knowledge and in the use of such talents as the Lord has given them for His service (II Tim. 2:15).

6. "The bad effects resulting from crude, unassimilated and ill-prepared efforts that would be possible when every Tom, Dick and Harry could hold forth."



With assumed proper appreciation of the importance, and the solemn responsibility of the personal service, a sincere desire to serve the Lord, and real discernment of the "Lord's body," is it likely there would be any crude, unassimilated and ill-prepared effort on the part of "Tom, Dick or Harry"? Would not rather the studied, deliberate, consecrated and prayerful preparation resulting from such appreciative spiritual condition be likely to bring forth measurably finished, reasonably assimilated and acceptable efforts on the part of *Thomas, Richard and Henry?*

7. "All spiritually-minded speakers would soon be crowded out by the forward and conceited ones."

Why should other than spiritually-minded persons aspire to the public service? Would such service assumedly rendered by persons who were disposed to crowd less insistent brethren out be true or acceptable worship? Is not the character of acceptable worshipers also outlined? Rom. 8:9: "But if any man hath not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Rom. 12:10: "In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another." Phil. 2:5: "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

Would not also a measure of forbearance on the part of the better qualified brethren toward others not so highly gifted be a reasonable manifestation of enjoined patience and continued kindness, though suffering long? "Love suffereth long, and is kind." See Phil. 2:3; I Cor. 14:26-33.

8. "The confusions caused by any divergence of views among strong-minded members."

9. "The door inconsiderately opened to wild, fanciful and unsound doctrinal teaching."

The elders of the church are responsible for judging

and ruling as to the character and extent of its ministers and public ministrations (Acts 20:28). Parents are expected to discriminate as to the character, quantity, quality and distribution of the food provided for their children. "Decently and in order," according to Webster, means "becomingly and by arrangement" (I Cor. 14:40). "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them; for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account" (Heb. 13:17). The overseers should guard the church against confusion, and wild and fanciful teaching.

10. "Inability of the average member of the average congregation to present the claims of the Gospel in any challenging way."

The inability of the average person to discourse satisfactorily on any topic in which he may not be heartily interested is no criterion by which to determine what would be the ability of the same person in regard to a subject in which both mind and heart were intensely involved. Does not practical experience confirm the fact that there is a logical relation between the real interest which persons possess in a subject or person and the disposition and ability of such persons to intelligibly discuss the same? By what system of logic may some persons be considered capable of acceptably expressing themselves regarding their respective interests and activities in earthly life and the same persons be deemed unable to properly discourse upon the more vital and intensely important issues pertaining to eternal life? If the proper spiritual interest be present, may we not expect its natural manifestations, as indicated by the following scripture?

"And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; or ministry, let

us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; or he that exhorteth to his exhorting; he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy with cheerfulness" (Rom. 12:6-9).

11. "The certainty that, since the majority of the church members will drain their thoughts dry of spiritual food in three or four discourses, the public instruction would soon become but wearisome repetitions, disheartening the speakers themselves and disgusting the sinners and younger element of the church."

Why should the wells of earnest human expression be drained dry when they may be continuously fed by the everlasting springs of the word of God? Is the plan of the Lord to be blamed because men may refuse to partake of the water of life, which God has so freely provided?

12. "The superlative character and supreme importance of the claims of the Gospel make it imperative that they be presented by trained and mature minds to the exclusion of the young and immature."

While this objection has no direct bearing upon the question of "mutual edification," yet it is pertinent to observe that the chief qualifications implied by scriptures which definitely refer to successful Gospel preachers, are a familiarity with the facts, and the willingness to persist in declaring them. When all the Jerusalem church "*except the apostles*" was scattered abroad (Acts 8:1), they "went about preaching the 'word'" (Acts 8:4). "And some of them traveled as far as Phoenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch. At Antioch they preached the 'Lord Jesus' and the hand of the Lord was with them and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord" (Acts 11:19-21).

13. "No fair-minded man can deny that many good things result from the pastoral system. Are these advantages to be lost?"

There need be no issue between the divinely-directed practice of mutual edification in the prescribed worship and the scriptural oversight of the church by its elders or pastors, whose duties and responsibilities are clearly and repeatedly delineated.

Reference to the scriptures enables us to make intelligent comparison between the New Testament and the present "pastoral systems" (so called).

Paul, speaking to the elders of the church at Ephesus, says (Acts 20:28): "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood."

We are informed that the word rendered "to feed" signifies "to exercise all a shepherd's care"; in other words, "to be pastors."

In this connection it is important to observe how studiously every approach to what may be styled the monarchical principle seems to be avoided in the revealed constitution of the church.

There is indeed one Lord and one Head who is invisible, but nothing like a visible head, or recognized leader.

We find no office which was designed to be occupied exclusively by a single person, and no position in which one man stands alone and pre-cinment among the brethren.

In the church at large we find not a solitary Pope, but twelve apostles. In a local church we find not "the pastor" but "pastors." So we read (Acts 14:23) of "elders in every church,"



Dr. Hackett, commenting on this verse, says: "The term is plural, because each church had its college of elders (see also Acts 20:17 and Titus 1:5), not because there was a church in each of these cities. The elders or presbyters, in the official sense of the term, were those appointed in the first churches to watch over their general welfare and discipline. With reference to that duty they were called also "episcopoi," that is, superintendents or bishops.

That the names were entirely synonymous appears from their interchange in such passages as Acts 20:17, 28 and Titus 1:3-9.

The presbyters or bishops were not, by virtue of their office, teachers or preachers, nor, on the other hand, were the two spheres of labor incompatible with each other. We see from I Tim. 5:17 that some of those who exercised the general oversight also preached the word. Compare also I Tim. 3:2.

The foregoing representations exhibit the view of Mosheim, Neander, Rothe and others who are eminent in such inquiries.

The vital question would seem to be, "What is the Lord's revealed system for perpetuating His church?" and not a question of comparison between it and any other suggested system or systems.

14. "The good things of the mutual edification system. Can they not be secured and enjoyed at other meetings of the church, thus withholding from demoralization the principal assembly of the congregation?"

The "good things," so called, of the system of mutual edification properly understood would seem to form a part of the prescribed services of the church when as the "body of Christ" is assembled for divine worship.

In referring to the miraculous endowments which

ushered in the more normal practice, the Apostle Paul speaks about edifying "the church" (I Cor. 14:4, 5). In verse 12 members are exhorted to seek to excel unto the edifying of "the church." In verse 19 the apostle states that "in the church" he would rather speak five words, etc. In the same connection he refers in verse 23 to the "whole church" being assembled. In verse 26 he portrays some of the items of worship desired in the church assembly, and in verse 39 he enjoins that the services be conducted "decently and in order," or becomingly and by arrangement.

Would it not thus seem that, while Christians are at liberty to arrange such incidental or regular gatherings as may be deemed wise, and to promote the education and spiritual growth of one another by every lawful procedure, yet under divine guidance provision has also been made for specific worship of the church on the first day of the week, embracing the Lord's Supper, and other related features which should have their place in every mature scriptural congregation, in order to its mutual edification or building up as a body.

By the neglect or disregard of these divine provisions may it not truly be said of present-day congregations as Paul said of some individuals in the church at Corinth (I Cor. 11:30), "For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep."

15. "Is not the scriptural practice of mutual edification substantially covered in congregations having a resident minister who regularly assumes the province of teaching and exhortation in the Lord's day worship, and where the conduct of the meetings generally, the presiding at the Lord's table, thanksgiving, prayers, etc., are taken care of by various qualified members?"

Careful consideration of the various scriptures set-

ting forth the worship of the church in apostolic times fails to disclose provision for any one person with or without title assuming the practice of doing all the formal teaching and exhorting in the principal assembly on the first day of the week.

Such practice is thus manifestly out of accord with divinely-revealed precedent.

As with all other efforts to substitute something for the plan of the Lord, the result is detrimental, as follows:

. It places the "resident minister" in the unscriptural position of appearing to distinguish himself from his brethren by gratuitously assuming a pre-eminence as a fixed personal factor in the meeting of the church every first day of the week.

b. Members are deprived of opportunity of personal co-operation in teaching and exhortation, for which any verbal service by another is no scriptural substitute.

c. Members are unlawfully deprived of opportunity for the development which grows, not only through studious, prayerful preparation, but also by the experiences of practical effort.

d. The practice is hurtful to the uninformed visitor, and also to the partially-instructed believer, both of whom, by failing to have presented to them a church worshipping according to the divine model, are naturally unable to discriminate between the divinely-directed order and the humanly-devised services mistakenly adopted from the common practice of the various sects.

e. It promotes a wrong conception of the divine character of the prescribed worship which was intended to be perpetual and universally adaptable, during the Christian dispensation, by intruding into it an uncertain personal element, the incidental absence of which leaves a void in the required order of activities.

In the prescribed ritual of worship under the Jewish dispensation the incidental or accidental absence of any *one* common priest could not disarrange the order or progress of the worship, but in this humanly-arranged feature of the church services today, while the High Priest, Jesus, is always present (though invisible), yet the absence, for any reason, of one certain common priest may prevent a complete functioning of the church worship.

Does not such possibility of uncertainty show lack of accord with the always unailing divine provisions for the possible certain performance of all worship required by the Lord?

It should be here stated, however, in all fairness, that the resident minister (so called) should not always be too strongly condemned for what might appear to be unwarranted assumption of the privileges and duties of the brethren generally, for in too many instances, by reason of thoughtlessness, preoccupied or slothful overseers, and perhaps an uninstructed or unawakened membership, no provision is systematically made for carrying on the prescribed worship "becomingly and by arrangement" as the scripture demands (1 Cor. 14:40). The responsibility thus unjustly and unwisely thrust upon him is often uncomplainingly assumed by the "resident minister" of the church.

Such "overseers"—so miscalled—should, without delay, resign from all pretense of service, or, in thoughtful activity, devoutly assume the duties and responsibilities entrusted to them by the church, and, in conjunction with an enlightened and spiritually-awakened membership, endeavor by devout co-operation to assume their respective proportional measure of the public service which may have been unrighteously imposed



upon an overworked minister.

16. "If some members have been favored by a natural gift for money making and apply themselves to acquiring ample means, which they freely use in the Lord's work, should not their liberal contributions be considered of equal value to personal service in the public worship, and answer as a practical substitute for it?"

When we consider that man is primarily indebted to the favor of God for every desirable material acquisition within his temporary control, even "the coin of the realm," so to speak, and after a comparatively brief period of possession such control is ended, through the ever-changing conditions of life, or perhaps by death, premature or otherwise; when we consider these things, does it not seem unreasonable to regard with self-approval our making of what we may feel to be liberal donations toward what is commonly deemed the Lord's work?

In view of the fact that, rightly speaking, our entire means belongs to Him who "holds all the wealth of the world in his hands" and that we are only brief custodians of the Lord's possessions, for which, sooner or later, we must render account of our stewardship, is there not a question as to the propriety of considering our "generous" contributions as gifts, in the full sense of the word?

We are actually granting nothing which the great God does not in reality already control, and which may be brought into use at His will whether, through the hands of its present seeming owners or through some other agency.

But man has within his individual power the privilege of granting to the Lord a personal gift esteemed by

Him to be far beyond the value of the transitory wealth of the world, and God graciously asks of him, not his belongings, but himself, his real heart interests.

Man is privileged to voluntarily manifest his individual consecration to the Lord by acceptable personal authorized service.

In established recognition of the man's gracious adoption, and sonship, the Lord has provided for him stated opportunities to openly voice his gratitude, his prayers and praise, also to mutually participate in words of instruction, hope and helpfulness with his fellow travelers on the way to eternity.

Such provision is embraced in the orderly arrangement of the church worship on the first day of the week, together with the promised personal presence of the invisible Lord.

Need it now be asked if the most liberal contribution of transitory means could in any sense be made to answer in place of such sincere personal service "in the church" as the man may be fitted for?

Some thoughtful and sincere brethren have been heard to express sympathy for and interest in the principle of mutual edification in the church, and openly deplore the fact that in so many cases the eldership is inefficient, and the evangelist or resident minister does not apprehend its obligatory character or appreciate its importance, and consequently the church meetings move along in a routine of conduct involving the least possible personal action or responsibility on the part of the brethren generally.

As common members of the body of Christ, before we arraign those whom we have selected to be overseers in the church and bewail the fact that they are not exemplifying all the revealed qualifications pertaining to their

position (Acts 20:17-35; I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; I Pet. 5:1-5); before we condemn the eldership in its seeming failure, let us in humility, and with sincere desire to learn *our own duty* before the Lord, consult some portions of the living oracles which may apply to us.

While we have found that many specific obligations are laid upon the *eldership*, we should not fail to also notice that all the members of the faculty of God are besought to contribute lives of suitable service as recognized children of the Lord (Rom. 12:1).

We can not fail to become more and more seriously convinced of our responsibility as individuals when we consider the number and character of the specific messages addressed not pointedly to elders or evangelists, but to *us as members of the body of Christ* personally, and collectively.

Let us carefully note to what class Paul's letter to the Romans was written (Rom. 1:1-7), and for pointed portions of that letter note the 12th chapter, verses 1 to 21, inclusive, 14:19; 15:14, 15; 16:17, 18. Note I Cor. 1:1, 2 as to whom that letter was indicted, and for pointed messages I Cor. 1:10, also 15:58. Note also Gal. 1:1, 2; Eph. 1:1; 6:10-13, inclusive; Phil. 1:1; 1:27, 28; 2:12-16, inclusive; 3:16, 17; 4:1; Col. 1:1, 2 and 8-10, inclusive; 3:12-17, inclusive, also 3:23-25; I Thess. 1:1; 5:14-18, inclusive; II Thess. 3:4-6, inclusive; Heb. 3:1, 12-14; 6:9-11; 10:24, 25; I Pet. 1:1, 2; 4:7-11, inclusive; 5:6-11, inclusive.

In view of the many pleadings and inspired injunctions which plainly apply to us as individual and collective members of the body of Christ, and considering our own shortcomings in exemplifying their spirit and practice, what little reason we seem to have for our

complaints as to the inefficiency of the eldership.

May it not be true that if we were prayerfully to apply ourselves to the teaching so generously provided for guidance, comfort and support, and were to strive to fulfill the revealed will of our Lord in character and conduct, that the blessing of God will follow our efforts?

Manifesting an active and unselfish interest for each other, with love and forbearance characteristic of the mind of Christ, would we not be likely to find joyful and intelligent co-operation on the part of an encouraged eldership, and the helpful assistance of the evangelist in our development in the Christ life and the preparation for such prescribed public service as the Lord may respectively qualify us to perform?

Let us, then, resolve with the help of God to do our part. The Lord will certainly bless our efforts.



## DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH.

O. A. COLLEY.

This subject is of such vital importance it can not be looked at lightly. We, as the Lord's people, have been rather slow to apply the part of God's law that relates to the withdrawal from members who walk disorderly.

## WHY WE HAVE FAILED.

I do not lay the charge of failure in this duty to any special church or congregation, but I must say that we have all neglected to teach and practice it as we should have done. The cause for this, as I see it, is mainly due to our effort to answer the "sects'" infringements on the doctrine of Christ, on the special features of how to get men into the church and failing to consider very seriously how to get them out, consequently we have practically failed to study and apply this part of the law.

## REMOVING THE RUBBISH.

This, like other Bible subjects, has the accumulations of many years of mistaken ideas, false theories and wrong interpretations. The parable of the wheat and tares in Matt. 12:24-30: "The servant said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them? But he said, Nay, lest while you gather up the tares ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, bind them in bundles and burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." This scripture has been employed by those who did not want to take action in the public assembly, against those who had walked unworthily, as a reason for their failure. As I view it, there is no reason in this objection. The Lord is not using this parable to illustrate the fact that there would be good and bad in his kingdom, the one

there as a result of *His sowing*, and the other as a product of the *devil's sowing*. No, I do not believe there are any in the Lord's kingdom as a product of bad seed sown by the devil. Observe: (1) The sower of the good seed is the Son of man. (2) The field is the world (vs. 37, 38). (3) The good seed are the children of the kingdom. (4) The tares are children of the wicked one. (5) The enemy that sowed them is the devil. (6) The harvest is the end of the world. (7) The reapers are the angels. This, it seems to me, is plain enough to teach us that He is teaching the disciples that there would be good and bad in the world until He comes again. To make this refer to the church makes it cross other plain passages on the same subject, which shows the interpretation erroneous.

#### THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES.

It is argued by some that we can not turn men out of the church, because the Lord is said to take away every branch that beareth not fruit. This objection is founded upon John 15:6: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away." It is argued from this, since the Father is to take them away, we should let them alone until He takes them away. It is true that He will make the final disposition of the withered branches, yet He has asked us as the representatives of His will on earth to "Withdraw yourselves from those who walk disorderly" (II Thess. 2:6). The careful fruit raiser does not let the decaying limbs remain on the tree until they fall off of their own accord. This would endanger the life of the tree and injure the fruit that other limbs might produce. In falling off of their own accord the growing fruit is either knocked off or injured. Churches should not let bad members remain in their fellowship until they finally drop out, as some churches think it proper to do.

## OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLES.

While we are not under the Old Testament as a law to observe in this age, yet there are many lessons on how the Lord dealt with those who refused to do as He commanded, and we are to profit by the examples.

The first case of discipline of which we have any record was under the supervision of the Lord himself. It was when Adam and Eve refused to respect His authority in the Garden of Eden. He "turned them out." They have forfeited their rights to remain in the beautiful place God had prepared for them. The church today is the place for God's children to enjoy the protection and fellowship of each other, but when this is broken by bad conduct the person guilty should be turned over to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus (I Cor. 5:5).

The next example of discipline recorded is the case where Cain had violated God's law on how to worship him, then added to the violation the murder of Abel, his brother, and to this still another sin of a lie, when the Lord asked him where Abel was. For these crimes the Lord "turned him out"—drove him out of the companionship of the line of faith that he revived through Abel's representative, Seth. This was seriously objected to by Cain, as discipline has been by his kind in our day. He thought it was too severe, greater than he could bear, but the Lord did not think so, and neither should we when men protest against the action of the church in matters of needed discipline. The Lord protected the line of faith, the golden links in the chain by getting rid of Cain. We should so understand it now; men should not be withdrawn from now through malice or because they can't be handled to carry out some hobby fostered by



some element of the church, but it should be done at all times when the church is endangered by false teaching or immoral conduct on the part of any member, whether he be a preacher, an elder or a man of great means.

#### THE WHOLE WORLD DISCIPLINED.

"My spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3). God was "slow to anger," but firm when corrections were necessary. He, by his Spirit, strove with the human family, through Noah (I Pet. 3:18-21). When they had refused the Spirit's warning through the Lord's appointed agency, He sent the flood for their destruction. He, in our day, strives with men by His appointed agency, through the elders and other faithful members of His church. When all has been done that can be done for their correction, in teaching and warning them, then, for the protection of the faithful and to bring them to repentance, the offender must be cut off.

#### THE CHURCH SHOULD NOT GRIEVE.

God has always had a law on sacrifice—worship. When men or angels tampered with it, He used His own wisdom in protecting it. He does not want His children to grieve over what He does to discipline and, thereby, protect His law on how to serve Him. An example of this may be found in Lev. 10, where Aaron's sons offered "strange fire" before the Lord in burning the required sacrifice. God sent forth fire from before Him and they died. He warned Aaron and other members of the family not to mourn for them, because they had broken his law, but rather bewail the burning which Jehovah had kindled (Lev. 10:6).

The Lord, through the Apostle Paul, in the Corinthian letter gives similar instruction (I Cor. 5): "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator or covetous, or an



idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." This expression, "no not to eat," has been interpreted to mean "know not to eat the Lord's Supper" with such as he has described. It evidently includes the Lord's table, and also any other relation that is included in the sweeping statement "have no company with fornicators" (v. 9). I do not suppose one of these sins, pointed out by the apostle, any more grievous than another, yet there are "common, little sins" that are threatening the church more today than some of the ones that society and common decency look upon as the *greater crimes*. Revelry, dancing and other worldliness is today sapping the life out of the church. It is winked at today by people who would have reproved it sharply a few years ago.

Fornication, at least one form of it, is looked at lightly in many churches today. The New Testament does not recognize but one real cause for divorce, and that is for a married man or a married woman to act unfaithful to the marriage vow with others. I do not contend that even that separates, but when committed it gives the innocent one a right to be separated from the guilty. This is not taught as it should be. Many today are living in open violation to God's law, and do not know it. All preachers and elders should teach that every one that puts away his or her companion and marries another while the first is still living is violating the law of God. To those who have already ignorantly gone into this unfortunate state, I want to express my sympathy. And, to you boys and girls who are yet single, I raise this as a voice of warning. The following scriptures are given with a request that all turn to them and read what the Lord has said on the subject: I Cor. 5; Matt. 5:32; 19:8, 9; Rom. 7:1-4; Matt. 19:9. There is

but one exception to this rule, and that is held in doubt by many able men. For my own idea I believe the Lord makes only one exception. There will continue to be many innocent victims until preachers, mothers and fathers teach the law of God on divorce, both at home and in public assemblies, and until the church exercises more discipline in regard to it.

#### ARE THE ELDERS TO BLAME?

It is easy for us to shift the responsibility from ourselves to some one else. Preachers, as a rule, try to be both elders and preacher; that is, assume the whole work and then wonder why the elders do not grow, and do more in the church. In most cases the elders have been so abused that they either fear to give a question its real consideration lest they are hounded by a set of preachers who are unwilling to abide by their decision, or fail to see the real importance of strict discipline. The elders are said to be overseers of the flock (Acts 20:28. They were associated with the apostles in important decisions (Acts 15:4-6, 22, 23; 16:4). The elders were to rule (I Tim. 5:17). They are to take the oversight of the church (I Pet. 5:1). All Christians should obey their ruling, respect and pray for them, for they watch for your souls, and must give an account to God for their ruling (Heb. 13:17). Many have engaged in rebuking elders for not doing what they thought they should do. This is also against a very positive law of God (I Tim. 5:1). We can entreat them, and teach the right when we think they are wrong, but further than this I do not venture.

#### PREACHERS AND ELDERS.

I do not understand that elders are "bosses" or "lords" occupying a throne, but that they are just servants of God with no more authority than other Chris-

tians, only as they follow the law of God upon any given question. I believe that every preacher in the Church of Christ is, or should be, answerable to the elders of his home congregation, and if charges are made against him, he should clear his record before being accepted by a church *anywhere*. The church or preacher that so far forgets the law of God as to give assistance to a member that has been withdrawn from by their home congregation are religious anarchists, and should be so treated until they repent of their deeds. If the church ever expects to prosper, it must abide by the law of God.

I have known of men being put in responsible places, where they should be examples for others, just because they were rich in this world's goods, but were lacking in good moral qualities. I have known of others being put in responsible places and encouraged because they were highly educated, but held decidedly skeptical ideas. If such men can no be converted, they should not be retained in the church to disgrace it further. An infidel is dangerous whether we call him a "higher critic," "agnostic" or by his real name. They are more dangerous in the church than without. We should not wait until they "drop out," but withdraw from them to safeguard the others.

The churches to which John wrote in Rev. 2 and 3 had *some* members that held to the doctrine of Balaam. All did not seem to hold it, but the Lord warned them, "Repent or else I will come quickly and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth" (Rev. 2:16). Another case is where the church at Thyatira had a woman teaching the servants of God to "commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." It is wrong for the church to foster members who teach and practice the wrong. Like leaven, their teaching will affect the whole

church (I Cor. 5:7).

#### THE REAL PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE.

One is not to be withdrawn from just to please the whims of some one who may be influenced by the ill tempers of the flesh, but the real purpose of it is to save the man who is to be withdrawn from (I Cor. 5:5), as well as to save the church from his evil influence.

#### HOW TO TREAT THOSE WITHDRAWN FROM.

"And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed (II Thess. 3:14). "Turn them over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (I Cor. 5:5).

#### HOW TO PROCEED.

I can not close this important subject without giving the pointed article written by our good brother, David Lipscomb, on this subject. I heartily commend it. (Queries and Answers, by David Lipscomb, pp. 139, 140.)

"The voice of God must control a congregation if it is a church of Christ. This is the only test of fidelity to God. If the voice of God does not control it, it is not a church of Christ. Elders are the older members, familiar with the scriptures, of good judgment, and imbued with the Spirit of God, whose duty it is to see that all obey the word of God. If any one violates the law of God, it is the duty of those who know it either to see him in person or to see that some one who has influence with the sinner warn him of his evil course and point out the law of God he has violated, and admonish him that he should repent. The elders are the head, or overseers, of the church. If those who see the wrong fail to induce the sinner to turn from it and confess it, it is their duty to take others with them to remonstrate. If they fail



(see the order, Matt. 18), tell it to the church. To do this is to report it to the elders, the heads or rulers of the church. They are to examine the case and determine what wrong, if any, he has committed, seek to show him his wrong. If he hears them, they have gained him. The elders should report the case to the church, give the facts in the case, lay before the members the charges and the evidence on which they are based, the scriptures violated, and the law requiring the action taken. The vote ought never to be put to the congregation as to whether they will withdraw from him or not. There is no authority for such a course, and such cases ought not to be decided by vote of the congregation, but by the law of God. This question might properly be put: Does any one know any reason why the conclusions set forth here are not true and scriptural? If so, the elders will hear the reasons, and if they are found just, they should have their reasons. And if they are found just, they should have their influence. If not, the elders should seek to show the truth both as to the facts and the scripture teaching to those who do not see it, that all may act with unanimity in the decision reached. This conference between the elders and those dissatisfied will be much more free from passion and feeling if private, yet the whole congregation is entitled to know the facts. Patience and persistence should be exercised in trying to get all to see the truth, that all may heartily agree in the course. I will not say that no action should be taken while one dissents. This might be proper if all were led by the spirit of the Gospel; but many let their family pride and fleshly feelings, rather than the word of God, control them in such matters. Some think they show love and kindness to kindred and friends when they object to the church enforcing the law of God on their families or

friends, but this is a mistake. A father or mother shows true love for a child by desiring the laws of God to be enforced when he does wrong. God's laws are for the good of all who sin. True love for the sinner, even if he be our own child, will prompt us to see the law enforced, that he may get the good that comes through the law of God. We are real enemies to our children when we object to their being dealt with according to the law of God. The parents should be as ready to report the sins of a child that they can not correct to the church as any one else would be or as they would be to report any one else. True love for the child seeks the true good of the child, and that is promoted by the discipline of the law of God; but many are not willing for the law of God to be enforced with reference to their kindred or friends, and to say the discipline shall not be enforced as long as one objects is to place it in the power of one such to be to the enforcement of the law of God. It is true that parents that object to the law of God being rigidly applied to their own child, relative or friend are not worthy to be members in the church of God, but they are often; and when this spirit manifests itself, such should be dealt with in patience to save them from this sinful course. But such should not be permitted to hinder the enforcement of the law of God. When the elders have labored patiently with those who are unwilling to see the law enforced, and they fail to get them to do right, then the facts should be stated to the congregation, the scriptures read, and the congregation should sustain the elders in their decision heartily and cheerfully. If the friends and kindred remain perverse and fractious after all patience and effort to get them right, they should be disciplined; for no one who objects to the law of God being enforced upon a child, a husband, a sister, a brother, or a parent,

is a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. But all this work must be done by the elders in a spirit of Christian love and freedom from personal or partisan feeling or partiality; the good of all, the salvation of those who sin, should be the one leading object of all true servants of God. So all must be done in kindness and love, that the sinning one may be made to feel that the elders are his true friends and seeking his good. When he is made to feel this, then their work will be almost sure to prove effective. The elders, acting according to the law of God, have the full authority of God, just as the representative of a government, acting according to the laws of the government, carries the full authority of that government. If not acting according to the law of God, they have no authority whatever. What the proper representatives of a state do the state does. No one would think that to enforce or execute the laws of a state upon a violator of that law the people must take a popular vote on trial of every case. That would be clumsy, and, left to a popular vote, the laws would not be executed with any certainty. It would depend upon the prejudices and excited feelings of the multitude. These are notoriously unreliable. What the legally constituted representatives of a people do in accordance with the laws governing that people the people do. The New Testament is the law of the church, and the elders are the scriptural representatives of the church. The duty of the elders is to teach and enforce obedience to the scriptures."

#### CONCLUSION.

Let us look forward to a better day, when the church can, in an unpartisan way, carry out the Lord's will in discipline with as much interest and zeal as we do other parts of his divine law. *Mark you!* the very best disciplinarians are not the ones who withdraw from the

greatest number, but the one who can take the Lord's word and sit down quietly by the side of the one who has gone wrong and get them to correct the wrong.



THE EMPHASIS WHERE IT BELONGS.

SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

FOY E. WALLACE, SR.

All my life I have been a regular student of the word of God, and a believer in its inspiration. There has never been a time since I can remember that I was not a regular attendant at the Lord's day worship. Some things in the Bible are hard for me to understand. There are some passages in the Bible that have been difficult for me to harmonize with the rest of the book, and with the requirements of an existence in the world. Jesus says: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieve do not break through and steal" (Matt. 6:19, 20). Again He says: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:34). If I believe that the Savior required me not to provide for my family, to make no provision for the morrow, I would certainly try to obey Him.

I shall pursue a course in this discussion that I have reasoned out for myself by a close study of the passages involved. I am reasonably well acquainted with men, and I find that most people have some degree of prejudice. Prejudice is an opinion formed without due examination or without due course of reasoning. One who will not listen to reason is prejudiced. Occasionally I find a brother who is so prejudiced in favor of some idea or custom that he would be willing to break up a church,

or destroy the faith, rather than give up a notion which may have neither scripture, reason nor common sense to support it.

It is hard to express one's self on this subject so as to be appreciated, for it is rather general in its nature. There is an oriental figure of speech in which a comparison is made by a negation and an affirmation. In this figure the adverb "not" is used to deny, the conjunction "but" is used to affirm. The Master says: "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (John 6:27). In this passage two kinds of food are compared, one pertaining to the body, the other to the soul. "Labor not for the met which perisheth." If we stop the reading there, it makes Jesus say that men are not to labor for anything to eat. Instead, he makes a comparison of the two meats, denying the one—not absolutely, though the language is absolute—in order to emphasize the other. That which pertains to the soul is more important than that which pertains to the body; therefore, he denies the less important in order to emphasize the more important. Paul says: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2). Suppose we did not read all the passage, but just that part which says, "Be not conformed to this world." Taken in the absolute, we would have to be different from everybody else in the world. Is that what Paul teaches? Does he teach that because men of the world live in fine houses we are to live in huts? Does he teach that because men of the world dress becomingly we are to be slovenly, or that we are to wear some kind of peculiar robe to show that we are not of the world? People go to extremes in matters of religion, but

the man whom God can use to the best advantage is the man who is loyal, safe, sound and void of extremes. In their efforts to be sound in faith and practice men often go to extremes. We have a lot of sound brethren, a lot of sound preachers, a lot of churches that are sound—sound asleep! The apostle denies us the right to conform ourselves to the world, in order to emphasize the importance of conforming ourselves to the will of God. Peter used this form of expression in reference to the apparel of women: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price" (I Pet. 3:3, 4). Here the outward adorning of the body is compared with the spiritual adorning of the soul; and that of the body, being of less importance, is denied in order that the more important may be emphasized.

Paul says: "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel" (I Cor. 1:17). In this passage Paul emphasizes the importance of preaching the Gospel, knowing that baptism will do no good until the candidate has been taught the Gospel. When the Gospel is preached and men believe it, they will be baptized in obedience to its command. Sectarians sometimes use this passage to try to prove that baptism is not essential to salvation, saying that, since Paul was not sent to baptize, baptism is no part of the Gospel. That baptism is not denied in the absolute is shown by the fact that Paul did baptize some of the Corinthians with his own hands; and to place such a construction on the language would make Paul guilty of a practice contrary to his own teaching. The construction of this passage is like the others I

have referred to. Again, Paul says, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (I Tim. 2:12). This passage teaches that a woman is not to usurp authority over the man. It will debar her from any kind of public teaching that will usurp authority over man, and therefore she can not be a preacher, an elder, or an overseer in the church, and, in my judgment, she should not teach a class of men; but there is nothing in the Bible that would forbid her teaching a class of her own sex, or a class of children under the supervision of the elders of the church. I am aware that Paul says: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home" (I Cor. 14:34, 35). That the women mentioned here were the wives of these prophets there is not a reasonable doubt; neither is there any doubt that these prophets were capable of giving them advice on such interpretations as were under consideration at that time. If this language is to be taken without limitation, then a woman would be forbidden to learn anything in the church from a preacher or elder who was not her husband. This passage is similar in construction to the others referred to. It emphasizes the importance of subjection, and, in doing so, denies the woman the right to do such teaching as usurps authority over man.

The sixth chapter of Matthew has been a puzzle to me. If we place the absolute construction on the language used by the Savior, no one would have a bite of breakfast tomorrow morning, for He says, "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on" (Matt. 6:25). Again, "Take therefore no thought for



the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for itself." And again, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thives do not break through and steal" (Matt. 6:19, 20). Does the Master absolutely forbid us to accumulate any of the material wealth with which He has blessed the world? Some of the greatest men of the Bible were men of affairs; men who had flocks and herds, lands, silver and gold, and great households of servants to do their bidding. They were noble men, men who pleased God and honored him in their lives.

Paul said to Timothy: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (I Tim. 6:17-19). Here he instructs wealthy men how to use their means. If Jesus teaches that men can not serve God and be men of affairs, then these men whom Paul speaks of could not use their money to the honor and glory of God. It shows, therefore, that, if they are humble, and do not trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living God, they can "have an hundred fold in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions," and "in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10:30). Jesus did not require the rich young man to sell all he had because he was rich, but because he loved and trusted in his riches. The rich man did not go to hell because he was rich, the beggar did not go to heaven because he was

poor, but the rich man went to hell because he was selfish and greedy, the beggar went to heaven because he served God. We conclude, therefore, that Jesus denies us the privilege of laying up treasures on earth, in the passage Matt. 6:19, 20, in order to emphasize the importance of laying up treasures in heaven.

Now we come to the final application of the text. The Master says: "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:31-33). This teaches clearly that when we have sought the kingdom of God, secondarily we may seek the things that are to be added to us. It teaches that our first duty is to seek God; that when our business and Christianity clash, Christianity shall have the right of way. We understand that these things will be added to us through the regular channels of industry. Jesus teaches us to pray for our daily bread, but we do not understand that he is going to rain bread down from heaven as the manna fell in the wilderness. God has given us soil, the sunshine and rain to mellow and moisten the soil; but man must prepare the soil, plant the seed, and reap the harvest, though God gives the increase. We must be careful that our business, whatever it may be, does not conflict with our duty to God. A man asked a cobbler, "What is your business?" He replied, "My business is to serve God. Christianity is my business, but I mend shoes for a living while I follow my business." Our business is to live the Christian life, to serve the Lord. Christianity is, in fact, our business. We are bought with a price, and we do not belong to ourselves. Whatever we do in the store, shop, office, schoolroom, or on the farm, is for the purpose of ele-

vating and furthering the kingdom of God, while we are following our business, namely, serving God. The very fact that Jesus says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," implies that secondarily we may seek the things that pertain to this life. We believe that Christianity is the most profitable business in which men can engage, because Jesus says that if we forsake all and follow him we shall "receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come ternal life." Paul says, "Bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come" (I Tim. 4:8). Christianity is the only business, therefore, in which we can engage that is profitable both here and hereafter. Christ inquires: "What is a man profited, if he shall gain he whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Matt. 16:26). Our text teaches, therefore, that seeking the kingdom of God is man's first duty and most profitable business.

## CHURCH FINANCE.

L. S. WHITE.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20: 35). These are the words of our Lord, and I have no apology to offer for making a speech on "giving." The Bible has much to say on his subject. If I were to speak on either faith, repentance, confession, baptism or the Lord's Supper, there could be no well-founded objection, because each would be a scriptural subject; but there is more said in the Bible on giving than on faith, repentance, confession, baptism and the Lord's Supper put together. I was recently told of a preacher who said he would quit preaching before he would preach a sermon on giving. I would as soon refuse to preach on baptism, or any other scriptural subject, as to refuse to preach on giving. The late J. W. McGarvey said: "I find men all over the country in the churches who think that they are not responsible to anybody except God as to their giving—nobody's business but mine and my God's. I wonder if those men could give a reason why a man should be held accountable by the authorities of the church for all the other sins he is guilty of, or may be guilty of, and not be held accountable for this particular sin. When I read through the New Testament, I find that the sin of covetousness or stinginess is more frequently held up to condemnation by the Lord Jesus and the apostles, and dealt with in severer and more terrific terms, than any other sin in the whole category. Indeed, a covetous man is more unlike Christ than any other wicked man in the world. A drunkard who gets drunk every day may, and often does, have a good deal of kindness and good-heartedness that ought to belong to every Christian. And a man who in a passion gets mad and murders another may some-



times be a good kind of a man; but if a man is covetous, stingy, penurious, miserly, he is further away from Christ, who gave up everything in heaven and came to this earth and gave up everything that ordinary mortals consider desirable while here, and gave up his life, for the benefit of others, while this poor wretch wants everything for himself, and is not ready to give anything for others. I verily believe that the covetous man is the most wicked of men in God's sight. He is called an idolator. Paul says, 'No covetous man shall inherit the kingdom of God.' Men of my acquaintance have lived and died in the church, whom I knew, and all the neighborhood knew, whom whole counties knew to be covetous men. I had ten thousand times rather die the death of a drunkard than to die the death of such a man as that; I would have more hope that God might forgive me and save me at last. Consequently, the Apostle Paul commands the brethren to withdraw from and put away from them every covetous man. He says, 'I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no not to eat.' 'Put away the wicked man from among you.' How many covetous men are put away in obedience to this apostolic command? The church has greatly sinned in not dealing with them as it ought. The time is coming when we shall deal with them more faithfully."

Our Savior says: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" (Luke 16:10-12). In

other words, the Lord has put means into our hands and holds us responsible for the use we make of them; and if we are not faithful in that which belongs to others, we would not be faithful with our own. The property we now have is not our own, it is the Lord's, and He holds us responsible for the way we use it.

#### EXAMPLES OF GIVING.

"And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the Lord commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord; gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goat's hair. . . . And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whose spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments. And they came, both men and women, as many as were willing hearted, and brought bracelets, and earrings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold; and every man that offered *offered* an offering of gold unto the Lord . . . and all the women that were wise hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, both of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom spun goat's hair. . . . Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded. And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, and every one whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to

do it. And they received of Moses all the offering, which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it withal. And they brought yet unto him free offerings every morning. And all the wise men, that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made; and they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from giving" (Ex. 35:4 to 36:7). Oh, how good is this! Here are poor people who had been in bondage a long time, ye they gave for the building of the costly tabernacle till they had given "enough and too much," and had to be "restrained from giving." How I would like to see Christians give for the cause of Christ till the elders would have to restrain them! I wonder if any one ever saw something like that.

The next example is in the form of a vow: "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my Father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee" (Gen. 28:20-22). Jacob fulfilled this vow. He taught it to his children. It became a part of God's law to the Jews, and they became the most liberal givers in the world.

After the birth of Christ, the wise men were guided to him: "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell



down, and worshiped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt. 2:11). This is in perfect harmony with our Lord's teaching in the text: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Christ also endorsed this same principle in the following example: "And Jesus sat over against the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living" (Matt. 12:41-44). This poor widow gave all she had, and was commended by the Lord for so doing. There are people today who have plenty, yet in their stinginess they give but little, and at the same time claim they are giving "the widow's mite." This is not true.

On another occasion Christ endorsed a man's giving away half he had: "And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham" (Luke 19:8, 9). Can anything be made stronger than the following: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38).

But the greatest of all gifts is the gift of Christ to the world. "For God so loved the world, that he gave



his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3: 16). The Christian religion originated in the great, warm, loving heart of God; and He gave to us the very best He had. "I gave, I gave my life for thee; what hast thou given for me?"

#### PRINCIPLES OF GIVING.

There are some clear and well-defined principles of giving laid down in the Bible, which for the sake of convenience I will number:

1. We are God's stewards. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (I Cor. 4:1, 2). A steward is one who, for a time, manages another's affairs, and must give an account of his stewardship. The money, and other property, we have is the Lord's, and we are responsible to Him for its use. "For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof" (I Cor. 10:26).

2. We are to give as we are prospered. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Cor. 16:2).

3. We must give cheerfully. "But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:6, 7).

4. There should be equality in giving. "Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according

to that he hath not. For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: but by an equality that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want; that there may be equality" (II Cor. 8:11-14). These principles will cover any case of church finance in the world, and if followed, the financial problem of the church would take care of itself.

A few years ago a missionary established a church on a foreign field. On one occasion, when the church needed money, one of the elders, a native, read the scriptures used above, and among other things said: "The scriptures teach us to give, to give cheerfully, and to give liberally; and I want you to fulfill all these scriptural requirements here today." He then took the collection. All the members were very poor except one. They gave as best they could. The man of property gave a dollar. The elder picked up the dollar and said: "Brother ———, you fulfilled the scripture which says 'give,' and you fulfilled the scripture which says give 'cheerfully,' but you violated the scripture which says give 'liberally,'" and he gave the dollar back to him. The fellow became angry, walked to the table and slammed down five dollars. The elder then said: "Brother ———, you fulfilled the scripture which says give, and you fulfilled the scripture which says give liberally, but you violated the scripture which says give cheerfully," and he handed his money back to him, and said: "You must fulfill all the scriptural requirements before we can take your money." The man then, with a smile on his face, put in ten dollars. The elder then said: "Brother ———, you have fulfilled the scripture which says give; you have fulfilled the scripture which says give cheerfully; and you have fulfilled the scripture which says give liberally, and we can now take your money." What a pity that

such lessons are not taught to more of our American churches.

A few years ago, while conducting a meeting for one of our country churches, I found out from the treasurer the total amount given by the entire congregation for all purposes the preceding year. Then I got him to find out the assessed valuation of the property of the church, and found that all they contributed the preceding year only amounted to one-tenth of one per cent of the assessed valuation of their property. At this rate it would take that church one thousand years to give as much as the present taxable value of their property, to say nothing of the accumulation of wealth during that period of time. The Lord has done much for the church, but what is the church, in many places, doing for the Lord?

#### HOW MUCH SHOULD CHRISTIANS GIVE?

Most of the remainder of this sermon will be used in answering this question. For more than twenty-five years I have carefully studied this question, and am fully convinced that the Bible teaches Christians to give back to the Lord at least one-tenth of their gross income. I believe it as certainly taught as baptism for remission of sins, and I believe that with all my heart. But "to the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to their word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20).

This doctrine of tithing was taught to, and practiced by, God's people many centuries before the law of Moses was ever given, and I want to show you that both Christ and Paul taught it, and it is now binding on Christians. Nearly two thousand years before Christ came to this earth, there was a mighty character called Abraham. He had great possessions and much power. Five kings and their armies were at war with four other kings. They



routed them, and smote much of that country. They captured Lot, nephew of Abraham, and took his property. When Abraham learned of this, "he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them to Dan. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them. . . . And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people." So far as I know, Abraham was the most powerful man in the world. He and his servants were able to destroy five kings and their armies, and evidently took an enormous amount of spoils. On his return from this battle he met the priest of God, and what did he do? "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abraham of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand. And he gave him tithes of all" (Gen. 14:8-20). Abraham certainly did not just happen to do this, but as we will learn later, God's people in general did it. Not only that, but Paul brings this example into the New Testament, and makes giving a tenth binding on Christians for all time to come. "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became



the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 5:5-10). From these last verses read we learn that Christ was a "priest after the order of Melchizedek." We will need this later.

We will now read extensively from Heb. 7:1-17: "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed them; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all." Notice this word "also." Abraham "also gave a tenth part of all." It shows that Abraham, in common with others, "gave a tenth part of all," just as we show from Mark 15:43 that "Joseph also waited for the kingdom of God" shows Joseph in common with others was waiting for the kingdom of God to come. "Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils." This shows that not only Abraham gave a tenth of the property he had accumulated, but he gave a tenth of the spoils he took away from the five kings; and while the other people gave a tenth of all, *even* as great a man as Abraham gave a tenth of all he had.

"And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law; that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: but he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he (Christ) receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham." What a glorious privilege Christians have of paying tithes in

Christ! Paul thus sums up his great argument on the priesthood of Christ: "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." Sometimes the Lord said he would do certain things, but conditions changed, and he changed his mind, as in the case of the destruction of Nineveh; but when God said a certain thing should be done, and swore to it, his mind was unchangeable. Paul quoted from Psa. 110:4, where God swore with an oath that Christ would be a priest "after the order of Melchizedek," and not only a priest, but would be "for ever." He also argues that Christ did not come from the tribe of Levi, consequently could not be a priest like those under the law of Moses, but sprang out of the tribe of Juda, "of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood," and declares it is "*far more evident*" that Christ is "another priest" "after the order of Melchizedek." But what was "the order of Melchizedek"? At least a part of it was that God's people gave a tenth of their income to the Lord. Then just as sure as the Lord's people gave a tenth of their income to Melchizedek, and they did; and just as sure as Christ is a "priest after the order of Melchizedek," and he is, just that sure are Christians required to give a tenth of their income to the Lord, and there is no escape from it. But an objector might say: "Tithing was under the law of Moses," to which I answer: Tithing was taught and practiced many centuries before there was any law of Moses; besides, Jesus Christ himself endorsed tithing while he was here:

"We pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Matt. 23:23). Jesus Christ says we ought not to leave tithing undone; and I'll never say a thing should not be done as long as Christ says it should be done.

*"WILL A MAN ROB GOD?"*

God asked the above question, and declared: "Ye have robbed me." And the people asked: "Wherein have we robbed thee?" and God answers: "In tithes and offerings." Then follows the awful condemnation: "Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." Then the Lord lays down this challenge to his people: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Matt. 3: 8-10) Have we enough faith in the promises of God to accept His offer, and receive the blessing?

*JACOB'S VOW.*

"And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his willows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread



abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south:: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. . . . And Jacob awakened out of his sleep, and he said, surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel. . . . And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth to thee" (Gen. 28:10-22).

This is one of the remarkable visions of the Old Testament, and its results are of far-reaching value to the Lord's people everywhere. Jacob carried out this vow. He taught it to his children. The Lord made it binding upon the Israelites, and it has come down the ages as one of their strong principles, and they have been the most liberal givers in the world's history. Recently I was in a large department store owned and operated by Jews. A man came to the manager, and asked him to give some money to a charitable object, and the Jew quickly said: "Oh, well, the only thing to do is to lay aside one-tenth of ones income to give to worthy objects." With that, he handed a blank check to the man, and said: "Fill out this check for what you want me to give, and I'll sign it."

#### PRINCIPLE OF THE TITHE.

The *principle* of the tithe has neither been set aside or



modified. God said: "All the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord" (Lev. 27:30). Animal sacrifices were enjoined on the Lord's people back there. They pointed to Christ. After He came and shed His blood, they were no longer needed, and He took them out of the way, and nailed them to the cross, and we are to have nothing more to do with them (Col. 2:13-17). But the necessity for the support of the Lord's cause is as great today as it ever was, consequently the need of the tithe is as great as it ever was.

PAUL ENDORSES THE TITHE.

"Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he altogether for our sakes? for our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? . . . Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? And they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (I Cor. 9:7-14). Paul declares: "For our sakes, no doubt this is written." If this principle is not to apply to us, then I ask: Why was it "written for our sakes"? Paul also says: "They who minister about holy things live of the things of the temple; and they who wait at the altar are partakers with

the altar." Who were the ones who "waited at the altar?" They were the Levites of the Old Testament. By reading Numbers, 18th chapter, you will see that "the things of the altar" consisted of one-tenth—what the Israelites in general were required to give, and went to the Levites, as the Levites were "given none inheritance among their brethren; but in turn the Levites were required to offer up an heave offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe." This was to be given to the priests; and they (the Levites) were to give "the best part" of their offerings; and by giving the "tenth part" of their tithes, it was to be "reckoned to them as though it were the corn of their threshingfloor, and as the fulness of the winepress." Thus God excused none of his people, not even the Levites, from giving a tenth of their income. As Paul says this was "written for our sakes," we are forced to the conclusion that the support of the new tabernacle (church) is to come from Christians giving one-tenth of their income. I see no escape from this conclusion, especially when Paul says: "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel," and this in direct connection with his statement: "They who wait (Levites) at the altar are partakers with the altar," or of these "tithe offerings." "Even so" means in *like manner*; then, "in like manner," which is by giving one-tenth, the Lord ordained that church work should be supported, and this is God's financial plan.

#### SOME PRACTICAL TESTS OF TITHING.

In 1918 I conducted a meeting in a large city where the teaching of the Bible on tithing had not been presented to the Church of Christ. I talked to the minister about it, and he said: "I would be glad to hear a sermon on it." The third Sunday of the meeting I preached on

tithing. The minister told the church he would like to see them try tithing, and asked the members to come next Sunday prepared to give one-tenth of their income for that week. The contribution for the next Sunday, which was the last Sunday of the meeting, was seven hundred per cent larger than the preceding Sunday.

Last year I conducted a meeting in another large city. A sermon was preached on tithing. The regular minister endorsed it, and made a strong talk in favor of it. Just after the close of the meeting, several of the members publicly agreed to give to the Lord one-tenth of their gross income, and to begin the next Sunday, which they did. The contribution increased four hundred per cent the first day it was tried.

Later I conducted another meeting elsewhere. A sermon was preached the second Sunday on tithing. I was told next day that the contribution was the largest in the history of that church, and it was about a half century old. I was anxious to know how it would be the next Sunday, which was to be the last day of the meeting. When the day came the rain poured till afternoon, and about one-third of the people were kept away, yet the contribution was even larger than the Sunday before. At night I asked the audience to send help to Washington, D. C., for the new meeting house there, and a large offering was made. In addition to this splendid showing, this same church is preparing to immediately erect a large and comfortable meeting house.

Take my home congregation here in Sherman. About the first of 1918, two months after I began work here, a sermon was preached on tithing. Occasionally during the year the matter was briefly presented while mainly preaching on other questions. During that year the contributions increased over four hundred per cent above



the preceding year. In 1919 the Bible teaching on tithing was presented even stronger than the year before. As a result, contributions increased over twelve hundred per cent over 1917, when there was no preaching on tithing. This church is now completing one of the best church houses in Texas, and will not owe a dollar on it when completed. Besides this, the church has helped to do much outside work, and has not had to make a single appeal for funds to meet the running expenses of the church. Only a minor number of the members are regular titheers, yet the entire church seems to be influenced by the teaching of the Bible on this question.

#### SOME CONSIDERATIONS.

In view of what has been presented, the following considerations are drawn:

1. The Gospel ought to lead Christians to do *more* than Jews, and they gave a tenth of all, besides many free-will offerings.
2. Jews had greater difficulties than Christians have.
3. Christians need a practical principle like this.
4. It is the only way to carry out Paul's teaching that there must be "equality" in giving, and to "give as prospered." One who gets one hundred dollars a month should give twice as much as one who gets fifty dollars a month for his work. Always the giving should be in proportion to the income. Then with the rich, the poor, the high, the low, will there be "equality" in giving; and we will no longer hear the statement: "Just a few in each church have to bear the burden."
5. God never would have ordered it had it not been for our good.
6. It is the *sure* way of giving the Lord His right share.
7. The acceptance of a principle like this marks a



distinct era of spiritual enlargement in the life of any person.

8. It would bring the religious awakening for which we have so long prayed.

## OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

BY O. E. PHILLIPS.

*In no age of the world has God ever granted His people the right or privilege to have their children educated by aliens or foreigners: unless for a special purpose.*

"The children of today are the society, the church and the nation of tomorrow. The prattler at your side whose sweet mispronunciations charm you will soon with keen discrimination and ample vocabulary give tone and tendency to the parlor. The boy with his whip and the girl with her doll will before long rule, real factors in the church and state, and train real lives for weal or woe of the nation. See the coming mother in that little, old-fashioned darling, rocking her baby to sleep, and humming the lullaby tunes which so recently sounded in her ears! See the voter, the orator, the merchant, the banker, the editor, the senator, in the stout youngster with boot-legs outside his trousers, and uncombed head crowned with torn and twisted cap. Music and oratory, enterprise and money, railroad schemes and political devices, power—social, religious, commercial and educational—lie all unfashioned and undirected in the little brains and muscles of the children around you."

"How shall all this power be directed? There is the problem. Take time to ponder it, and be not sure at any time that you have found the solution." Hoping to be of some service in this important field of Christianity, this address is placed before you.

## JEWISH DISPENSATION.

God was very strict with the Jews about the education of their children, together with their marriage and worship. In Moses' last address to them, immediately before going up the mountain to die, he speaks to them twice

about it. Deut. 6:4-10: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one God: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house, and on thy gates." He again refers to this in the eleventh chapter.

Children were usually taught the simple doctrines of religion by their parents, by means of aphorisms, sacred stories and rites, while children of the kings seem to have had tutors for their own (II Kings 10:1-5). Even after the exile, national instruction was chiefly limited to religion, as naturally might be expected from a nation whose political institutions were founded on theocratic principles.

The question naturally arises here, how did it happen that the Jews, confined to so small a territory in Syria, living continually isolated and apart from other nations, and not possessing in their own territory resources of any kind for the advancement of education, should, nevertheless, have mustered such a host of sages and learned men? How did John, the herald of Christ, and Paul, the apostle, receive the education which made the former the teacher of his own nation, and the latter that of so many nations and ages?

The solution of these questions may be found in the establishment of an institution among the later Israelites, unique in its kind, and eventually brought to a high

degree of perfection, namely, the public meeting of learned men, for the purpose of expounding the sacred writings and giving instruction in practical philosophy. We shall bring together some of the sacred records concerning this institution, to show its influence upon education in general.

"For the latter period of Jewish civilization, from Ezra and Nehemiah to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and its final and complete overthrow in the second century after Christ, a great number of philosophical and religious aphorisms are found collected in the Talmud, as originating with the men of these learned assemblies in various epochs, and in which we may trace the spirit of many passages of even the New Testament.

In the Babylon Talmud (Tr. Sanhedrin) those desirous of knowledge are exhorted to repair to the learned meetings of certain celebrated rabbis who taught in Lydda, Pekun, Labneh, Benebarak, Rome, Sikni, Zipporim or Nesibis; and in the land of captivity to the great teacher in Bethshaarim, and to the sages who taught in the Gaazith. The Talmud also mentions other seats of the learned, such as Jerusalem, Cæsarea, Bethshan, Acco, Bether, Magdala, Ushah, Baccat (Tiberias), and Alexandria in Egypt. In Tiberias the most learned men of the age assembled to compose that famous monument of Jewish learning, the Talmud. Gamaliel, Paul's master, was head of the learned assembly or college at Jabnesh (Jamnia), which, it is stated, not fewer than three hundred and eighty students were numbered. The manner of procedure was by discussions, questions and answers, the details of which I do not deem it necessary to give in this address.

#### NEW TESTAMENT ALLUSIONS.

Now the practices mentioned in the preceding cita-



tions entirely correspond with the intimations of the New Testament, and with them may be taken into the series of facts illustrative of the condition of learning and education and mode of instruction among the Jews, for the period considerably before and long after the time of Christ. The following passages in particular may be indicated in this connection: Luke 2:46; Acts 5:9, 10; 19:8, 9; 22:3; I Cor. 14:26-33; II Tim. 2:2. In the last but one of these passages, it is true, the description applies to Christian assemblies; but on comparing them with other passages, it will appear that the first Christian teachers retained many of the regulations of the Jewish assemblies.

These meetings not only took place in Jerusalem, but in other places, remote from the capital of Palestine, such as Galilee, the frontiers of Idumea, Lebanon, and even in heathen countries where there were Jews.

These meetings, schools or colleges, as we choose to call them, abounded in great numbers when our Lord was on earth. We know of his having visited one in Jerusalem when he was only twelve years of age, and it is probable he attended many more, whether regular or not we can not tell; but we do know he was familiar with their procedure from many references to them, or their teachers during His ministry on earth.

Let it be remembered that these teachers and professors, who were the lawyers and doctors of the New Testament, formed no mean opinion of their own dignity and importance, as indeed the Gospels evince. Many corruptions of the Mosaic law followed the wake of these self-exalted professors; sects, high and low positions, sophistries, idle questions and vain researches of the so-called wise were the results of this departure. Each looked with envy and hatred upon the other. One

may be inclined to think the Jews would have been better off if they had never known education, except what they learned from their parents and forefathers, as Moses directed; but 'tis a mistake to so conclude, for there were as many, perhaps, who fell under the former manner of education as the latter. Who can forget the thousands who fell in the wilderness, having been led away so easily because of their ignorance? Who can think for a moment that God did not want His people to learn of His wondrous power stored in the earth and air? 'Tis marvelous indeed to find about us every day vast multitudes of undiscovered wealth and pleasure, He has had stored away for us since creation. David, who reached a high state of education, exclaims: "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. Their line is gone out into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun; which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."

These schools or meetings had their origin about the time Ezra rebuilt Jerusalem, and reached their highest state of perfection about the time Christ was on earth. They were the methods used to perpetuate the things taught by Moses; Christ did not condemn the methods used, for they were the product of wisdom. But he condemns the self-righteousness of these professors, together with the traditions and commandments imposed by them. Jesus said to them, "Why do ye transgress the commandments of God by your tradition? . . . Ye hypocrites!

well did Isaiah prophesy of you saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

The synagogue, which came into use at about the time these schools sprung up, was used as a place to hold these schools. The synagogue was nothing more than a house built for prayer, reading, meditation and sabbath day worship. Many of them contained more than one room, that the work might more effectively be carried on, and in some communities there was a building for every ten families.

With this history of Jewish manner, custom and practice before you, we are now to present the working, manner, custom, practice and privileges of the New Testament church, for which your mind is now prepared.

#### NEW TESTAMENT DISPENSATION.

The New Testament church had as its purpose the salvation of men, the evangelization of the world, the uprooting of false doctrines, and picturing God as a loving heavenly Father.

It was an institution of baptized believers, worshipping God after His direction and pattern, doing good unto all men, preparing its communicants to spend an endless eternity in happy service and adoration of God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

The apostles of Jesus Christ were inspired by the Holy Spirit, and were guided into all truth by it. All things therefore that they commanded, by precept and example, are binding upon all who name the name of Christ, to do them and in the way shown.

You are now invited to read with me Phil. 4:8, 9: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever



things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." From the above we get two thoughts:

#### THINGS ESSENTIAL AND THINGS INCIDENTAL.

Things essential are the things commanded of God, to be obeyed just as God has directed. Things incidental are the things that naturally come up in obeying things essential, and must be decided by us. These things may be of a local nature, and perhaps of a world-wide nature. Let us consider some of those things:

1. God has commanded all who believe, be baptized, in water, buried and raised up, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for the remission of sins, to walk a new life.

Incidentals: It may be done in a stream or pool, inside or outside, warm or cold, public or private.

2. God has commanded us to sing, making melody in our hearts to the Lord (Eph. 5:19). This is a heart service of praise and adoration we render to God, for his mercy, plan of salvation, wonderful love, goodness and greatness. It therefore excludes everything we might do in his service for our own entertainment. Instrumental music is therefore excluded; because we do it for our own entertainment or that of others.

Incidental: We do not know how the apostolic church sang, we do not sing as they did fifty years ago (they used three notes, we use seven). We may therefore use three notes or seven, round or shaped, major or minor staff, written or oral, one verse or more, one song or more.



3. Worship is essential; God and Christ are the objects; the first day of the week is the day; Christians are the people; apostolic example is the way.

Incidental: Place, hour and length.

4. Giving of our means is essential; as we are prospered is the amount; on the Lords day is the day; when the church is assembled is the time.

Incidental: All we have if we like, and any day (Acts 4:36, 37). We may place it on the table, plate, in a hat, basket, box or hand it to the treasurer. We may give to other good causes if we choose if there be any.

5. Observance of the Lord's Supper is essential; every Lord's day is the time; Christians are the people; we must offer thanks as the ceremony; an unleavened loaf and wine are the elements; loaf to be broken after thanks is offered. All are to partake, solemnly, seriously, reflectively, decently and in order after one another.

Incidental: We may stand to offer thanks, bow or kneel; we may go up after it or have it brought; loaf may be on paper or plate made of tin, china, porcelain, copper or silver; under cover or open. The wine may be fermented or unfermented, old or new, clear grape or colored; in one container or many.

6. Teaching of the scriptures is essential, in language all can understand; rightly dividing the word of truth (II Tim. 2:15). To young or old, saint or sinner.

Incidental: Anywhere or any day the necessity arises or we may appoint; we may use the lengthy letters as they were written or chapters and verses, references and synopsis (they sustain the same relation to the scriptures as banks do to finance, they are a convenience); we may use maps to find locations, dictionaries to get definitions, histories, encyclopedias, authentic translations, exegeses and blackboards.

## OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

Innocence and ignorance go together, knowledge and virtue go together. "My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to mine understanding; that thou may regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge." "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it." "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever herefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whosoever shall receive one such little one in my name, receiveth me. But whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believeth on me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

We live in an age when young people are at the wheel; they control the marts of commerce today; they are reading, thinking and acting as never before in history. They are our merchants, lawyers, doctors, farmers, builders, constructors and preachers and professors. For any institution to neglect them is to court destruction. Training in early life fixes their affection and destiny. For the Church of Christ to neglect them is to court destruction and is sinful. It therefore behooves the church to study how to meet the situation we face, from a standpoint that will please God and accomplish the desired end, that is, teach them to love God and his church, devoting their lives to it.

For the same reason we hold protracted meetings, to teach sinners the way of life, we should hold meetings annually, monthly, weekly or daily to teach them the way of life. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." It is as essential to Christian service to study how to give the lesson needed or applicable as it is to give the proper division of the word. Both of them are proper divisions. A score of men may be sick, but they can not take the same medicine, though it be ever so good. A mixed audience of old and young, learned and unlearned, could hardly be expected to need the same instruction from the Bible. Why should it be sinful to divide this audience and give the lesson needed?

If only one competent instructor be present, he should teach one class, then another, as he may see fit. If more than one competent instructor be present, they should be divided according to age or need of instruction. What is there sinful about this so long as the thing taught is the scriptures?

It was shown in the beginning of this address that this custom was in vogue among the Jews when Jesus was on earth, and that he did not condemn it. Paul was evidently educated in the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, after this custom, in the school of Gamaliel, which was in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3).

Paul recognized the different stages of one's life, and therefore different needs, in I Cor. 3:11: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childish things." Though this scripture was not written for the purpose of teaching this thought, it does it nevertheless. The classes exist whether divided or not.

Again, Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, in Heb. 5:



12-14, states, "or when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilled in the word of God of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

Peter also recognizes the different stages of one's development in I Pet. 2:1, 2: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and all hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." From these scriptures one must be dull who can not see the different stages, ages or classes recognized by these two apostles.

#### THE DIFFERENT CLASSES.

The different stages (classes) of life may be illustrated as follows:

1. The imaginative age. This is in early life when they so dearly love the toy, and the boy loves his whip and stick horse, the girl her doll and doll buggy; it's when they "play like" and "make like." Their innocent prattle, curious questions, sweet mispronunciations and implicit faith make us love a little child. A discourse to them on the final perseverance of the saints, validity of baptism, gift of the Holy Spirit, and so on, would be like feeding a sucking baby fresh pork. Why should it be thought a thing incompatible with the divine will for one capable (let it be man or woman) to take these little tots into one corner of a church building, different room or other place, and tell them of Jesus as a little baby, His travel with mother on a donkey to Egypt, and how He



loved little children when He became a man? Then teach them how He healed the sick, loved good people, and wants to save little boys and girls who will be good and grow up to be Christians. Illustrated lessons may be given from the scriptures to teach them the word: the ant and the grasshopper, sheep and goats, giants, danger of looking back, Noah's ark, the nobleman's daughter, and on and on. The field is limitless. Dull is the one who can not see the opportunity to place principles and teachings into their little hearts that will guide them into the church that Jesus built.

2. Adventurous and inquisitive age: Here the boy and girl begin to separate for a time; the girl loves her doll a little less and the beautiful more, flowers, her dress, dainty things, and many others are her field. The boy likes a tramp in the woods and over the fields, a swim in the pool or stream, climbing a tree, hunting with his dog and gun or fishing in the stream. Each hold some of the spirit of the other and together are anxious to learn of things that are mysterious to them, hence are constantly asking questions to gain this knowledge. To this age or class the opportunity is boundless. We can get their interest only by appealing to the things that interest them, and Jesus, mindful of this, left with us the lessons of his life and teaching in this sphere, to-wit: the lilies of the valley, the birds of the heavens, feeding the thousands, helping the helpless, Dorcas making clothes for the poor, walking upon the water, climbing the mountain, fishing in the lakes, sowing seeds, and the transfiguration, and many others that can not be mentioned in this address.

3. Solemn fact age. Here the lives begin to blend again, and do it. Here they take on the more serious side of life, and a craving to do something takes hold of them,

thoughts of their own home and a life companion, studies in mechanic art, natural powers, operation of material substances and the working of the human body command their attention. To them the stories of Joseph, Moses, Ruth, Elijah, Daniel, Paul and Peter, James and John are interesting and applicable; lessons in philosophy, contrasting the vain and true; creation in Gods way and the false theories; the home life of Cornelius and his conversion; gaining the whole world and losing the soul; the elect lady and her children; Gaius and others will furnish them food for thought and strength

4. The sympathetic age. The two lives having blended, and their home having been blessed with children, they now love littleness, helplessness, feebleness and faith of the little ones in them. New responsibilities are upon them and they reach out for information; ideals for the future of their offspring loom up, and they step a little more carefully themselves. To this class we may go with the crucifixion more effectually, we may present the beauty and advantage of a holy life with more force, the necessity of faithful attention and attendance.

5. Old age. This class bring with it, as do the others, many of the characteristics of the ages preceding it; yet it is distinguished by this peculiarity: it lives in the past, on how they used to do in the civilities of social intercourse, domestic life, business and educational activities, and their religious actions. It is also noted they think more of crossing the river of death, heaven, home, angels, what they shall do in heaven, and so on. Here again the field is limitless, and so easily seen that I shall not go into details of it.

The last age is so far removed from the first and second ages that what interests the last one will drive the first ages from the church, if we deal wholly with things

that interest it.

These ages naturally exist, and therefore were planted in us by our Father in heaven. The church of Jesus Christ should take advantage of it and extend the kingdom for which He died. Show me a church that is not doing it and I will show you one that is inactive and has no influence upon the young of their community, and very seldom upon their own offspring. They wonder why their children do not become Christians, when the sin lies in their own door.

I do not defend any special method we are now using, that I am acquainted with, but I do say that we need to give the matter thought, and study to make the Christian home and church one joy, happiness, edification and usefulness to all classes. May God help us to do it is my prayer.

## WORLD EVANGELISM.

C. G. VINCENT.

## THE DIVINE AUTHORITY FOR MISSIONS.

In all matters connected with human redemption, Jesus, the victorious One over sin and death, received "all authority in heaven and on earth" from God, the Father. Therefore He commanded His chosen disciples to "go into the whole world" and "discipline the nations" or "to preach the gospel to every creature." Heralding the good news of salvation is the first duty of the disciples of Christ. It is their chief business! This divine law, "go and preach," from its hour of promulgation to this good moment, still stands clothed with "all authority in heaven and on earth." It has never been abrogated. Let no man attempt to make void this divine command. If we, for any purpose whatsoever, destroy the force of this command, we destroy the life and action of the church.

## THE DIVINE ARGUMENT FOR MISSIONS.

You find it in Rom. 10:13, 14. In this passage we find four interrogations asked by the inspired apostle, Paul. The proposition that "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" is set down and four heart-searching questions asked. Paul asks, "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" To ask the question is to answer it. It is morally and psychologically impossible for one to "call upon" Jesus or any one else for salvation unless one "believes" in that person. This act raises another question, "How shall they believe in him whom they have not heard?" Faith comes by hearing, so how can one believe in anything or in any one of whom one has not heard? It is simply impossible. But this second truth brings up another



problem, "How shall they hear without a preacher?" Paul asks! The propaganda of the Gospel from its beginning until now has been carried on by "preachers" directly, in person, or indirectly, by pen; so, after all, the world can not hear "without a preacher"! Paul goes to the limit of his logic, for this third fact provokes another question, namely, "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" They are to be sent by the church in the name and for the glory of Jesus Christ as we read in portions of the divine record.

Then the missionary returns and reports a number of converts. That simply means that some church *sent*, somebody *preached*, some people *heard*, some of those who heard *believed* and *called upon* Him (obeyed His will) and were *saved*. Where did their salvation begin? At home! Maybe in the collection plate!

#### THE NEED OF ORGANIZATION.

Beyond a doubt the Gospel met with phenomenal success in the New Testament period. What produced such results? Multiplicity of organizations? I heard a "pastor" once boast of thirteen organizations in his local church! Was the New Testament church organized? It was, but its organization was local and simple—not extensive and complex. The more complex a piece of mechanism is, the more liable it is to fail. The slogan in motor construction is: Maximum power with minimum machinery. While I was in France on one occasion when Ford and Fiat (and Italian made car) cars were being assigned to heads of the various departments, and I was asked which I preferred, a Ford or a Fiat. Knowing the simplicity of construction of the Ford and the complexity of the Fiat, I at once asked for a Ford, though the Fiat has more show and shine to it. I got there and back on time, whereas the other men were constantly

calling for help! The divine organization for evangelism is simple but effective. It is so simple that some fail to discover it!

#### JESUS AN ORGANIZER AND EXECUTIVE.

People often think of Him merely as a teacher and idealist, going about preaching, spending much time in meditation. But the life and work of Jesus show Him up as a masterful organizer and a skillful executive! Take just one of several examples, the feeding of the "five thousand men besides women and children." Before Him is a huge problem of administration. Is Jesus equal to it? He commands and order comes out of chaos. He has a plan and he works his plan! He commands the people to sit "in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties." He breaks the bread, the disciples serve it, the multitude feed upon it and are filled! Christ is the head of His church. The church itself is His organization to serve the bread of life to the hungry multitudes of earth. One cause for the wonderful success of the New Testament church, then, was its simple and effective organization.

#### THE CHARACTER OF THE PERSONNEL OF THE CHURCH.

The character of a company or corporation doing business in any line depends upon the character of the personnel of its management. It is so with the church. Study the Acts and observe the character of those who composed the New Testament church. They were united, "they were of one heart and soul." They were generous, some of them to an extreme. No place among them for the miserly and the selfish! They were prayerful. They were Spirit-filled souls. They were uncompromisingly bold. They would not compromise either with the sects of Judaism or the cults of paganism. They were zealous, for they persisted in evangelizing in spite of persecution even to the death, and when the church was scattered by

persecution, when they could not hold public meetings, they went about "preaching," or, better still, "talking" the word, for that is the sense of the Greek! In short, they were 100 per cent Christian and they believed and preached a 100 per cent sufficiency message. So, if the twentieth century church maintains the simplicity of organization and the faith and character of the first century church, like results may be expected. Let it be said humanly-devised missionary societies is not enough to satisfy the requirement of God and the need of the world. Suppose we would oppose sprinkling as baptism, but never teach nor practice immersion? Consistency is more than a jewel—it is *power!* A congregation or a Church of Christ that does not talk about, pray for and give to world-wide missions today does not and can not exercise the power it should in its community!

#### WHAT TO DO WHEN A MISSIONARY GOES WRONG.

What course is to be pursued when a missionary goes off into error or becomes immoral? At the outset let it be remembered that the missionary, though usually highly spiritual and conscientious, is human and liable to err or fall into sin. Let it be further stated that the missionary is surrounded by more temptations and by fewer restraining influences than the average preacher in the homeland. I need not go into details, but every missionary will verify my statement. But back to the question heading this paragraph. Duty of the appointing church is to make every effort to save him from his error or his sin. The appointing church should seek the aid in this effort of any co-operating church or churches. There should be joint action. During this effort at restoration the missionary should be supported fully. If the effort at restoration fails, the appointing church

should recall the missionary, pay his way back to the home church, discipline him and set about to find and appoint another missionary and send him out without delay. The appointing church should notify any co-operating church of its every action. If the missionary should refuse to respect the recall order from the church, he should be dropped at once and the co-operating brethren notified immediately, and straightway another man, true and faithful, should be selected and sent out to take the place of the missionary recalled or dismissed.

But suppose the appointing church fails to do its duty, what should the co-operating church do? First, try to get the appointing church to do its duty, but, failing in this, the co-operating church has two courses open, first, become an appointing church, select their own missionary and seek other churches to co-operate, and, second, to take fellowship with some other missionary on the field.

What to do in case a missionary makes mistakes in the administration of funds entrusted to him? If he undertakes a project with the view of planting the truth in a heathen land, sincerely believing it a good opening for doing good, and for some reason or other, outside of his control, the project fails, I say, the thing for the appointing and co-operating churches to do is to write him a letter of sympathy (for it hurts him more than it does any one at home) and ask him to be more cautious (and he will, for experience is a wonderful teacher) and continue to support him and pray for him. It might be well to advise him to consult his fellow workers, both native and American, before he involves himself again in some big undertaking!

*But to abandon the field simply because a missionary goes wrong or maladministers some money, and so let the heathen remain to live and die in darkness, without hope,*



*is bad logic and worse Christianity!* Let us bear in mind, too, that projects we undertake for the glory of God in the homeland sometimes come to naught. This well-known fact will make us more charitable in thinking on the mistakes of the missionary.

#### A WORD TO PREACHERS.

There is a fearful responsibility resting upon every minister of the Gospel of Christ in the matter of teaching, educating and exhorting churches to their duty in world-wide evangelism. As a rule a church is governed in its thought and life by the teaching of the preacher who instructs the membership from the pulpit. Now let us bear in mind that there are a great variety of Bible subjects from which a preacher may select his themes! A man might preach ten years to a community, preaching always on Bible themes, and never touch on the significance and scope of the great commission Christ left His disciples! I think all agree that there are relative values in the realm of Bible subjects, some subjects more important than others. But just how any preacher of the Gospel can, year after year, fail to see and emphasize the "*Go, teach all nations*" at the close of the Gospels, the final message of the divine Savior, is simply beyond my comprehension. There are four great "*alls*" in the commission, "all authority," "all nations," "all things" commanded to be observed, then the promise of the presence of the Lord "all the days"! The commission is the marching order of the church. When this command is withdrawn the church must halt. Since it is still in force, the church must go forward or be guilty of mutiny and subject to the divine court-martial! And what shall be said of the leader of the mutinous "soldiers of the cross"? No preacher discharges his full duty to a church unless he teaches the church its duty and privilege in carrying

the Gospel to lands beyond the seas where the people sit in the shadow of deep darkness and bow down their back always to idols made with their own hands!

I regret to say it, but a fact it is just the same, namely, the reason why so many preachers are silent on this greatest of Bible themes is, they fear their support may be cut short. But this is near-sighted selfishness. The joy and enthusiasm that come to a missionary church always intensifies its self-sacrificing spirit, and thus the church takes good care of its preacher and at the same time reaches out into the fields beyond! God, according to promise, multiplies both the desire and the ability to give, provided the people are taught His laws and conditions connected with this grace!

In going about over the country as I have in recent years, I have found that where we have a "live-wire" preacher, one who teaches and leads the church into the God-ordained channels of action, we have working churches whose faith toward God is gone forth into every place, and from whom "is sounded forth the word of the Lord" not only at home but also abroad. When I find the indifferent preacher, and their name is legion, I am certain of finding an inactive and sluggish church! All the talk about being apostolic and at the same time being either o-missionary or anti-missionary constitutes an inconsistency worthy of the most severe rebuke. The time has long since come when the man who stands in the pulpit must learn to declare the whole counsel of God on this subject as well as on other Bible themes. The eldership and membership should insist upon it, for the preacher who fails to do it is robbing the church of a great joy and an exalted privilege!

THE GOSPEL ENTERS EUROPE.

Have you ever thought of how the Gospel came to us

in this fair land? Let us go back to the New Testament and other history and learn the lesson. It will help to make us humble and grateful.

Turn to the sixteenth chapter of Acts. Paul and Silas and Timothy are about to begin missionary work where Paul had left off. Phrygia and Galatia had been evangelized by Paul and Barnabas. So the next logical field was Asia, just west a little. Strange but true it was that the "Holy Spirit had forbidden them to speak the word in Asia"! It was the adjacent province. To preach there would have been less expensive than to go where they were finally led! But the Lord's logic and the Lord's ways are higher than ours! So the missionary band turned their faces eastward toward Bithynia and Pontus, the next logical field, for it was so close! But again "the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not"! So they came down to Troas, a seaport, the gateway to Europe, and they were uncertain as to what to do until Paul saw a vision in the night. "There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us." So they "concluded the Lord had called them to preach in Macedonia, and at once they took passage aboard the first ship crossing the Aegean Sea. They disembarked at Neapolis and proceeded nine miles to Philippi. What did they find? Not a multitude gathered in the market place eager to hear their message. Not a synagogue packed with Jews hungering for the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the world's Redeemer. Paul and his helpers "knocked about" in the city for several days, no doubt, wondering about the meaning of the vision he had seen at Troas. On making inquiry, he learned that a "prayer meeting" was held on each Sabbath outside the city by the river. They decided to attend. They did so, and found some "women come ogether." They "spake

the word unto them." Among them was a certain woman, by name Lydia, a dealer in purple and a native of Thyatira, a convert to the Jewish faith. She "gave heed unto the things spoken by Paul." She and her household obeyed the Gospel. Shortly afterward the jailer and his household were converted. This was the first evangelistic effort in Europe! This church "sent once and again" unto Paul's needs. He carried on his work in Macedonia and Achaia, planting the truth in every important center. After completing his third missionary tour, Paul finally reached the far-distant Rome, where he preached more than two years. The center of Christian activity was removed from Jerusalem, the place of the birth of Christianity, to Antioch of Syria. From this place it was shifted to distant Rome! From Rome during the following centuries the Gospel went forth into all Europe saving the people from idols. Up to A. D. 550 practically all Europe except the islands north of the "Channel" had been evangelized. A very interesting thing occurred in Rome about this time. Gregory saw in the market place in Rome three sturdy, blue-eyed, light-haired young men, being offered for sale as slaves! He asked who these young men might be. Some said, "They are angels." His heart was touched and he made a play upon the word and said, "Ah, they are meet to associate with the angels." "What is their province?" he inquired. "De Ira," came the reply. He thought for a moment, and said, "They shall be saved from (de) the wrath (ira) of God"! He next asked who their king was. He was "Aelle." He shouted, "Alleluiah! They shall sing the praises of our God!" Gregory then offered himself to the chief bishop as a missionary to the idol worshippers of the extreme north. He was told that he could not be spared. He was disappointed. About ten years later he



became the head bishop, and the first thing he did was to appoint an able preacher named Augustine and forty other workers and sent them forth beyond the channel to evangelize the British Isles and to save them from their numerous idols. Three hundred years ago the "Pilgrim Fathers" landed on the eastern shores of this blessed land, bringing with them their religion and their Bible! It matters not from what country or language of Europe your ancestors might have come, at one time in their history they worshiped idols just as the heathen people do today! What if the missionary spirit had been lacking in centuries gone as it is among so many of us today? The only answer is: We today would be worshiping idols made with human hands!

FIVE FUNDAMENTAL REASONS WHY HEATHEN  
RELIGIONS HAVE FAILED TO MEET THE  
NEEDS OF THE HUMAN FAMILY.

1. The suppression of woman. She is looked upon as a sort of chattel or a mere servant of man. One heathen religion compares her to a cow! She does not stand on an equality with man before the civil law. She is not protected and honored as the 'weaker vessel' nor is she given her rightful place as the Mother of the World.

2. There is no foundation upon which a superstructure of high morality can be erected. In heathen lands morality in a large measure is a matter of expediency. In other words, people are not taught to be honest for the sake of honesty itself, truthful for the sake of truth itself, pure for the sake of purity itself. Christ teaches that consciousness of a moral responsibility to a living, just and holy God is the only restraining and at the same time the only propelling power in human actions.

3. They have all failed to discover the will and

character of God. Idolatry is a futile effort to picturize Divinity. They cry of Philip, "Show us the Father," which is the appeal of the human race, is unanswered. It was left for Jesus Christ to give in His life and character the true likeness of God.

4. The greatest of all human problems, the removal of the guilt of sin, is unsolved. The consciousness of wrong thought and wrong action is as extensive as the human race. A Hindu student came to a missionary, after having carefully compared Christianity with his religion, and said, "I have found a great difference between your religion and mine." The missionary, anticipating an argument, said, "Well, what is the great difference?" He was much surprised when the student replied, "You have a Savior whereas I have none"!

5. Nothing to comfort and sustain in trial and in the greatest crisis in this life, death. At such a time, for example, the Japanese say, "Shigata ga nai," there is no help, whereas Christians say with their Christ, "Not my will, but thine be done"! They are resigned, but to what? To *fate*, blind and meaningless, but we to a *Father*, all-wise and loving! The heathen life is a dirge. All their music is written in the minor key and all their great novels end with a sad chapter!

#### A WORD ABOUT QUALIFICATIONS.

The missionary must be "rooted and grounded" in the faith, must have a good knowledge of the Bible, must be honorable and conscientious, must have good financial judgment. He should be able to speak well, to sing well. He should be thoroughly educated. He should have a good personality, be of a cheerful and happy disposition. He must be physically fit in every respect. He should be free from "hobbyisms." Some people think that if a man can not do much at home in the way of preaching, etc.,

he might be able to do a good work among the heathen! There was never a greater mistake made! We need high-grade and able workers for the foreign fields, and it is not fair to anybody involved to send inferior workers!

#### THE MOTIVES THAT LEAD TO A DECISION.

Just before we started to the foreign field a missionary then on the field wrote us and requested us to analyze and review the motives that entered our decision to go to the foreign field. He feared that too much romance or too much desire "to see the world or too much of the wrong thing might have entered and controlled our decision. As I now look back over my motives and, without prejudice, review them, I would not deny for a moment that the spirit of both romance and adventure had a part in our decision, but I know it was only a *minor* consideration. But would this spirit of romance and adventure, since the *major* motive was to obey God and save souls, disqualify a missionary? In time of war the spirit of romance and adventure enter the decision of the soldier and the marine who volunteer for the service, but this fact does not hinder him from making a good soldier or a good marine. It does not keep him from doing his duty, for the *major* motive that led him into the service was patriotism! As I now think of the missionaries whom I learned to know and to love for their work's sake I do not hesitate to say that in so far as I know there is not to be found on the face of the earth a body of men and women so consecrated to God, so devoted to their Master, so much in love with the souls of men, and so eager to save them from idolatry and sin, so determined to do their work 'as unto God,' so energetic and self-sacrificing as that great company of workers who hold aloft the torch of light and truth in the benighted lands

beyond the rolling seas. The happiest period of our life was the five years we spent among such people and in such a glorious work, and we would to God that we could be there now!



GOD HATH SPOKEN.

(Heb. 1:1.)

A. LEROY ELKINS.

In introducing the letter to the Hebrew Christians the Apostle Paul begins with the remarkable statement that "God at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son."

This bold affirmation is either true and far reaching or it is untrue. That God has spoken to the human family may be proven with certainty. I have often said that the proof that God has spoken is proven with greater certainty than that George Washington was the President of the United States. That each of these statements are true is proven in the same way. We have monuments that point to each and to their achievements; we have documents that have come down to us from the very time in which they lived; we have tradition and cotemporary history; and nowhere do we find any counter proof to cast doubt on the matters in hand.

No one doubts that George Washington lived at the time stated, nor that he did those things that are recorded of him. The difference in the certainty of the proof in each case is not a difference of uniformity in testimony, it is not that there is counter proof concerning either the one or the other; for there is no counter proof in either. It is solely a difference in the *character* of the *tests* of *sincerity* and a *reason* for deception in either case.

No such tests have ever been put to witnesses as were put to those who testify on the facts set forth in the Bible.

"God hath spoke." In this statment Paul assumes

that the Jews were strong believers in God. That He had spoken in times past to the fathers by the prophets. Since God has spoken thus, why not conclude, not an unreasonable one, that he hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son?

For centuries they had been worshipers of the one true and living God, and one of their prophets had said: "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God."

Surely no one but a fool would dare to say such a thing. To proclaim that there is no God we declare that we know all that there is in all the universe. If there is one thing that we do not know, that one thing might be that there is a God. The one who says there is no God puts himself in the class with the fool. But they tell us that these divine beings, God, devil, angels, these places we call heaven and hell, are all creatures of the imagination. Man just imagined these. But I boldly say that the man who declares that these could be creatures of the imagination does not know the psychology of the human mind. It is not the function of the imagination to create thought. The imagination can only use the materials in hand, and out of them it may build air castles, but it can not obtain information from the exterior world. We have just five senses, and one or more of these are brought into action in the process of perception, viz: hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting and feeling. We get the idea of sweet, sour, acid, alkali, etc., from the taste; we get the idea of odor from the smell; we get the idea of rough, smooth, hot, cold, etc., from the feeling, and through the senses of hearing and seeing we get the idea of God and the knowledge of His will. It can't be had in any other way.

That we can not create by imagination may be fully shown by an effort to imagine a sixth sense. Try it, ye

doubting Thomases, and when you have imagined a sixth sense, tell us about it—tell us its work and its location.

Man must have learned of God through one of these senses else the thought could not be there. Man may forget the nature of God, he may forget His will, he may not know His attributes, but the knowledge that there *is one* can never come into the mind of a human being except by *revelation*. Not only must man need to have learned that lesson in that way, but he must have learned to *talk* from the one who gave him his being. Man did not create himself, else he could create other things. Anything that could create itself could continue the work after self creation. Then man is not a creator, but is a creature. To admit a creature admits a Creator. There can be no plan without a planner. There can be no design without a designer.

That God has spoken may be proven without the Bible testimony.

We *learn* to talk. No one has been known to talk until they learn it from some one who has learned it from some one else. We learn to speak the mother tongue. There are well-authenticated cases of persons born with the full set of teeth; but in all the history of the world no one has ever been born who had a tongue.

There had to be a first man or there could never have been the second man nor the millions who live on the earth today. The first man, as all the rest, had to *learn* to talk. He must have come into this existence as a *man*. Had he come into the world as a *babe*, with no one to care for him, he would have died. But as man some one must teach him the law of life, how to eat, what to eat, the names of things and their use in his life that he was to live on the earth. There was but one way for him to

learn to talk, and that was for the one who placed him here to teach him. God spake to man and taught him the things that he ought to know. In this way we arrive at the conclusion that man learned to talk from the Creator and that man at the first spake the vernacular that God taught him.

Animals are controlled by instinct and do not need to be taught what to eat, how to eat, and the laws concerning their existence. Man is controlled by reason and must be taught all that he knows. The power to reason and to communicate his thoughts to his offspring is the great thing that distinguishes man from the animals. Man being endowed with reason, intelligence and the ability to communicate intelligence to his offspring, has made constant progress in all the ages of his existence on the earth. In this field of progress man operates alone. God is perfect and progress is impossible to Him. Animals have made no advance in all the ages of the world. Man comes to the swollen stream and seeks to cross by clinging to a floating log, for he must learn to swim else he can never swim. Animals plunge in and swim across, for they are controlled by instinct. If one is drowned in the crossing, the others get no lesson from it and never seek a safer way to cross. When man is turned under by the single log, he emerges to seize, if possible, the second, and discovers that by holding to two he can float safely to the shore. These two suggest the raft, and the raft suggests the canoe, while the canoe suggests the still greater vessel. Thus the process of reason and construction continues, until today we have the mighty ocean steamers that plow the bosom of the great deep and bid defiance to the storms that play upon its surface. Animals make no advance. The birds build their nests today just as they did in the rafters of Noah's



ark. Monkeys live the same monkey life that they have lived in all the ages.

If the first man who ever lived had been a mere animal, no advance would have been in evidence today; for animals make none. No matter what the experience of other animals may be, the rest of the animal kingdom never get a lesson from it. So if man were a mere animal, we should never make another step in advance. *Surely man is capable and God has spoken.*

But I am sometimes asked why God does not speak now. I answer, because it is not best that God should teach the human family in that way at this time. The Apostle Peter says: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when made known unto you the power and coming our Lord Jesus Christ; but we were eye-witnesses of his majesty. For we received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came to him from the excellent glory a voice such as this: This is my beloved Son in whom I delight. And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard when we were with him in the holy mount; but we have a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that you take heed" (II Pet. 1:16). God's word, given as it was by every infallible proof, is better as a guide to man than an audible voice from the clouds day by day.

God could as easily speak from the clouds day by day as to reveal His will; but since He has revealed His will, I know that God did the best thing, and that therefore the revelation was the best way. When God has spoken, enough has been said.

Truth is always better than falsehood upon any matter in the world. "By their fruit shall ye know

them." The fruits of faith and obedience to the teachings of the Bible prove that it is true.

It is not fair to compare a half-hearted Christian with one who is about a half-way infidel; nor is it fair to compare one raised under vicious surroundings, who yet claims to be a Christian, with one who has been reared under fairly good Christian influences, and pretends to be an infidel.

"A little leaven leavens the whole lump." Take one who has been reared under the very best Christian influences and has developed into a real Christian character, and compare him with one who has been reared away from Christian influences and wholly under the influences of unbelievers—one who believes that we are just animals in greater evolution than other animals—that the highest enjoyment that we may have is animal enjoyment—and compare these two, and you have the matter demonstrated. This will show that the fruits of Bible faith are good fruit, while the fruit of unbelief is bad.

"God hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son." The book that contains what He said is the wonder book of the ages. It is the only book upon the face of the earth that can not be convicted of containing an error. It is the only historical book that contains history, none of which can be impeached. Its history is correct and its geography beyond criticism. When the writers and compilers of Encyclopedia Britannica sent forth these great volumes they followed it almost immediately with another volume calling attention to its errors.

The Bible is the only book in all the earth whose writers could write the history of events before they occur. They wrote much that was in the future when

they wrote, and no man can show a blunder made by them. The history of the past as given in the Bible no man can impeach. The history of the kingdoms, their rulers, length of time they were in authority, their successors, how the government came to an end, the territory embraced, the nations and governments that were contemporary, with even the minutest details concerning them, stands unimpeached by any authentic history in the world.

In the second chapter of Daniel's wonderful writings he dares to say that, from the fall of the Babylonian empire until the coming of Messiah the Prince, there would arise just three kingdoms, and that in their order each of them would be weaker than the one that preceded it, culminating in an empire that should be partly strong and partly broken. This broken condition he illustrates by the toes of the feet of the great image that the king saw in his dream. The kingdom thus pictured was none other than the Roman empire, that kingdom that was in authority when our Lord hung on Golgotha's brow.

This empire is known to have had just ten divisions, and that when its hold was broken through the power of the Gospel of the Son of God there has never been an absolute world empire since. There never will be another until the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdom of God and of His Christ.

Daniel said that during the time of this kingdom "the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed." God did that thing and that institution has had a positive existence in the world for over eighteen hundred years. To deny the existence, the power and the influence of that kingdom upon men and governments is to deny the plainest facts in history.

## A WELL-KNOWN LAW.

The law of reproduction as given in the very beginning of the Bible is in perfect harmony with all that we know in the world. "Let everything bring forth after its kind." No exception can be found. If this law did not hold good, no one could tell what to plant in the springtime. Otherwise a man might plant corn and raise pumpkins instead.

Darwinism, the only real rival of the Bible in all the earth, teaches that everything came by evolution, that we came from a lower order of animals, and that these came from a still lower order; and that this line can be run to a single organic cell. Here is where Darwinism completely breaks down, commits suicide and digs its own grave. *The world that we know does not do things that way. Nothing comes from a single cell.* The law as we see it in operation today is that it requires the positive and the negative—the male and the female. This is just as true of the vegetable kingdom as it is of the animal.

The fundamntal basis—its hypothesis—is contrary to all we know, contradicts the laws of nature and can not be true. Failing in its major premise, it falls to the ground as untrue. Yet, one of their writers, in writing out what they call the biogenetic law, reasons as follows: "There is every reason for believing that the frogs and salamanders, which now stand higher in classification than the fishes, were developed from the fishes in earlier ages in the course of progressive evolution. Once upon a time they were fishes. Putting it in the form of a law it run: each new individual must, in its development, pass through the form of its parents' ancestors before it assumes the perfect form itself. If a new individual frog is to be developed, and if the ancestors of the whole frog stem were fishes, the first thing to be developed from the



frog's egg would be a fish. And it will only later assume the form of a frog. That is a simple and pictorial outline of what we mean when we speak of the biogenetic law. Let us bear in mind that evolution proceeded from certain amphibia to the lizard, and from these to the birds and mammals. That is a long journey, but we have no alternative. If the amphibia (such as the frog and the salamander) descends from the fishes, all the higher classes up to man himself must have done so. Hence the law must have transmitted even to ourselves this ancestral form of the gill-breathing fish. What a mad idea, some will say, that man should at one time be a tadpole like a frog! And yet—there's no help in prayer, as Falstaff said—even the human germ, or embryo, passes through a stage at which it shows the outlines of gills on the throat just like a fish. It is the same with the dog, the horse, the kangaroo, the duck, mole, the bird, the crocodile, the turtle, the lizard. They all have the same form. Nor is this an isolated fact. From the fish was evolved the amphibian. From this came the lizard. From the lizard came the bird. The lizard has solid teeth in its mouth. The bird has no teeth in its beak. That is to say, it has none today. It had when it was a lizard." And they expect that people who have enough gray matter to go in out of a hard rain to believe that kind of thing. In Meyer's School History we are told that the child in its embryotic state passes through all these forms. First like a tadpole, then they develop that which resembles gills and scales—showing that man has evolved through, and of course now out of these ancient forms—that during this embryonic stage there is a time when the tail is longer than the body—thus showing that we were once monkeys—but that before birth we develop into the form of a man. This view is advocated by the high-up edu-

cators of this nation and of the old countries as well. Can you take the medicine? Is there an experienced physician on the earth that does not know that such is falsehood, that it can not be a mistake? Such are the theories of men.

God has erected monuments of his wonderful achievements among men, and these are of such nature as to furnish the *greatest proofs* that He has spoken; the easiest to be understood. No monument has ever been erected on matters that were fiction. Only on well-known matters of fact. No one could deny that Abraham Lincoln lived and that he did the great things said of him. We have monuments erected by those who revere his memory and the great service that he rendered to our republic. Documents have come down to us from that very age and are all backed up by tradition. There is not to be found any counter proof, and so no one but a foolish jay would dare call it in question. The monuments, the documents and the tradition all being in perfect accord, makes the proof beyond question.

But this is precisely what we have to prove that the things said in the Bible are true. The Fourth of July as a monumental day in the history of our country, the Declaration of Independence that has come down to us, the cotemporary history and the tradition being in perfect accord, all doubt is dispelled and we celebrate the Fourth of July as our national birthday.

In God's wonderful work among men we note the Sabbath day that can be traced back step by step to Moses, we can do likewise with the Passover, with the day of Pentecost, the feast of tabernacles, etc., and to this we have the documents from that very time, and tradition the strongest that the world has ever known, to

confirm it all. Since there is no counter proof, we conclude that God "spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets." No stronger proof has been offered on any matter of history. If God has not spoken, how can you account for the fact that all nations, no matter how ignorant, no matter how far into savagery they may have gone, all believe in sacrifice? They may not know the true God, they may have lost sight of Him, they may have forgotten the kind of sacrifice He requires, but among all the nations of the earth yet known, every one of them believes that there is a God, that there is a Deity, that there is a Great Spirit, and that that infinite one sometimes becomes displeased with their conduct, that something must be done to appease that wrath, and in every case they believe that He requires sacrifice. Can you tell where that universal idea came from? Did they just imagine it? Why did they all imagine alike on that and not the same way about circumcision, the same way about intermarrying with other nations, the same way about God keeping them separate from all others? Why not imagine the same on all these matters? Do you believe that the whole Jewish nation could have been induced to begin keeping a law that required them, under certain conditions, to kill their own sons for stubbornness? Read the requirements of the law of Moses and ask yourself whether a sensible nation that had just come from bondage would have kept the law of Moses at all unless they *knew* that the things Moses said concerning the signs and wonders wrought in their presence were not done? Would they have rebelled? Did they rebel or did they accept it? Almost thirty-five centuries ago the history of the Jews was foretold as we know it today. Did those who wrote just guess it? When the writers told them that "God will scatter you," did they know

what they were talking about or were they just guessing? When he said, "You will become a hiss and a by-word," did he *know* what he was talking about, or did he just guess it? We know that such is the case today. "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them; for I am the Lord their God" (Lev. 26:44). "Lo the people shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Did Moses know? Are the Jews reckoned among the nations anywhere? Where is the land that the Jew can call "home" today?

"For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee; though I make a full end of all nations whether I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished" (Jer. 30:11). Did Jeremiah *know* or was he just guessing?

Have the Jews been scattered? Have they been kept while all the nations that fought against them have been lost? Where are the seven strong nations that fought against them in the time of Joshua? Where are the Babylonians, the Macedonians, the Midianites, the Hittites, and the other great nations of antiquity? They are gone into oblivion, while today there are more pure-blood sons of Abraham than there were in the time of Solomon.

Again we show the truthfulness of the Bible writers by the great train of fulfilled prophecies concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. It is said by those who have taken the time to count that there is not less than five hundred prophecies of our Lord and of His wonderful life, work, death, resurrection, ascension, and His coronation at the



right hand of God. The prophets see Him as He heals the sick, as He gives sight to the blind, as He preaches the Gospel to the poor, as He rides into Jerusalem upon an ass and upon the colt, the foal of an ass, and gives an account of the conduct of the people on that occasion. They well remembered that Zechariah had told that: "Tell ye the daughters of Zion, Behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek and riding upon an ass and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." If our Lord had ridden into Jerusalem upon just one animal, and that the ordinary beast of burden, nothing special would be indicated, and no special attention attracted. But when our Lord thus rode into the city every student of prophecy concerning Him would be made to remember what the prophet Zechariah had said. No wonder they shout: "Behold your king cometh."

A thousand years before our Lord lived among the Judean hills David saw Him and exclaimed: "A reproach among men and despised of the people" (Psa. 22:6). "All they that see me laugh me to scorn" (v. 7). David sees him on trial and declared: "They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots" (v. 17). Six hundred years before He came Daniel saw him "cut off" for the sins of the people. Almost six hundred years before our Lord died Isaiah said: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter and as a lamb is dumb before his shearer so he opened not his mouth." But Daniel stakes his reputation as a prophet by saying that it would be just a definite number of years from the "command to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince" (Dan. 9:24-27). A thousand years before Jesus died on the cross David saw the crucifixion and exclaimed: "They pierced my hands and my feet." This was never true of David and could

not have other than a prophetic meaning. David is made to foresee the awful thirst of our Savior as He thus died and He cried out: "My tongue cleaveth to the roof of my mouth." David sees the mob around Him and said: "Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gasped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion." "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels." David sees Him as the Father turns His back on Him that He might die for the world, and shrieks as one in utter despair: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But in final faith and anticipation of God's faithfulness, he watches for the resurrection of our Lord and exclaims: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hades neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption."

Hosea sees Him as He lies in the tomb and declares: "After two days will he revive us: in the *third day* he will rise up, and we shall live in his sight" (chap. 6:2). Daniel after seeing Him cut off from the people, sees Him as He "ascends to the ancient of days in the clouds of heaven" and see Him brought "near before him and there was given *him* a kingdom."

David sees Him in His ascension and sings the song of the angels, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in." When He was escorted into the presence of the ancient of days and this kingdom was given Him, as Daniel said it should be, Zechariah sees Him there and exclaims: "Behold, the man whose mane is the branch, and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build the temple of Jehovah; even he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and

shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." David said in *Psa. 4:11*, "Thy throne is in heaven." This kingdom has had a positive existence in the world for many centuries and shall continue until the time when death shall have been swallowed up in victory.

The Bible, when studied from the viewpoint of its promises, with reference to its covenants, its wonderful system of jurisprudence as given by Moses, the priesthood as given in both Testaments, the sacrifices of the Old as typifying the sacrifice of Jesus to establish the New, the tabernacle service as foreshadowing the service in the new dispensation—the perfect harmony and unity of thought throughout the whole is proof that can not be found equaled on any other matter upon which proof has been brought to bear. Now we hear the testimony of a few witnesses that in a great measure agree concerning a case where life is at stake, and we decide that the man on trial is guilty and the authorities put the criminal to death on that testimony, but the witnesses are not put to death to test their veracity, their sincerity. They are only on their honor. But the witnesses who testified that Jesus arose, that they saw Him for many days after He arose from the dead, that He ate and drank in their presence many times, that they saw the nails driven in His hands when He was crucified, that they saw the nail prints in His hands after He arose, that they saw the place in His side where the soldiers pierced Him after He was dead on the cross, that they knew him well for several years before He died, that he had for these several years been their constant and close companion, that they could not be mistaken in Him, that they not only saw Him put in Joseph's new tomb and a large stone put at

the entrance and the seal of the government put upon that stone, that a Roman guard was placed there to prevent His body from being stolen, but they declare that they saw Him after He came back from the dead and that they saw Him ascend into heaven, that a cloud received Him out of their sight, that angels appeared to them at that time and told them that that same Jesus that you see go into heaven shall return again as you see Him go into heaven. When called in question for such testimony they never turn aside from their statement, but, on the other hand, thousands of them stood firm as witnesses, and the apostles, who were chosen witnesses, and *knew* whether it were true or false, seal their testimony by dying rather than recant. Such witnesses have never borne testimony on any other matter.



OUR PLEA STATED.

BY JESSE P. SEWELL.

The text for our sermon on this occasion is I Peter 3:15, and reads as follows: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

INTRODUCTION.

The existence of a separate body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ is not an indifferent matter. There must be a real reason for such existence, or it is inexcusable and sinful. We should be "ready" and able at any time to give "a reason," not merely an excuse, for our existence, and to give this reason "with meekness and fear."

By "our" I refer to those believers who profess to have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins through His blood, and who are serving and worshipping God as members of the church to which He added them when He saved them.

I shall not at this time endeavor to establish either the scripturalness or reasonableness of "our plea," but only to present a clear, comprehensive statement of it. Without regard to whether it is established in scripture and reason, I shall labor to state this plea in such a way that there may be no misunderstanding as to what it is. If I can succeed in this undertaking, you will then be in a position to consider the "reason" for it.

I. A PLEA FOR RESTORATION.

Ours is not a plea for a new church or denomination, but it is rather a plea for a restoration, among all be-

lievers, of the doctrine, faith, spirit and practice of the New Testament church.

It is well that we consider here the statement of some of our outstanding men of a hundred years ago. I quote first from "Last Will and Testament of Springfield Presbytery." This document was issued by the Presbytery of Springfield, sitting at Cane Ridge, in Bourbon County, Kentucky, and was signed by Barton W. Stone and associates June 28, 1804. In the "Impremis" this document says, "We will that this body die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the body of Christ at large; for there is but one body, and one spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling."

There can be no mistaking this language. It was not their purpose to establish a new church or denomination. They were convicted deeply of the sin of denominational division and were resolved to clear themselves by dissolving their body and sinking "into union with the body of Christ at large."

On September 7, 1809, more than five years after Barton W. Stone and his associates issued this statement in Kentucky, Thomas Campbell and his son, Alexander, sent forth their "Declaration and Address" from Buffalo, N. Y. In that document, which has since become so famous, they said: "That this society by no means considers itself a church, nor does at all assume to itself the powers peculiar to such a society; nor do the members, as such, consider themselves as standing connected in that relation; nor as at all associated for the peculiar purpose of church association; but merely as voluntary advocates for church reformation." This language very clearly shows that these two great men had not even a slight idea of starting a denomination or church.

In that same document they said again, "Dearly be-

loved brethren, why should we deem it a thing incredible that the Church of Christ, in this highly-favored country, should resume that original unity, peace and purity which belongs to its constitution, and constitutes its glory? Or, is there anything that can be justly deemed necessary for this desirable purpose, both to conform to the model and adopt the practice of the primitive church, expressly exhibited in the New Testament? Whatever alterations this might produce in any or in all of the churches should, we think, neither be deemed inadmissible nor ineligible. Surely such alteration would be every way for the better, and not for the worse, unless we should suppose the divinely-inspired rule to be faulty and defective. Were we then in our church constitution and managements to exhibit a complete conforming to the apostolic church, would we not be, in that respect, as perfect as Christ intended we should be? And should not this suffice us?

Nothing could be more clearly established than this paragraph establishes that Thomas and Alexander Campbell were aiming at restoration among all believers and not at starting a new denomination, or even at an denominational separate existence.

That there may be a still clearer understanding, I quote further from the same document: "It is, to us, a pleasing consideration that all the churches of Christ which mutually acknowledge each other as such, are not only agreed in the great doctrines of faith and holiness, but are also materially agreed as to the positive ordinances of Gospel institution; so that our differences, at most, are about the things in which the kingdom of God does not consist, that is, about matters of private opinion or human invention. What a pity that the kingdom of God should be divided about such things! Who, then,

would not be first among us to give up human invention in the worship of God, and to cease from imposing his private opinion upon his brethren, that our breaches might thus be healed? Who would not willingly conform to the original pattern laid down in the New Testament, for this happy purpose?"

If further proof were needed, it could be given abundantly; but these quotations demonstrate beyond any doubt that it was the restoration among all of the churches of the original doctrine, faith, spirit and practice of the New Testament church and not the starting of a new church, that these great men had in their hearts. The creation of another denomination was the very thing they did not design.

"But," it is said, "you people are a denomination; you do exist separately." I answer, yes, we do exist separately; no, we are not a denomination.

Mr. Stone, the Campbells and their associates were greatly surprised and deeply grieved. None of the denominations would "be the first among us to give up human inventions in the worship of God" and "cease from imposing" their "private opinions on their brethren" and willingly conform to the original pattern laid down in the New Testament. On the other hand, they soon found themselves branded heretics and "turned out" of the various denominations in which they had their membership. Thus they were forced to a "separate" but not to a "denominational" existence in order that they might continue this great plea. They simply resolved to speak where the Bible speaks and to be silent where it is silent; to accept the scriptures as their only rule of faith and practice; to obey the Gospel of Christ, trust Him for salvation, be members of the church to which God added them when He saved them and to join nothing



else religious, and continue their plea for restoration.

We exist separately today, but simply as Christians and not as a denomination. Each local congregation is free and independent under God to study, understand and practice the scriptures for itself. It is responsible to no denominational organization.

"But," it is insisted, "you claim to be the only Christians." We do not; we claim to be Christians only, and our plea is that all believers should be Christians only, and not denominational Christians. Our plea is a plea for the restoration of the original doctrine, faith, spirit and practice of the New Testament church.

## II. A PLEA FOR UNION.

Ours is a plea for union. It is not a plea for consolidation of denominations, church federation, or the establishment of an ecclesiastical trust or combine. It is a plea for such a union with Christ and such conformity to His teaching as would bring all believers in Him into fellowship and co-operation.

On this point I also quote from "Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery" as follows: "Imprimis. We will that this body die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the body of Christ at large; for there is but one body, and one spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling." "Item. We will, that our name of distinction, with its reverend title, be forgotten, that there be but one Lord over God's heritage, and his name one."

It was not easy for these good people to dissolve their organization, for them to give up their name, to sign and send forth this wonderful document. But their deep, earnest desire for the peace and union of believers in Christ made it possible. They had no idea of the uniting of denominations or the federation of churches. They

saw and felt the sin of sectarian division. They could not act for others. They were not responsible for others. They could dissolve their denominational organizations and sink into the body of Christ at large, be Christians only. They could drop their distinctive human name and wear only the name of Christ. These things they did that they might contribute their part to union of believers.

I shall quote from "The Witnesses Address." This is an address issued by Barton W. Stone and others explaining the action of the Springfield Presbytery. On the point now being discussed they said: "With deep concern they viewed the divisions and party spirit among professing Christians, principally owing to the adoption of human creeds and forms of government. While they were united under the name of a presbytery, they endeavored to cultivate a spirit of love and unity with all Christians, but found it extremely difficult to suppress the idea that they themselves were a party separate from others."

In their "Declaration and Address," after quoting several scriptures, Thomas and Alexander Campbell said: "With such encouragements as these, what should deter us from the heavenly enterprise, or render hopeless the attempt of accomplishing, in due time, an entire union of all the churches in faith and practice, according to the word of God?" These same scriptures are today a part of God's inspired word. With their encouragement we plead for the accomplishment of this heavenly enterprise, the union of all the churches in faith and practice, according to the word of God.

These great leaders said further: "Our dear brethren of all denominations will please to consider that we have our educational prejudices and particular customs to

struggle against as well as they. But this we do sincerely declare, that there is nothing we have hitherto received as matter of faith or practice which is not expressly taught and enjoined in the word of God, either in express terms or approved precedent, that we would not heartily relinquish, that so we might return to the original constitutional unity of the Christian church; and in this happy unity, enjoy full communion with all our brethren, in peace and charity."

It is not an easy thing to do. It is easy to become partisan. It is easy to become devoted to custom. It is easy to decide that we have found and that we practice the entire truth and to close our minds against further study and discovery. But we are making a sincere effort, if not a completely successful one, to hold ourselves ready to relinquish anything which we may practice, not expressly taught and enjoined in the word of God, that we might return to the original constitutional unity of the Christian church, and enjoy full communion with all true believers in Christ. This is our plea for union. We plead with all believers to join us in this plea.

I beg your indulgence for one more quotation on this point. This one is also from the "Declaration and Address," and is as follows: "Having said so much to solicit attention and prevent mistake, we submit as follows: 1. That the church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one; consisting of all those in every place that profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him in all things according to the scriptures, and that manifest the same by their tempers and conduct, and of none else, as none else can be truly and properly called Christians. 2. That although the church of Christ upon earth must necessarily exist in particular and distinct societies, locally separate one from

another, yet there ought to be no schism, no uncharitable divisions among them. They ought to receive each other as Christ Jesus hath also received them, to the glory of God. And for this purpose they ought all to walk by the same rule, to mind and speak the same thing, and to be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment."

In the seventeenth chapter of John it is recorded that our Savior prayed, "That they (those who believe in Him) may be one, as thou Father( art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." This is the union for which we plead.

### III. A PLEA FOR LIBERTY.

As Stone, the Compbells and their associates began to send forth their plea for restoration and union the chief obstacle which they found in getting people to accept it was ecclesiastical authority as embodied in the conflicting creeds. During the last century the party spirit has greatly decreased, and the ecclesiastical authority of denominationalism is not to be compared with what it was one hundred years ago. Yet it is altogether too strong now. It is the great bar to the return of all believers to the original faith and practice of the New Testament church.

Our plea is not for liberty to reject divine authority, but it is a plea for liberty to reject human authority whenever and wherever found, and to accept all truth revealed in the word of God. The great advantage in our undenominational separate existence does not consist in the amount of the divine truth which we have discovered and which we may practice, but rather in the great fact that we are free from all human authority to search the word of God for this truth and to accept and practice any and everything we find there. We are re-



sponsible to no human authority. We are responsible only to God. Our plea is that the faith and practice of Christians should not be decided and dictated by human ecclesiastical legislative bodies, but that individuals and local congregation should be free under God to search the scriptures and therefrom fix their own faith and decide their practice.

I desire to quote on this point also from the "Last Will and Testament": "We will that our power of making laws for the government of the church, and executing them by delegated authority, forever cease; that the people may have free course to the Bible, and adopt the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ." And you will please consider carefully the following from the "Declaration and Address": "From the series of events which have taken place in the churches for many years past, especially in this Western country, as well as from what we know in general of the present-state of things in the Christian world, we are persuaded that it is high time for us not only to think, but also to act for ourselves; to see with our own eyes, and to take all our measures directly and immediately from the Divine Standard; to this alone we feel ourselves divinely bound to be conformed, as by this alone we must be judged. . . . Our design, therefore, for ourselves and our brethren, would be, that, rejecting human opinions and the inventions of men as of any authority or as having any place in the church of God, we might forever cease from further contentions about such things; returning to and holding fast by the original standard; taking the divine word alone for our rule; the Holy Spirit for our teacher and guide; to lead us into all truth; and Christ alone, as exhibited in the word, for our salvation; that, by so doing, we may be at peace among ourselves, follow peace with all men, and

holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

#### IV. A PLEA FOR LOYALTY.

Ours is a plea for loyalty. It is not a plea for loyalty to denomination, human name or creed, but for loyalty to Christ and His word. He, himself, said, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." The Holy Spirit through Paul said, He has been made "head over all things to the church," and again that God has "spoken in these last days by His Son." The Father speaking from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Once again I beg your consideration of a quotation from the "Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery": "We will, that the people henceforth take the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven; and as many as are offended with other books, which stand in competition with it, may cast them into the fire if they choose; for it is better to enter into life having one book than having many to be cast into hell."

I now present to you the last quotation for this occasion. This one is from the "Declaration and Address" and is as follows: "Nothing ought to be inculcated upon Christians as articles of faith, nor required of them as terms of communion, but what is expressly taught in the word of God. Nor ought anything to be admitted, as of divine obligation, in church constitution and managements but what is expressly enjoined by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles upon the New Testament church; either in express terms or by approved precedent."

Any idea of liberty or liberalism which involves disloyalty to Christ is at war at once with the fundamental principles of our plea, and is based on a false conception of Christian liberty. Christian liberty is not license to

do as one pleases or to follow the authority of men. It is the liberty to do God's will as revealed through Christ—no more, no less—and this without the interference of human authority.

Our plea is a plea for loyalty to Christ in all things.

V. A PLEA FOR PROGRESS.

Ours is a plea for progress in the discovery and practice of divine truth. The importance of our plea and our safety in making it do not consist in the particular truth we have accepted and which we now practice, but rather in our attitude toward all truth in Christ. If we ever allow ourselves to become satisfied with our achievements in the realm of spiritual knowledge and practice, our usefulness will be ended. It is not the truth we know and practice that is all important, but all truth revealed in Christ Jesus. Our minds must ever be kept open and our hearts must warm as we continue to search the scriptures. Our design must be to know all divine truth which has been revealed to man. If we would be safe and useful, we must "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Let us press unto perfection."

"Not that I have already obtained or am already made perfect; but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet I have laid hold, but one thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Until every person on earth has been brought to the fullness of a knowledge of the truth in Christ and to loyalty to Him in all things there will be a real necessity for pressing on, for stretching forward.

Ours is a plea for progress.

## IN CONCLUSION.

Our plea is a plea for the resoration of the original doctrine, faith, spirit and practice of the New Testament church among all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and not a plea for a new denomination. It is a plea for Christian union, that is, for such union with Christ and such conformity to His teaching as will bring all believers into fellowship and co-operation. It is not a plea for the union of denominations or the establishment of an ecclesiastical trust or combine. It is a plea for liberty, not the liberty to reject Christ and His authority, but the liberty to reject human authority whenever and wherever found, and to accept and practice anything found in the New Testament without the interference of men. It is a plea for loyalty. It is not a plea for loyalty to denomination, human name or creed, but for loyalty to Christ and His authority in all things. It is a plea for progress—progress in the discovery and practice of divine truth, a progress that leads out of the shackles of human traditions and on “unto perfection.”



## THE COMMISSION AFTER TWENTY CENTURIES.

J. M. McCALEB.

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations, and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14).

When this prediction was made by Jesus it was impossible that it should have immediate fulfillment; nor, from a human point of view, did it seem at all likely that it would ever be done. A few unlettered men, unknown outside their immediate community, poor in this world's goods and without any special genius, were His dependence, while half the world was unknown to the other half, and separated by impossible seas.

However, in a more limited sense, there was a fulfillment of His words even in that generation. The Gospel was carried to every "nation under heaven" in the lifetime of Paul. Some have taken this in the absolute sense, but a comparison of Acts 2:5-11, where the same expression is used and defined, shows that it only includes those countries lying around the Mediterranean Sea and under the dominion of the Roman empire. This was the nearer fulfillment of Christ's words; but there is still another which is to reach the "uttermost parts of the earth."

It has taken nearly twenty centuries to make it possible for the words of our Lord to come true, and even now they are still in the process of fulfillment. It was about seven years from Pentecost before the apostles would go to the Gentiles (Acts 10); in A. D. 51, or about eighteen years from Pentecost, the Gospel was planted first in Europe, Philippi being the starting point

(Acts 16:6-35). It spread from Greece to Rome, and probably as far as Spain. About the second century it was carried to the Britons. But the British Isles remained largely pagan till about the end of the seventh century A. D. Gregory the Great, seeing some Angles in the slave market at Rome, was so impressed with their beauty that he exclaimed, "Not Angles, but angels." He sent missionaries to England (Briton) about the end of the sixth century. A hundred years later the British Isles were nominally Christian. Paul spoke of going to Spain. All Europe was in time evangelized, but after the Gospel had been greatly perverted.

The Ethiopian eunuch was probably the first to carry the Gospel to Northeast Africa, anciently called Ethiopia, now called Abyssinia, and by the fourth century it was nominally Christian. They have kept the Gospel even down to the present day, and Menelik, their emperor, claims to be a descendent of Solomon.

By the end of the fifteenth century the Gospel had spread as far as Persia and probably Southern India, and north into Russia.

In 1492 Columbus discovered the great western half of the world. The inhabitants of both North and South America were sun worshipers, and some offered human sacrifices. Spain overran South America and planted Roman Catholicism. Protestantism became predominant in North America. The Puritan fathers came to the New World for the sake of religious freedom. John Wesley was a missionary to the red men of this country. When thinking of the undertaking he approached his mother and asked whether he ought to leave her to go so far. She replied that if she had twenty sons she would be glad to give them all to be missionaries.

Australia (and adjacent islands) was discovered in

the eighteenth century and colonized by the English. Australia is regarded as a Christian nation.

A century ago the Gospel was carried from Boston by a company of Congregational missionaries around the southern end of South America and across the Pacific to the Hawaiian Islands. Strangely enough, the government had overthrown their ancient paganism and the people were without a practical religion, waiting, as it were, for the Gospel message to be brought to them. What a pity is was not presented to them just as it was in the beginning!

In 1859 the first missionaries landed in Japan. Thus after Christianity had lingered in the New World for about three centuries, it reached the Mid-Pacific and then the Far East, or Asia again, in her extreme eastern borders, having first begun in Western Asia nineteen centuries before. Since then it has continued to spread all over Asia, including China, Thibet and India, till there is not a country today where the Gospel is wholly unknown. In all the different countries of the world there are over 25,000 Protestant missionaries, the Bible has been translated into nearly a thousand languages and dialects, while the Gospel in these latter days has for the first time encircled the globe, and we may well repeat with Morse, "What God hath wrought?" Never since the Gospel began to be preached has it been possible to accomplish what is being done now. The telephone, the telegraph—with and without wires—the international mail system, railroads, steamships and flying machines have brought the nations together as never before, and instead of being indefinitely far away, knowing but little of each other, they are now as next-door neighbors. We face a new situation. Let us have the vision to see what it means. In all these facilities for world communication

the man of business sees unparalleled opportunities for trade; the pleasure seeker a tour of the world to see the sights; while the Christian sees in it the hand of God in fulfillment of the words of His Son that the Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all nations.

When a child scarcely fifteen years old, I heeded the call of God to come to repentance. I was baptized for the remission of sins, not simply as an abstract, technical teaching, but as a doctrine that must be lived also in the life which followed. Many who claim to have been baptized for the remission of sins must be mistaken, for they go on practicing the same old sins they did before. I realized when I was baptized into Christ that I was also brought into His purity society, the church, and hence must be pure. Fifteen years later the same authority that called me to be saved sent me to be a savior. Again I did not feel that I must go and join something apart from the church, for by virtue of being in the church, I was already in God's missionary society. Every individual Christian also, because he is a Christian, is a missionary. Every Christian is both called and sent, and he who declines to let God send him is as guilty as he who rejects the call of repentance. I went to Japan because I was sent. Since the first five landed in Japan in 1892, thirty-three missionaries in all have gone. There are today nine on the field, with prospects of two more going in 1920. About one thousand people have been baptized. At present there are seven churches and a membership of five or six hundred. From four to six hundred children attend the Sunday schools. We have a boarding school for young men, about thirty in number, and a kindergarten of thirty-two children. Nine Japanese evangelists and five Japanese Bible women. In 1919 there were



fifty-five baptisms.

It is said that of the sixty millions of Japanese, thirty-nine millions have never yet heard of Christ nor know a Bible. Twenty-one millions have more or less knowledge of the Bible. Ninety thousand have been converted to Protestantism. As in the homeland, the Gospel affects different ones differently. Some come at first from mere curiosity. When they learn that to become a Christian means to break off from sin, they lose interest and go away. This constitutes a vast majority. Others consent to the teaching as being good. They admire the pure life of Jesus and the high character of His teaching, but do not feel the need of trusting in Him as a Savior. They are moralists and go just so far and no farther. A third class, much in the minority, are of those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

A young man a few years ago in the city of Tokyo was passing the street in front of the Kamitomi Zaka church and heard singing. It attracted his attention and he went in. His heart was heavy and a dark cloud had settled over him. After the preaching was over he sought an interview. Brother Hiratsuka, the minister, invited him up into his own private study. He had many questions to ask about Yasukyo, Jesus-teaching. They continued thus until two o'clock in the morning. In the meantime the young man's burdens had become lighter. There was a rift in the clouds and a gleam of hope came into his soul. He confessed what he had intended to do, and drew out a little package containing the poison he had bought for the purpose of committing suicide. He continued to come for instruction and was baptized. He is today working in a barber shop in Tokyo. Buddhism has no help for the heavy laden. Each must be his own savior and rise or fall by his own conduct. There is no

one to whom they may turn and hear the welcome invitation "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

More than twenty years ago I was teaching an English class in a private school. I came in touch with a young man who was a Buddhist. His family were all Buddhists. This was the first missionary with whom he had ever become acquainted. He heard for the first time of the living God and of Jesus Christ. His soul was hungering and thirsting after righteousness. The more he learned, the more he wanted to know, and he continued to come till he came into Christ. He has continued to be a true and faithful Christian and has turned many others to righteousness, for he is none other than the same Brother Hiratsuka who saved the young man from committing suicide. His father was dead. He sold out most of his interest in the old home to get means to come to America. He spent six years in California, and while there taught his own countrymen of Christ. When he returned to Japan he became a co-worker with Brother William J. Bishop. He had a desire that his mother and other members of the family would hear the Gospel and believe. He began periodic visits to his native village, some eighty miles north of Tokyo. As a result of his labors, assisted by Brother Bishop, Brother Vincent and others, there is today a church in that community of thirty-four members. In 1919 there were eight baptisms. They are preparing to build a house for worship all at their own charges. In 1918 I went with our brother on a trip out there. From the nearest station we must walk about five miles. We came to the brink of the hill overlooking the valley in which the old home was situated. On the hill amidst the forest of small trees, oak, pine and cedar, was a family graveyard of half a

dozen graves or so. The stones set up at these graves are practically the same as those in our own land. Among them was the grave of his mother. He pointed out the names of different ones and told something of their life. At the foot of the hill we came to the stream, a clear mountain brook. Pointing to a place where it ran in against a great rock forming a pool, he said, "There is where I baptized my mother." A few years before her death she yielded to the teachings of her son and, giving up Buddhism, accepted Christ. One evening we stood out in the yard and were looking up at the starry heavens and he remarked that his mother, long before she heard of the true God, would look up at the evening sky and say, "I wonder what is beyond?" She was another of those hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and when she was called she went knowing in whom she had believed.

It is good for one to be interested in self. Obedience to God is for one's own salvation; but if one's interest ends here he loses the very blessing sought. His self-interest becomes selfishness, and selfishness and Christ can not dwell in the same heart. It is good for one to be interested in the salvation of his family; but if interest ends there, then he fails to love his neighbor as himself and becomes narrow and self-centered. It is good for one to love his country and the people to whom he belongs. Scott but expresses my sentiments when he says:

"Breathes there a man with soul so dead,  
Who to himself hath never said,  
This is my own, my native land?  
Whose heart within him ne'er hath yearned,  
As home his footsteps he hath turned,  
From wandering on a foreign strand?"



But at the same time there is great danger just here lest we allow our love of country and countrymen to overshadow the love for God and a lost world. Patriotism helped to nail Jesus to the cross, kept the Gospel from the Gentiles for seven years and is today one of the most stubborn barriers to the universal propagation of the message of life. It appropriates religion for political ends and degrades it into a state policy. There are no political or racial boundaries to the Gospel.

An over-done patriotism blinds good men to some of the plainest teachings of the scriptures. In Fayetteville, Tenn., I was standing in Brother Hugh Smith's store talking to Brother A. While we were talking Brother B came up, and I remarked that I had not yet spoken to Brother A whether he was willing to go as a missionary to the heathen. Brother B replied, "If he has got as much sense as he ought to have, he won't go." Suppose A had been out of Christ and I had said, "Brother B, I have not yet asked A whether or not he would be baptized," and Brother B should have said, "If he has as good sense as he ought to have, he won't do it," wouldn't it have seemed that he was opposed to baptism? In like manner when a brother says it shows a lack of good sense for one to obey the first part of the commission, which says, "Go teach all nations," I conclude that he is against it, and is as blind to this part of the scriptures as he who belittles baptism.

It is easy to love and labor for those who love us. But the triumph of the love of God in us is that it enables us to love and labor for the foreigner that hates us, and till we reach that point we are below the standard. Some seem puzzled to know why I have chosen to spend my life in a foreign land, and the question is frequently asked, "Do you like it over there?" seeming to think that



it is nothing more than a matter of choice from personal preference. If this were all there is to it, I certainly would never go outside the United States to remain for any great length of time. Every one who is called to be saved is also sent to be a savior. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature is of universal application and is binding on every Christian. And as the harvest fields of the world in these latter days have been opened up in such a marvelous manner, it behooves us all to enter in and reap.

"Nor shall this spreading Gospel rest  
Till through the earth its truth shall run,  
Till every nation shall be blest  
Who feels the light or feels the sun."

## THE FAMILY, STATE, AND THE CHUURCH.

LIFF SANDERS.

In the great world in which we live, man with his problems are chief concern to us. Our social, intellectual, moral and religious nature must be directed and controlled in order that the greatest good and happiness may be the present and ultimate object in human life. In order that this may be accomplished, it is necessary that there be institutions organized for the purpose. To this end God has established directly or indirectly three great institutions; according to arrangement they appear in history the family, the state, and the church. These institutions meet the needs of man as a whole. Inasmuch as man can not live apart from his fellow being, it is therefore necessary that we have regulations in his relationship in his many forms and needs. The purpose of the family is the propagation of the human species, the state to protect man in his rights, and the church to save him in time and eternity. We shall therefore discuss these institutions in the order as they appear.

## THE FAMILY.

Man, as first introduced to us, was alone (Gen. 2:7). He was surrounded with all the beauty and grandeur of the Garden of Eden, but without and means of increasing his kind or perpetuating his posterity if death should overtake him. God saw his condition and said that "It was not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helpmate for him" (Gen. 2:18). "And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And the man said, This is now bone of my bones,

and flesh of my flesh: she was called woman because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:21-23).

From Gen. 1:28 we learn that God commanded them to be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. From these scriptures we learn that the family is composed of husband, wife and children. In order to perpetuate this institution God ordained two things, marriage and birth. The great promoting element behind all of this is love. Therefore the divine injunction, "Husbands, love your wives" (Eph. 5:25). Also that children honor and obey their parents, and parents bring them up in the virtue and admonition of the Lord. See Eph. 6:1-4. Thus we see that the propagation of the human family involves more than merely bringing them into the world. Man comes into the world as one of its most helpless creatures. In this condition he is dependent on his parents for physical, mental, moral and religious care and training. It is the duty of the parents to attend to this directly or indirectly. Parents realizing the responsibility on this proposition have provided schools to augment this work. Therefore schools have become adjunct to the family, in preparing their children for the duties and responsibilities of life. As society became more and more complicated by increased population and the inability of many to meet this obligation, the state has come to their rescue by providing public schools in many parts of the civilized world to meet this demand. Inasmuch as the family is a God-ordained institution for the purpose of propagating the human family, God has thrown about it laws for its preservation; hence Jesus gives one cause for divorce—that is fornication (Matt. 19:9)—for in this sin the purpose of this union is de-

stroyed. The family is God's first great institution and is ordained to continue its mission until time shall end.

#### THE STATE.

As man's economical and social conditions became more complicated by increased population on the earth, he found that the family could not meet his needs and demands, so not only the Jews but all the people grew steadily out of the patriarchal age (the age of family rule). Man would often infringe on rights and privileges of another. This brought about the rise of government, embracing a certain territory for the purpose of protection of its citizens in their rights. Government in its mission is to protect man in three great rights that inalienably belong to him, namely, life, liberty and property. This institution is regulated by law enacted by a legislative power and enforced by an executive power that are enabled to enforce the law. To meet this demand the law is divided into two great divisions, civil and criminal. The civil to adjust differences between individuals according to justice and equity, the criminal to prevent men from infringing upon the rights and taking the lives of others. In order to do this it is necessary to provide punishment to deter the would-be criminal and inflict the punishment upon those that violate the law.

Paul recognizes this mission and principle of civil government in writing to the Roman brethren when he said, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For the rulers that be are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldst thou have no fear of the



power? do that which is good, and thou shall have praise (protection) for the same: for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil be afraid: for he beareth not the sword (an instrument of war and punishment) in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only because of wrath (punishment), but also for conscience' sake. For this cause ye pay tribute (or tax) also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing" (Rom. 13:1-6). From this we see that government is an institution ordained of God to afford the protection of man in his rights. When we come to consider the Jewish government, one that God ordered and arranged directly, the same principles were involved. Inasmuch as God is the author of all government, it therefore follows that all governments are accountable to him. Jehovah pronounced woe and destruction on Israel through His prophet in their failure in this respect, when He said, as He plead with them to change their course and pointed out the result if they continued: "For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt; then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers from old even for evermore. (Notice the indictment.) Behold ye trust in lying words that can not profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal and walk after other gods that ye have not known?" (Jer. 7: 5-8). In verse 15 we have the threat, "And I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all of your

brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim." From this exhortation, indictment and threat that Judah as a nation had failed in its mission and there was no safety or protection for the weak against the strong, for this reason God was going to take them away. There is one characteristic of the Jewish government that has since been transferred to another institution—that is the religious. This is a prerogative that now belongs to the church. What was true of the Jewish government is true of all governments. Hear the prophet again, the word which came from Jehovah, saying, "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold, he was making a work on the wheels. And when the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter, he made again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of Jehovah came to me, saying, O house of Israel, can not I do with you as this potter? Behold as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel. At what instant I speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to break down and to destroy it; if that nation concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if they do that which is evil in my sight, that they obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them" (Jer. 18:1-10). Daniel was called upon to teach Nebuchadnezzar the same lesson. That is, the Most High ruleth over kingdoms of men and giveth to whomsoever He will. See Daniel, 4th chapter. Other examples are Nineveh, Babylon, Egypt and Tyre. It is as true today as it has

ever been that the nation that fails in its mission must meet the wrath of God. Hence the need to stand for law and order by the citizenship of the nation. If you should occupy an official position or as a juror and fail to inflict the punishment prescribed by law, you are contributing to the ruin and downfall of the nation. On the other hand, if you do your part in whatever position you occupy to enforce law, you are contributing to the safety of life and property and helping to perpetuate the life of the nation.

It is time for citizens to remember the charge that was given to Ezra (7:25, 26), "And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God that is in thy hand, appoint magistrates and judges, who may judge all the people beyond the river, all such as know thy God; and teach ye him that knoweth them not. And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed upon him with all diligence, whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment." This is the only way to preserve the peace, happiness and prosperity of a nation. "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). As Christians and citizens it is our duty to lend our means and service to this end. "Put them in mind to be in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work" (Titus 3:1). "Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as sent by him for vengeance on evil-doers and for the praise of them that do well" (I Pet. 2:13, 14).

A man becoming a Christian does not forfeit his citizenship in the civil government. Paul claimed right of protection as a Roman (Acts 22:25). No one was

required to resign an official position; if so it should have been stated. The eunuch was an officer and went on his way as such. Cornelius was a centurion, Sergius Paulus was proconsul of Cyprus, the Philippian jailer was in charge of the prison when Paul left him. Erastus was treasurer of Corinth. Evidently many of the Pretorian guard became Christians (Phil. 1:13). It therefore follows that the same principle obtains in this as did in the various callings and professions of life. "Brethren, let each man wherein he was called abide with God" (I Cor. 7:24). Let us then stand for the good and oppose the evil in government as elsewhere that we may preserve the rights of man to us and our posterity, for which God intended it should stand.

#### THE CHURCH.

The church of Christ was the last of the three great institutions established by the God of heaven. Its mission is the salvation of the world. The means it uses to accomplish is the Gospel of Christ (Mark 16:16; Rom. 1:16). Man had failed to keep perfectly the moral, civil and revealed law, and for this reason was a sinner, as sin is the transgression of law (I John 3:4). In Rom. 1:16 Paul sets forth the proposition that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Following this, he proceeds to show the Gentile had failed to remember God and drifted into sin (Rom. 1:21-32); the Jew had a revealed law, but had failed to keep it, so he, too, was a sinner (Rom. 3:9). Evil brings condemnation to Jew and Gentile alike (Rom. 2:9), and for this cause had entailed the death sentence, as the "wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). In order that he may avert the death penalty, the law must be satisfied and pardon or salvation provided. Christ died as a criminal for us that He might satisfy the law (Gal. 3:13), and with His blood



procured this salvation (Rom. 3:24). This salvation is provided in the church or kingdom of Christ. "Who delivered us out of the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins (Col. 1:13). Through the church salvation was extended to all nations (Mark 16:16; Luke 24:47). Not only to save him from sin, but to save his life to the work, worship and service of God. It is God's desire that man achieve the greatest good possible. To this end God has provided certain principles that are fundamental in their nature. These are faith, hope and love. In the development of these principles man reaches his highest attainment. Faith is produced by testimony (John 20:30, 1! Rom. 10:17). Faith creates a mental gymnasium for intellectual development; this in turn makes him strong and leads to obedience (Acts 6:7; Gal. 5:6; Rom. 4:20; Acts 3:16).

As faith is a product of the intellect, so love arises from the sensibilities. Paul declares that love is the greatest of the three. This being true, it is the greatest thing in the world, and when we see the sacrifice and service produced by love in all the relationships of life, we can but realize the truth of this statement. For sacrifice and service are the proofs and fruits of love. The death and suffering of Christ on the cross, and for men that were enemies to God, is the greatest demonstration of love that the world ever beheld. As the great objective point of the Christian's faith is the resurrection of Christ from the dead, so the great objective point of love is the cross. God has left us two great memorial institutions to preserve these mighty demonstrations of power and love, baptism and the Lord's table. There is nothing that will have greater power to make a man good and noble than sacrifice and service. The product

of love is character. We love Him because He first loved us (I John 4:19).

Hope is the lesser of the three graces, yet it performs a very important place in the Christian life. Hope rests on promises. Hope is therefore related to faith, for without faith there can be no hope. Hope is the inspiration of life. It is our comfort in the time of darkness. It is the pilgrim's staff, and the mariner's anchor. Its product is cheerfulness. It enabled men to sing in prison and rejoice in the hour of adversity. Smite this wonderful grace from the earth and all happiness would perish.

We behold the Christian with faith to make him strong, and love to make him good, and hope to make him happy. We behold the mission of the great, yes, the greatest, of all institutions, the church of the living God. With these great principles the church reaches back to make better families and better nations. It makes man to realize a greater responsibility is resting in his relationship to God and man.

The church is a city of refuge for the sinner, a temple for the saint to worship in, a place where the hero of faith may prove himself, an opportunity for the good man to serve and sacrifice, to fill the downtrodden and sorrowful with hope that they may look up and smile again, and thus prepares us to live ever in the land of light and love and commune with the saints of all the ages, and to join the great son of Moses and the Lamb:

I love thy church, O God;  
Her walls before Thee stand,  
Dear as the apple of thine eye,  
And graven on Thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall;  
For her my prayers ascend;  
To her my toils and cares be given,  
Till toils and cares shall end.

Beyond my highest joys  
I prize her heav'nly ways,  
Sweet communion, solemn vows,  
Her hymns of love and praise.

## HOW TO LIVE.

R. C. BELL.

The fact that life is thrust upon man without his knowledge and snatched from him without his consent is evidence that he is not an independent, absolute being; ample evidence that he, even between birth and death, is subject to another, and that he is not his own master. It signifies that he is not qualified to direct his own steps and to live his own life. It should make him humble and enable him to realize that he needs to be taught how to live the one short life allotted him here below, lest he, in his short-sightedness, throw it away. Certainly this fact should give man his true relationship to God, the right attitude toward his Maker, and make him willing to take advice from above.

Hence, Christ assuming that man knows his place in God's economy and that he is therefore teachable, proceeds, in the sixth chapter of Matthew, to teach him how to live. And please remember that it is His doctrine, not mine. And please remember, too, that, if your life does not square with it, your quarrel is with Him and not with me. When I speak in the name of Jesus, I always bear in mind that He overhears all that I say,, that my speech will face me in judgment, and that therefore I must please Him first, last, and all the time. When what I say pleases man, of course, I am glad, but when it displeases him, I have no recourse; I can not help it.

A manufacturer, in shipping the parts of a complicated machine to a customer, sends along a drawing on blue paper showing how to assemble the machine. This drawing is called a blueprint. And, when it is followed, the machine, being properly set up, will run smoothly without lost motion or useless friction, and will therefore



develop high per cent efficiency. Now, in the scripture before us, Jesus gives man the blueprint of his life. He tells him how to construct his life, not only so that there may be no lost energy or wasting anxiety, but also so that there may be developed a high degree of Christian efficiency. But does not the fact that Christians in general are inefficient justify the fear that they are not building according to the drawing? Let us examine the blueprint.

The Lord begins by designating the bank with which his disciples should do business. He says: "Lay not for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." In this category there are but two banks, the earthly and the heavenly. And Jesus makes choice of the latter, telling Christians that, since nothing to endanger or destroy can enter, it is the safer place to store treasures. Indeed, He forbids His disciples to make life deposits in the former.

Notice precisely what it is that He forbids. It is not industry, frugality, nor thrift, in short, not the making of money, nor even the accumulation of treasures, but the laying it up upon the *earth* that He forbids. He is not considering the making of money, but telling His disciples what to do with it after it is made. There are but three possible uses to which money may be put. One is to provide the things needful for the body. This is good. Another is to save it and store it away in some material form. This is bad; for it not only lies idle so far as God's work is concerned, but, since it must be left behind at death or at the coming of the Lord, it is really lost to

the holder. And the last is to give it away that the needy and the lost of earth may be helped and saved. Money used in this last way, that is, that which is given away (provided it be given in the name of the Lord) is all that is saved. This is the way to "make friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness," and to lay up treasures in heaven. Money used in the first way is consumed, money used in the second way is lost, but money used in the third way is saved. Christ, in our passage, merely prescribes the second use and endorses the third. Most of us, perhaps all, could obey Him without making any change in our present occupations, but likely this obedience would necessitate a change in the use we make of our profits.

An illustration from the ant is in point: the ant is not only industrious in collecting its food, but also wise in selecting a safe place to store it. What would you think of an ant that piled its food for the winter in the street, where the first wind would scatter it, or the first beast trod it under foot? Certainly, such an ant would be foolish, and, in spite of its diligence, labor for naught. Hence, since the selection of a storehouse for treasure is a matter of prime importance, Christ settles it once for all, for his disciples, so that they need not labor and live in vain. Truly, this is a fundamental and vital matter, for where the treasure is, there is the heart also. And a failure to follow the blueprint at this point means wrong character construction and irrevocable disaster.

Jesus continues: "The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness! No man can serve two masters. . . . Ye can not serve God and

mammon."

This quotation, taken in its context, can refer only to the two places of storing treasure. It contemplates confusion in man's mind as to the respective merits of the two, and the probability of his having such disordered vision and such darkened understanding (Christ's evil eye) as to decide that the earthly is the better. It means that a man may be so full of pride and worldliness, so lacking in spiritual discernment that he can not correctly estimate values and know what is really worth while. It means that a man may have such poor judgment that he will think a worldly life better than a spiritual one, and mammon a better master than God, and consequently give himself over to the task of laying up treasures upon the earth. Verily, this is what practically all men, who do not fashion their lives after the blueprint, do.

The importance of the correct decision about the place to store treasure can not be over-emphasized. In solving the problem of learning how to live, it is vital. The man who obtains the correct answer and starts life right shall be full of light and have day all the way in both worlds. But the man who gets the wrong answer, and consequently puts his treasure in the wrong bank, starts life in darkness and behold "how great is the darkness!" All the journey of life is in darkness and ends in eternal night. Oh, brother, beware!

With this great lesson in banking concluded, Christ continues: "Therefore I say unto you, be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than food, and the body than the raiment? . . . And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life?" Food, drink and raiment are too insignificant and unimportant to be the cause of

anxious thought. Other things of vastly more consequence must occupy the minds of God's children. Notice, too, that is still a question of properly estimating values, of getting things in proportion, and of putting the emphasis of life where it belongs. Observe, moreover, the point that all anxiety is utterly useless and unavailing. It can not change conditions, for none of you by being anxious can add one inch to his height, or one minute to his life.

The Lord illustrates, next from nature, an outstanding doctrine in his philosophy of life. The doctrine that touches bottom and makes easier the selection of the right bank.

"Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? . . . And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all of his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much clothe you, O ye of little faith? Be not anxious, therefore, saying what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

Now, what does all this mean? Whatever else it may mean or may not mean, it does mean that God sees and knows and cares for his child on earth. It means that God's child, instead of being an orphan, has a living, loving, ever-present Father, who proposes to supply his food and clothing. It means that the Christian, having



such a thoughtful and good Father, who will never forget or fail him, may live an active, normal, happy life, free from care and anxiety. It means, furthermore, that Christians who do not live this way fail to do so because their faith in God is weak. "O ye of little faith."

Christians who possess a vigorous, healthy faith accept, at face value, the teaching that God, who feeds the birds and clothes the grass, will much more feed and clothe them. They, with childlike confidence and abandon, untorn and undistracted by the cares of life, are able to throw themselves into and to give themselves over to the worship and work of God, without hindrance. And thus they develop high efficiency in Christian service. Such Christians are not tempted to dissipate their energies and to waste their lives striving after material things, for they, in faith, rest in the riches and goodness of God, who knows their needs and promises to supply them.

But just how plain and definite is this promise? No promise can be put in plainer or more definite words. Ambiguity or vagueness can not account for the fact that it means so little or affords so little comfort and assurance to Christians. The reason must be sought elsewhere. Christ knows the reason. In saying, "O ye of little faith," he analyzes the matter with unerring skill. It must be that many Christians just simply do not believe their Father's promise. Listen: "But seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." "Added unto you." Yes. Food, drink and raiment, things to which we attach so much importance, are really, when properly valued, so insignificant that God throws them in, when we undertake the big and important task of seeking *first* the kingdom and his righteousness. It is like this: when a customer buys a dollars worth of sugar, a bag is placed upon the scales

and the proper amount of sugar put into it. The merchant considers the string, which he wraps about the bag after it is taken from the scales, of such small consequence that he does not weigh it. It is thrown in. Even so, God, when dealing with those whose first concern is to do the will of God, throws in food and clothing. Is not this promise specific enough for the most particular and cautious? In this respect, what more can be asked?

Remember, however, that the promise is not unqualified. There is one condition, but only one. Of course, it must be met by one who would enjoy the promise. One, who would live this normal, care-free, successful, happy life in full assurance that he will be cared for, must seek first, not second, God's kingdom and His righteousness. Just as certain as there is a God of truth, the Christian who unselfishly lives for the glory of God and the good of God's creatures will be fed and clothed. And what more should the servant of a rich, good, eternal Master desire? This is enough, provided he loves his Master and believes Him and desires before everything else the prosperity of the Master's business. Absolutely the only thing that need concern the Christian is his part of the contract. God will perform his part when man becomes selfless and meets God's condition. But no lazy, ambitionless man can meet God's condition. No man can seek God's kingdom and righteousness in idleness. The Christian, no matter what vocation he follows, must realize that he is God's steward, and really work to the Owner's interest. If he "loafs on the job," and yet expects God to carry out his part of the contract, he is like the man who expects God to pardon him before he obeys the Gospel.

But, how does God fulfill His promise? Really, to be asking how God performs his work is an indication of

mistrust rather than of faith. It is a mistake to puzzle ourselves over the *how* till we lose sight of the *what*. This is the very thing Nicodemus did. Because he could not understand how he could be born again, he refused to admit the possibility of a new birth, and consequently lost the blessing of being a new creature in Christ. Oh! that Nicodemus and all men could believe. Is it necessary to know the psychology of God's mind or the philosophy of his ways to believe and enjoy Him? It is not. We may not know how God answers our prayers or forgives our sins or provides for us, but, when we believe Him, our ignorance does not prevent our enjoying His riches and goodness. Remember, too, that in fulfilling His promises, God need not resort to miracles or set aside law or despise human agency. He must not be so limited, for He is unlimited and almighty. Moreover, remember that it is not ours to seek *how* God keeps His promises and performs His works. It is ours to do our part and trust God for His.

And, because there are human conditions in the above cases, it must not be forgotten that God's part is the greater part. When a penitent sinner is baptized, God forgives his sins. Even so, when a Christian, without anxiety but in restful faith, seeks first God's kingdom, God cares for him in a special way. He supplies his temporal *needs*; he promises no other worldly goods. Sinners and indifferent Christians have promise of no such oversight. It is to be feared that too many Christians do not really desire this divine care and oversight, since, in all probability, they can make more money and have a better time, as the world counts good times, without it. Christians need faith in Jehovah; they need to know that God's way is the best way to live, and "that the friendship of the world is enmity with God."

In conclusion, the doctrine, without hair-splitting distinctions or nice points and speculations about the how, is simply that loyal, selfless Christians can afford to be indifferent to laying up treasures upon earth; that they can afford to be satisfied with daily food and raiment, and need not be anxious about the proverbial rainy day, since they have a Father who will care for them as He does the birds and the lilies. The Christian, therefore, who really believe Jesus Christ can, without fear, throw himself completely into his Master's work as Paul did and not be bothered about his bank account on earth, or be distracted by the cares of life and be thus made unhappy and inefficient, for God will provide. Who can estimate how much the church of God is suffering today in genuine efficiency, success and happiness because Christians fail to build their lives by the blueprint of the Master? Paul built by it, and can there be any question that he lived wisely and successfully a life filled with rejoicing? Do you suppose that he now, in eternity, regrets the way he spent his brief life on earth? Truly Paul was wise and lived the best way, for it is God's way.



THE PROMISES, THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

BY EARLY ARCENEUX.

We have heard of various man-made "Keys to the Scriptures." Each professes to be the only one which will unlock the "mysteries" of divine revelation. Swedenborg had a mystic key. The Mormons have their inspiration as a key. Mrs. Eddy gave us a "Key to the Scriptures." Russell's followers believe his writings are the only and all-sufficient key to the scriptures. The denominationalists believe that the Holy Spirit secretly guides them into an understanding of the things of God. But He (?) guides them into many and conflicting understandings.

It has been said, "God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain." This is the statement of a great truth. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah" (Isa. 1:18). This passage clearly indicates that common sense is to be our guide in understanding the communications of Jehovah. He gave us our reasoning faculties. He addresses them in his word. His word is adapted to them, or it is unintelligible, and therefore useless.

We do not have to go outside the Bible for a key. The book itself clearly teaches that method is to be employed, and describes the method. "Handling aright the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15) implies a wrong method of handling the word, and enjoins it upon the teacher of the word to employ the right method. To the same effect we have "The law is good if a man use it lawfully" (I Tim. 1:8); "For we are not as the many, corrupting the word of God" (II Cor. 2:17); "Nor handling the word of God deceitfully" (II Cor. 4:2); "Only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ"

(Gal. 1:7); "Wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (II Pet. 3:16). The method employed is therefore a matter of the first importance in Bible study.

The masses of the people use no method in their "attempts" to study the Bible, unless desultory, haphazard, hit-or-miss, "take-it-as-you-come-to-it" reading, may be called a method. They have been taught none. The majority of their teachers use no intelligent method. To most people it makes no difference who spoke, to whom he spoke, or under what dispensation it may have been spoken. They say the Bible is the word of God; it's all good; it matters not whether it is in Genesis, Psalms or Acts of Apostles. But the devil's lie is recorded in Gen. 3:4. Noah was told to build an ark of gopher wood. We are not. In Job 2:9 we find, "Curse God, and die." We ought to make some inquiries about this before taking it "just as we come to it." When Peter said, "Repent and pray" (Acts 8:22), he was speaking to a baptized man (Acts 8:13). It therefore does not touch the question of an unbaptized man's praying for pardon. When the same apostle commanded, "Repent and be baptized for remission of sins" (Acts 2:38), he was addressing unsaved people (Acts 2:40). There is one sin in Acts 8:22. There are many in Acts 2:38. Nothing could be a greater or more serious perversion of God's word than to apply to the sinner what was addressed to the Christian, or to the Christian what was addressed to the alien as such. Of course, some duties are common to both, as repentance.

The Bible is a book of many books and many classifications. If its contents are not properly classified, we will never understand the real teaching of the divine

volume. It is impossible to do more now than to develop briefly its most fundamental divisions.

In the third chapter of Galatians three things stand out in bold relief, the promises to Abraham, the law of Moses and the Gospel of Christ. If we understand these three things, and the relationship between them, we have the key to a more comprehensive knowledge of the Bible than we would ever attain by following any human key which has been offered. And without this understanding one studies with a veil upon his heart (II Cor. 3:14).

Let us note the emphasis placed upon these three words in Galatians (3): "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed" (Gal. 3:8). "For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse . . . no man is justified by the law before God" (Gal. 3:10, 11). "For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no more of promise: but God hath granted it to Abraham by promise" (Gal. 3:18). This promise was made more than four hundred years before the giving of the law of Moses. The law does not save. Our salvation is through the Gospel in fulfillment of the promise.

These things in their proper relationship will appear in their historical development. We go back of the Gospel dispensation nineteen centuries. We find ourselves four hundred years before the law at the call of Abraham. We open our Bibles at the twelfth chapter of Genesis. We are in the patriarchal dispensation. We will read the text of the promises to Abraham. "Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name

great; and be thou a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3). "And Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Gen. 12:7). We have here two very distinct promises of very different natures. The first promises to make of Abraham's seed a great nation, hence a national promise, concerning one nation. The thing promised is the land of Canaan, hence an earthly promise. The second promises blessing to all nations, hence a universal promise to all mankind. The blessing promised is justification (Gal. 3:8), hence a spiritual promise. It would be impossible for two things to be more clearly differentiated.

But these two promises are the germs of the Old and New Covenants. The first promise is repeated in Gen. 13:14-17. The second is here omitted. It is repeated again in Gen. 15:18, and the spiritual promise omitted. Again the national, earthly promise is repeated in Gen. 17, and the covenant of circumcision is given. Again the second or spiritual promise is omitted. Here in connection with the covenant of circumcision is a sentence which should be remembered, "And my covenant shall be in your flesh" (Gen. 17:13).

The connection between the law of Moses and the promises is clearly stated. "He hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations, the covenant which he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac, and confirmed the *same* unto Jacob for a statute (the law), to Israel for an everlasting covenant, saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance" (Psa. 105:8-11). This passage is too plain to leave us in doubt about the fact that the law of Moses, the Old Covenant,



or, if you please, the Old Testament or Jewish scriptures, grew directly out of the national, earthly promise to Abraham. That very promise, being the one here quoted, was confirmed to Israel for a law.

It has been contended, from the necessities of certain false theories, that this promise has not been fulfilled, but that it awaits fulfillment in the future. On this point let us read: "So Jehovah gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. . . . There failed not aught of any good thing which Jehovah had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (Josh. 21:43-45). As Israel departed from Egypt; as the law was given from Mount Sinai; as Israel possessed and dwelt in Canaan, the fulfillment of the first promise was running its course. The second or spiritual promise was awaiting fulfillment. The two covenants, fulfilling these two promises, could not both be in force at the same time. The Old Covenant excluded Gentiles. The first promise concerned Jews only. The second promise and the New Covenant embrace all nations. They include Gentiles. But Gentiles could not be excluded and included at the same time. The Old pronounced a curse, "The law worketh wrath." The spiritual promise blesses all who bow to the terms of the New Covenant. The Gospel is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16). The law therefore had to fulfill its mission, run its course, serve its purpose and expire by limitation before the New Covenant could be in force, or the second promise could be fulfilled. This shows why the law had to be abrogated. "He taketh away the first that he may establish the second" (Heb. 10:10). This also sets aside the theory that "the two covenants lapped" during the personal ministry of Jesus on earth. This taking away of the law occurred when it was nailed to

the cross of Christ (Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:14).

Near the middle of the law period Jeremiah by divine inspiration, looking down the ages then future, prophesied as follows: "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it. . . . And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more" (Jer. 31:31-34). Note: 1. God would make a new covenant. 2. It would not be like the Old Covenant. (Yet some men talk about "the identity of the covenants.") 3. The New Covenant described and differentiated from the Old. a. Under the new God will write His law in every heart that is to be brought into covenant relationship with Him. Hence the great commission reads: "Teach, baptize" (Matt. 28:19); "believeth and is baptized" (Mark 16:16). The record of work under that commission reads, "When they believed they were baptized both men and women" (Acts 8:12). b. "They shall teach no more their neighbor and brother, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me." The Old Covenant was a national compact. The Israelites were in covenant relationship with God at birth. All had to be taught. Now they must be taught first, then be born again, of water and the

Spirit into the New Covenant. It is needless to say this removes the foundation of the theory and practice of infant baptism. That theory subverts the fundamental principles of the New Covenant. c. "Their sin will I remember no more." This is in sharp contrast with the fact that under the Old Covenant there was a remembrance made of sins year by year because it was impossible for the blood of animals to take away sins (Heb. 10:1-4).

The connection between the Gospel and the promises is just as clearly revealed as is the connection between the law and the promises. "The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall the nations be blessed" (Gal. 3:8). He did not forget and quote the first promise. The Gospel is the fulfillment of the spiritual promise here quoted. This promise was fulfilled to the Jews first after the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus (Acts 3:25, 26).

The advocate of infant baptism runs his Gospel line back to the seventeenth of Genesis, and puts his practice in the room of infant circumcision. But in so doing he confuses things which are kept distinct and separate from one end of the Bible to the other. You remember that was a "covenant in your flesh." The New Covenant is written in the heart. Its members are not to be taught to know Jehovah; for all shall know him. But in finding their gospel in Genesis (17) they leave out the Gentiles (Eph. 2:11-16), Christ and salvation.

The Old Covenant was in force till Jesus died. Hence when the apostles were sent out under their limited or Jewish commission (which some confuse with the Gospel) they were commanded, "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samari-



tans: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:5, 6). But immediately after the resurrection, the law having been abrogated, they were commanded, "Go teach all nations" (Matt. 28:19). The time had come for the fulfillment of the second or spiritual promise; for the ushering in of the Gospel dispensation.

Here we also read, "All authority is given unto me" (Matt. 28:18); "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20). Moses was no longer lawgiver. When we make our appeal to the Old Testament for authority for a single practice which is not authorized in the New Testament we do violence to the supreme authority of Jesus Christ; we count his blood, the seal of the New Covenant, a common thing.

But some one may say, "I admit the law of Moses was taken away, but not the entire Old Testament." The Jews divided the Old Testament into Law, Prophets and Psalms. Christ accepted that division (Luke 24:44). In Gal. 4:21, 22 Paul quotes Genesis as "the law." In John 10:34 under the formula, "Is it not written in your law," Psalms (82:6) is quoted. In I Cor. 14:21 under the formula, "In the law it is written," Isaiah the prophet (28:11) is quoted. Inspiration has called the Pentateuch, the Psalms and the Prophets "the law." Those who may be interested are urged to make a careful study of the third chapter of Galatians in connection with the arguments here given. A summary of contrasts between the covenants may be suggestive. We wish simply on this great subject to teach just what the inspired writers have said.



Old Covenant (II Cor. 3: 14).	New Covenant (Heb. 8: 8).
First Will (Heb. 10:9, 10).	Second Will.
Law of Moses (John 1: 17).	Gospel of Christ (Rom. 1: 16).
Ministration of Condemnation (II Cor. 3:9).	Ministration of Righteousness.
Law (Rom. 6:14).	Grace (Gal. 2:21).
Law of Works (Rom. 3: 27).	Law of Faith (Rom. 3: 27).
Law Good (Rom. 7:12).	Better Covenant (Heb. 8: 6).
Enacted on Promises (confirms entire argument, Heb. 8:6).	Enacted on Better Promises (confirms entire argument (Heb. 8:6).
Faulty (Heb. 8:7).	Perfect (James 1:25).
Weakness Through Flesh (Rom. 8; Heb. 7:18).	Power of God (Rom. 1: 16).
Flesh (Gal. 3:3).	Spirit (Gal. 3:3).
Yoke of Bondage (Gal. 5:1).	Law of Liberty (James. 1: 25).
A Curse (Gal. 3:10).	A Blessing (Gal. 3:8).
Provisional (Gal. 3:19).	Final (Jude 3: Heb. 13: 20).
Passeth Away (II Cor. 3: 11).	Remaineth (II Cor. 3:11).
One Nation (Gen. 12:1-3).	All Nations (Matt. 28:19).

The student may increase the list indefinitely.

## THE THRONE OF DAVID OR REIGN OF CHRIST.

BY J. B. NELSON.

To the members of the kingdom of Jesus Christ and friends of the Bible, I feel that the honor and pleasure is mine to be one of the number to deliver one of the lectures before the Abilene Christian College at this time. My subject for this occasion is, "The Throne of David or Reign of Christ." The title of my subject naturally calls for a consideration of the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. As I see it, there can be no reign of Christ apart from the kingdom of Christ.

I shall first consider the definition of the terms of the subject under consideration. Dr. Joseph Henry Thayer, who is considered one of the best, if not the best, lexicographers in the land, defines the term throne as follows: "*Thronos, a throne, seat, i. e., a chair of state having a footstool; assigned in the New Testament to kings, hence by meton. for kingly power, royalty: Luke 1:32, 52; Acts 2:30. metaph. to God, the governor of the world: Matt. 5:34; 23:22; Acts 7:49 (Is. 66:1); Rev. 1:4; 3:21; 4:2-6, 9, 10, etc.; Heb. 4:16; 8:1; 12:2; to the Messiah, the partner and assistant in the divine administration: Mt. 19:28; 25:31; Rev. 3:21; 20:11; 22:3; hence the divine power belonging to Christ, Heb. 1:8; to judges, i. q. tribunal or bench (plut. mor. p. 807b.): Mt. 19:28; Luke 22:30; Rev. 20:4.*"

The Rev. Thomas Sheldon Green, M.A., in his *Lexicon of the New Testament*, defines the term as follows: *Thronos, throne to set, a seat, a throne (Matt. 5:34; 19:28; Luke 1:52); meton, power, dominion (Luke 1:32; Heb. 1:8); a potentate (Col. 1:16), etc.*

Donnegan defines thus, "*Thronos, a seat; a stool, or*

chair, especially, an armed chair, a chair of state, a throne."

*Basileia.* Dr. Thayer says thus: *A kingdom*, i. e., the territory subject to the rule of a king—frequent in the New Testament in reference to the reign of the Messiah."

To have a kingdom we must have, first, a king; second, territory (or subjects); thirdly, law. At this time we have Jesus Christ seated in heaven as our King, the church as the subjects and the New Testament as the law. I would have you understand in the very incipency of this investigation that I teach that to be a member of the church of Christ is to be a member of the kingdom and to be a member of the kingdom is to be a member of the church. To be a member of one is to be a member of the other. I throw down the gauntlet and defy any man living to prove that the New Testament teaches the contrary. I can't conceive, according to the teachings of the New Testament, of a man being in one and not the other. I admit that the word kingdom is used in the aggregate and the church usually in a local sense, but church is in the aggregate equally with kingdom in Matt. 16:18, 19. Whenever and wherever you show me he is a member of one I will show from the New Testamnt that he is in the other. If you tell me that he is only in a certain, metaphorical, sense a member of the kingdom, but in reality a member of the church, then I will prove that only in a sense he is metaphorically a member of the church. Away with the idea that Christ has two institutions, one the church and the other the kingdom, and it only in a sense, but will be in reality at the resurrection. I shall pay my respects more fully to this phase of the subject a little later.

I now want to direct your attention to the investiga-

tion of the *throne*. I mean to be understood as taking the position that Jesus the Christ is today, and has been from seven days after His ascension to the right hand of God, the Father, on the throne of David, and is King of kings and Lord of lords.

I would have you know that God has never had but one throne, and has only one today, and never will have but one. "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest" (Isa. 66:1; Acts 7:49). The Bible nowhere teaches a plurality of thrones in heaven or on earth. We see from these passages that heaven is the throne of God. God is an absolute monarch, a perfect monarch filled with mercy and kindness and knows how to deal with every phase of human weakness. He can not be mistaken in any of his rulings.

Israel became dissatisfied with God's perfect rule. God was in heaven ruling Israel on earth, though invisible to man. Israel, filled with the desires of human rule, began to call for an earthly king. Nearly three hundred years before the Israelites called for a king God told Israel then that she would ask for a king, and gave certain warnings of what would be done (Deut. 28:36, 37). God foresaw that Israel would want to remove the throne from heaven to the earth, and she did. "Ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your king. Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the Lord has set a king over you. If you will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebell against the commandments of the Lord, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God: but if



ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, but rebell against the commandment of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers" (I Sam. 12:12-16). Hear the Apostle Paul: "And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they desired a king; and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. And when he had removed him he raised up unto them Daid to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will. Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus" (Acts 13:20-23). By reading the eleventh chapter of I Samuel you see that Saul as king was a selection of the people and not the special choice of God. He was the people's king. We find that God revealed unto Jacob: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. 49:10). After the throne had been wrested from heaven's domain and placed on earth and a man made king placed upon the throne, he, the king, rebelled against God's admonition and took the sole authority in his own hand. By reading the 15th and 16th chapters of I Samuel you will see that Saul was rejected, and David was anointed to be king, a man after God's heart. We find the sceptre is with Judah. After the reign of David, Solomon the son of David came to the throne, so the throne is transferred to Solomon (I Kings 1:13, 17). "And also thus said the king, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which hath given one to sit on my throne this day mine eyes seeing it" (I Kings 1:48; 3:6). Solomon followed strange

women and his heart was turned away from God (I Kings 11:1-3). In consequence of the sins of Solomon when his son Rehoboam came to the throne the kingdom was rent, except the tribe of Judah that the throne might be perpetuated to the posterity of David. "And it came to pass when all Israel heard that Jereboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and make him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only" (I Kings 12:20). God had promised that a reservation was to be made to Abraham and to the tribe of Judah. "And unto his son will I give one tribe that David my servant may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there" (I Kings 11:36. See also Ex. 20:24; II Chron. 6:2, 6, 32). The angel told Mary at the birth of Jesus that God would give Jesus the throne of David (Luke 1:32). It is for me to prove whether Jesus is on David's throne today or not. We have found that the throne is on earth, being transferred from one king to another, but still carrying the title of David's throne because David was the first God appointed king on earth to occupy the throne that was brought down from heaven and placed among men.

Passing down the line of kings, we find that Jehoia-  
chin, who is also called Jeconiah and Coniah, was the last king to sit on the throne of David and was king at the time the children of Israel were carried away into Babylonish captivity. The king of Babylon set up a king, Zedekiah, but he had no authority to do such (II Kings 24:1-20; Jer. 22:24-30).

The throne is now taken from among men. "Therefore thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim king of Judah; he shall have none to sit upon the throne of David" (Jer.

36:30; Ezek. 37:1). Hear what Jeremiah the prophet of God said to Israel between the first and second sieges, or carrying away to Babylon: "Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? Is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord, write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. 22:28-30). But one is ready to say what becomes of the prophecy of Gen. 49:10 if the throne of David is not to have another man of the tribe of Judah to rule on the throne on earth? Some commentators and critics say that the passage is not to be understood without limitation; if so, trouble comes just here. Some say that the sceptre shall not *finally* depart from Judah. Jesus was heir to the throne of David in a three-fold sense. First by natural descent, or genealogy of David, to whom God transferred the throne for a time (Matt. 1:1-17). Second, because He is the only begotten Son of God (John 1:14-18). Thirdly, by appointment (Heb. 1:1-4; 2:9; Phil. 2:5-11; Luke 22:29).

Jesus was of the tribe of Judah (Matt. 1:1-17) therefore could not be seated on David's throne on earth and ruling. To those who contend that Jesus was ruling king on earth during his personal ministry, and to those who teach that Jesus is to come back, be seated on David's throne on earth and rule in His kingdom, let them think over Jeremiah's language, "For no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. 22:30). But one is ready to say that this means the direct descendents of Coniah or Jeichonias. If you think so, then turn to Matt. 1:11 and



you will find that Jesus was a direct descendent of this family, so away goes all contention that Jesus could be ruling king on earth. No, not before He went away or at His return. This lecture is to be published, so I make the open challenge to all that I am willing to meet any man either in an oral or written discussion that Jesus Christ never was nor never will be king on this mundane sphere. I tell you, brethren, it is getting time the true soldiers of the cross were arising and making an open fight on the materialism that is gradually creeping into the church of late. I for in, in the language of Brother F. B. Syrgley, "I can not and will not stand for it." Arise, soldiers, arise and show your colors.

One is ready to ask, when Israel went into Babylonish captivity, what became of the throne and who occupied it? The throne was vacated and stayed vacant for about seventy or seventy-five years—all the time Israel was in captivity. "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without a teraphim" (Hosea 3:4. See also Jer. 36:30). "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hosea 4:6). Here we find Israel without a king and without a law. The throne has been vacated. When, where and by whom was the throne of David reoccupied? "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days" (Hosea 3:5). I contend that God became their king until Jesus the Son of David went home to glory where the throne had been exalted, and was seated at the right



hand of the Father in heaven. When Israel came out of captivity they looked to God for help, for He had become their king. The throne had been among men nearly 500 years and vacant for 70 or 75 years. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help. *I will be thy king*: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, give me a king and princes? I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath. For now they shall say, We have no king, because we feared not the Lord; what then shall a king do to us;" (Hosea 13:9-11; 10:3). "The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever, as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven" (Psa. 103:19; 89:35-37). When Israel was brought out of captivity they found the throne of David in heaven and God seated again as king.

We now look forward to the time that Jesus was seated on David's throne in heaven, at which time the kingdom or church was fully set up.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, *upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom*, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever" (Isa. 9:6, 7). "Behold the man whose name is the *branch*; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, *and he shall sit upon and*

*rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne:* and the counsel of peace shall be between them both. And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord" (Zech. 6:12, 13, 15). "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like unto the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they came near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:9, 13, 14).

It seems to me that just to quote the above scriptures ought to be sufficient to convince any thinking man that Jesus is the one of whom the prophets speak and that He is today on David's throne; but for fear all will not readily grasp the prophets' teachings, I shall comment. Isaiah's words that unto us the child born, the son given, He shall have a government, He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Prince of Peace. Beyond the shadow of a doubt this refers to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It simply means God manifested in the flesh in the person of Jesus and ruling through Him. This is clearly proven in I Tim. 3:16. Isaiah further tells us that he is to be upon David's throne, and upon his kingdom, to order it, to establish it with judgment and justice. If the kingdom is not yet set up, then Jesus is not our Counsellor. A counsellor is one who expounds the law, an advocate (I John 2:1). This wonderful man is to have an increase in his government, and this was to be while

upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; but if the kingdom and throne of Christ is not yet, then we have not Christ as our Counsellor, advocate, so He, Christ, is sitting idly by up in heaven waiting for the ushering of the coming of the kingdom. Zechariah says, as given a moment ago, that the *branch* shall build the *temple* of the Lord and shall bear the glory of it, shall sit and rule upon his throne and shall be priest upon his throne. A king is a ruler, so the *branch*, who is Christ, is to be priest and king upon His throne. He can't be priest on earth, "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest" (Heb. 8:4), so if he is to be king and priest on His throne and can't be priest on earth, then that forever *precludes* the idea of the kingdom being established while Christ was on earth or when He comes back to the earth, which he will never do. There is no scripture that teaches that Jesus will ever walk on earth again.

Jesus was seated upon David's throne in heaven at the right hand of the Father on the day of Pentecost. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21). Hear what the Apostle Peter said on the day of Pentecost in that wonderful sermon, the first one ever preached in the name or by the authority of Jesus Christ (Luke 24:46-49): "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house



of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:25, 32-36).

Jesus is now in heaven, where David's throne was carried, and where God was reseated and where the throne is to stay throughout an unending eternity. It is in heaven to stay, there is to be no end to it. Never again will it be brought to earth and placed among men. The end: Isa. 9:7; Ezek. 37:22, 24, 27; Dan. 7:14; Psalms 89: following scriptures give an abundance of proof to that (29, 36, 37).

A little more on the throne and reign of Christ, in heaven, who is heir to the throne and appointed to it by Jehovah. God has exalted Him, crowned Him and given Him a name above every name, and all this was done after He had been crucified and appeared in the Holy of Holies, heaven itself. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past unto the father by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom, also he made the world; who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins and sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Heb. 1:1-4). "Son whom he hath appointed heir of all things." Hath appointed *indicates an action past and perfected*. Where was this done, On David's throne in heaven. "Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in



the likeness of man: and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that *Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father*" (Phil. 2:5-11). I must confess this is strange language to me if Jesus is not yet in possession of His Father's throne, to which He is heir by inheritance, and also by appointment, and if not yet seated on David's throne which was carried back to glory.

As I have already stated and proven that the throne of David is eternal in the heavens and that God was seated upon it when Jesus came in the clouds of glory and came to the Ancient of days, *i. e.*, to God, and received power, dominion and a kingdom, an everlasting kingdom. God is still king. God was a universal king (Dan. 4:25, 32; 2:21). Jesus was seated at the right hand of the Father and made equal with God, by himself, Christ's dominion is spiritual and over the church which is His kingdom. The spiritual reign and name is above all other reigns and names. None so powerful, so great, so highly exalted, so honored as the Christ. Seeing that Christ was to be a spiritual adviser, advocate, teacher, lawgiver, mediator, intercessor, ruler, Lord, and as these terms all apply to the kingdom, I confess that I am worse than bewildered if the kingdom is not established today.

The kingdom, or church, has been established. It began when Jesus came into the presence of God and was consecrated priest and went into the Holy of Holies to make the atonement. Jesus was upon earth forty days

and went home to heaven seven days before Pentecost and came into the presence of God and waited seven days for His consecration. While Jesus was being consecrated there was no man in the church. There could not be a man in the church if types and shadows mean anything. "And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in seven days, until the days of your consecration be at an end: for seven days shall he consecrate you. As he hath done this day, so the Lord hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you. Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle seven days, and keep the charge of the Lord, that ye die not: for so I am commanded by the house of Moses" (Lev. 8:33-36). "And then shall be *no man* in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel" (Lev. 16:17). We learn from Hebrews (8th, 9th and 10th chapters) that the old was a type or shadow of the new.

We have already learned that Christ could not have been king, lord, ruler, priest, lawgiver, atoner, intercessor, etc., while on earth. It is not necessarily the purpose of this lecture to show the place where the kingdom was set up, but to show that there was no church or kingdom until the crucifixion of Jesus, and that the kingdom is in existence today. I will advance a few thoughts for consideration. The time the church was to be set up was the beginning of the Last Days, which the following scriptures teach: Isa. 2:2, 3; 28:16; Joel 2:32; Micah 4:1, 2, 8, and these show that the above had their fulfillment in the city of Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost: Acts 2:17; 11:15; Heb. 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:5. The same scriptures also prove that Jerusalem was the city where

the church began.

#### CHURCH AND KINGDOM.

The kingdom is the church and the church is the kingdom. About the first time I ever heard any one advocate that the church and kingdom were separate and distinct institutions were those who were trying to get around the arguments upon the new birth in John 3:5. Later the materialists, who teach that all the spirit a man has is his breath, began to teach that we would be born of the Spirit at the resurrection, and then we would have membership in the kingdom. I want some one who teaches that the kingdom and church are not the same to tell me by the Bible what is the process of getting into the kingdom if we do not become members by the same process we become members of the church; Can a man be a member of the church of Jesus Christ and at the same time not be a member of the kingdom? Or can he be a member of the kingdom and not be a member of the church? Be frank, be plain and clear in your proof. Did the people on the day of Pentecost become members of the church and later by some other process become members of the kingdom (Acts 2:38, 39, 47)? "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:18, 19). What Jesus built upon the rock he called the kingdom. If we have no kingdom, then Peter could not bind and loose while on earth, so nothing bound or loosed in heaven. No authority or power given to the church, because the church is one thing and the kingdom another and the keys are for the kingdom and not the church. Away with this doctrine. It is not of God, but



wholly of man. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13). It was the church at Colosse that had been translated into the kingdom, not that she was waiting to be translated after death. The same process that made those people church members made them members of the kingdom. "And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellow workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me" (Col. 4:11). Good authors have rendered *cis* in this passage *in*, so those who had been translated were fellow workers *in* the kingdom of God. It may be rendered, into the kingdom of God. They were not waiting for the kingdom as Joseph of Armathea did before the day of Pentecost, nor were they praying for it to come as Jesus taught his disciples. They were fellow workers *in*, into, the kingdom of God. "I, John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9). John states plainly that he is in the kingdom. He was not in the vestibule, for if it has such a thing, I have never read of it in my Bible. If John was not in the kingdom, he was not a companion in tribulation. It was the reign of Christ he was under, the King of kings and Lord of Lords. Christ on David's throne in heaven and John on earth a laborer in the kingdom of Christ. "Which in his times he shall shew, *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (I Tim. 6:15). "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which can not be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12:28). The translation of Conybeare and Howson reads, "Wherefore, since we receive a kingdom that can not be shaken." This is much



better, but James Macknight is still better, and reads: "Wherefore we having received a kingdom not to be shaken." This is in perfect accord with Col. 1:13 and Rev. 1:9).

The kingdom of God or church of Christ is a place of enjoyment, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. 14:17). Paul did not say that the kingdom will not be, but said it is not, that is, it is not now, at this time, meat and drink.

I shall let my concluding argument be from a little tract on the kingdom by the lamented G. W. Cone. I must confess that he has given me many good thoughts upon the kingdom of Christ and throne of David: "This prepares the way to speak of 'regeneration,' as taught in the New Testament, not a metaphysical hair-splitting arrangement as taught in the modern schools. 'Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?' And Jesus said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (Matt. 19:27, 28). Some understand this scripture to have reference to the following: 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from his goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left,' etc. etc. (Matt. 25:31-33). In one, the apostles were to do the judging, in the other, the Lord Jesus Christ; in regard to the regeneration, there is a washing connected with it

according to the teaching of Paul (Titus 3:5), but it is difficult to see how any washing can be connected with the final judgment.

"The Savior makes 'regeneration' and the kingdom synonymous. Matthew calls it regeneration, and Luke calls it the kingdom. Suppose, then, we take Luke's kingdom and put it in the place of Matthew's regeneration and see if it will make good sense according to the rule: 'And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye have followed me into the kingdom, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' (See Luke 22:29, 30; Matt. 19:28, 29). Reader, how do you like this transposition? 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit.' 'Washing of regeneration.' This washing belongs to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus the Christ; it is not baptism, but is the result of baptism" (pp. 18, 19). I have quoted Brother Cone at length, for there is much to think about in what he said. Accept the truth, renounce the error from all men.

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Cor. 15:24, 25). When Gabriel sounds his trumpet in the last day it will not be a signal that a kingdom is to established, or that Jesus is coming to the earth to be seated on David' throne; but, on the other hand, it will be to deliver to God, the Father, the throne and kingdom that has been since the day of Pentecost.

While we sojourn on this earth, we are living in the first domain of the kingdom, the church (Mic. 4:8).

The first domain, the church, is the *holy place*. (See Heb. 9 and 10.) "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God" (Heb. 10:19-21). Isa. 2:1-3 and Mic. 4:1-8 and I Tim. 3:15 prove beyond the shadow of a quibble that the house of God, kingdom and church are all the same. As Jesus went into death, passed through the veil, his flesh, and went into the holiest of all, so will we some day pass from the first domain of the kingdom into the everlasting domain, from the Holy Place to Most Holy. (See II Pet. 1:11.)

At the coming of Jesus in the air when we will rise to meet Him and all is over, He, Christ, will send His holy angels to gather out of the kingdom, not to establish it, but to gather out of it, something already established that offend and do evil (Matt. 13:47-52). Whether this be the kingdom in its universal sense or not I do not care to discuss. It shows the *end of things*, not the beginning of a kingdom on earth. Paul told the church at Ephesus that in the dispensation of the fullness of time that might gather together in one things in heaven and in earth (Eph. 1:10). No second chance for any one then. Prepare, dear friends, for eternity. Tell the sinner he must be born of the water and the Spirit to enter the church, or kingdom (John 3:5). "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). "For ye all are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ, then are ye Abra-

ham's seed, and heirs according to promise" (Gal. 3: 26-29). Heirs of what? Of the blessed kingdom that Jesus received and that Daniel saw in the night vision when Jesus ascended to glory and the beautiful gates opened up and let the king of glory pass in and take the throne of David. He will be there until the last enemy is put down and Jesus becomes our elder brother.



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