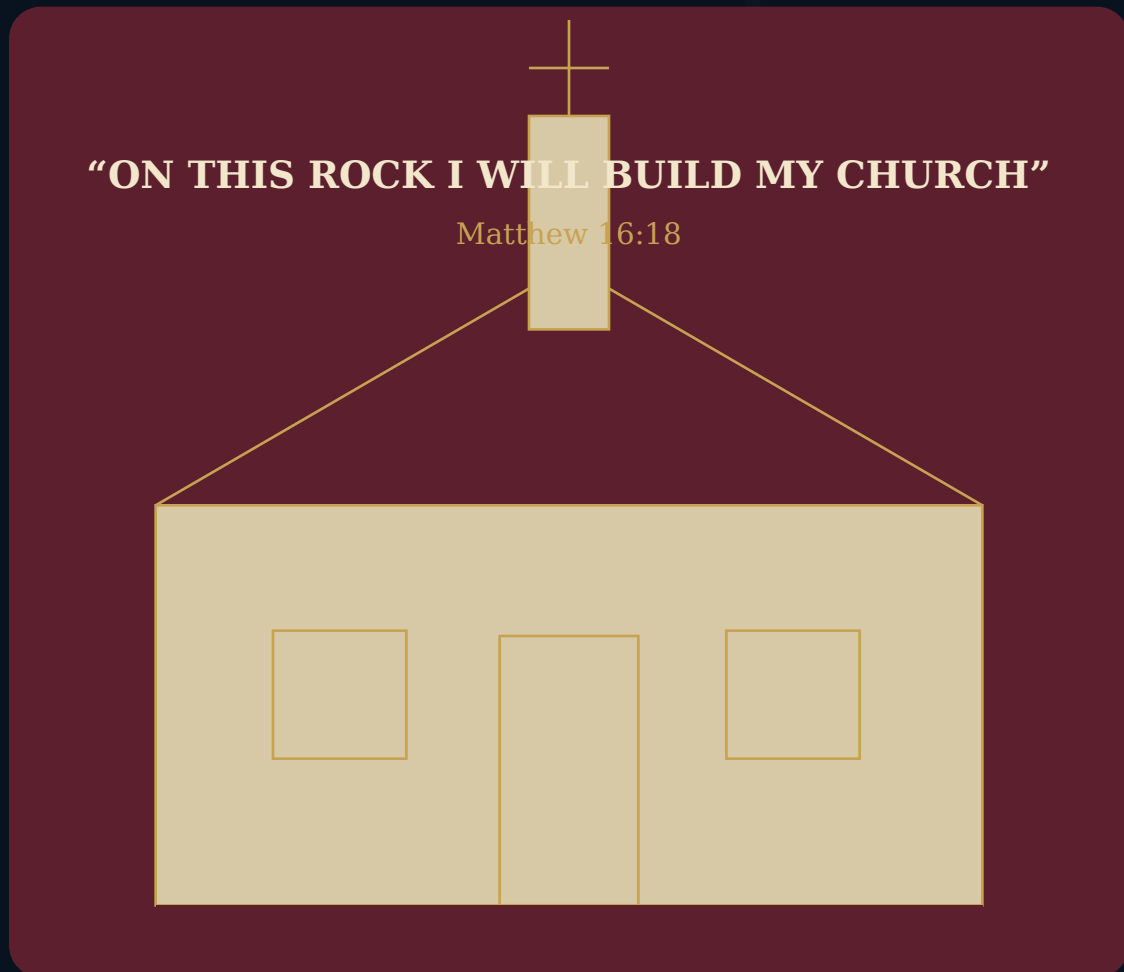


CLASSIC BAPTIST ECCLESIOLOGY

MY CHURCH

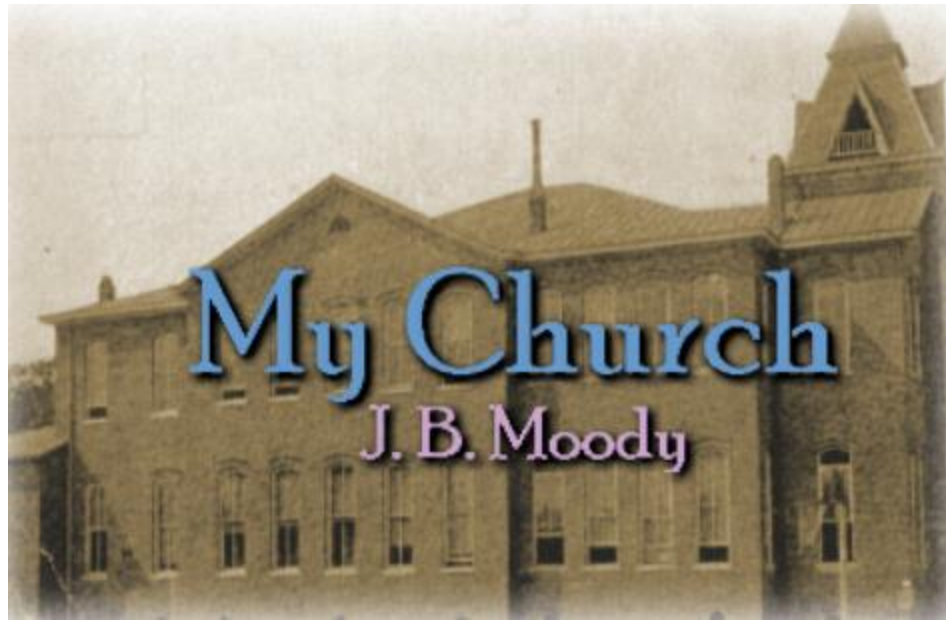
Faith, Order, Loyalty, Communion, and Perpetuity



J. B. MOODY, D.D.

Biographical sketch by Ben M. Bogard

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J. B. MOODY. D. D..

Elder Joseph B. Moody, D.D.

By Ben M. Bogard

J. B. Moody was born June 24, 1838, in Clarksville, Va. His early life was spent in Virginia and Kentucky. He was educated at Bethel College, Russellville, Ky., and entered the ministry September 17, 1876. Thus it will be seen that he was thirty-eight years of age when he began preaching, but he has developed into one of the strongest men, and is one of the greatest preachers and ablest debaters that has ever lived. He is indeed a pillar of orthodoxy.

Chapter One

ADDRESS OF WELCOME TO THE Southern Baptist Convention.

Mr. President, Brethren of the Convention, and Visitors:

I have often visited the Southern Baptist Convention, but never had it to visit me before. I feel proud, elated, yea, I am almost beside myself.

I desire very briefly to introduce to you our city, and then to introduce you to our people. There are many kinds of cities in the world, most of them common, and but few uncommon. Ours is one of the few. The name does not express its only peculiarity. It is notably a city of hot springs, and it ought to be also for its cold springs, which abound in great variety, and are of the best quality. Out of the same mountain proceed both cold and hot water. This is a great mystery, which I trust some of you will solve. Truly, this is a place of "many waters," and I congratulate you in following the example of the first Baptists in resorting to such a place. If any should doubt there is much water because there are many waters, let me assure you that we have over five hundred places prepared for immersing the body in water. We all believe in immersion here. When we asked our bath-house men if the Convention might test our capacity to immerse a multitude, they cordially replied: "Certainly, send them on;" and one said, "Send them all to me." There was duly one complaint, and that was, after tendering the baths they would not be accepted. If you don't accept you ought to be sent back and made to take a whole course. Get your [tickets](#) with instructions and your baths "as free as the water runs out of the ground," is the way one stated it. We welcome you to our many waters, cold and hot. Use them muchly and freely, both externally and internally. While this is not Washington City, yet it is a washing city. We take in washing—tons of it.

But not only the best of waters, but we have also the most precious stones. Passing by the baser metals, such as corruptible gold and silver, of which there are prospective mines more promising than the retrospective ones. Yea, we have mines in our minds more promising than those in our mountains. Passing by these, I introduce to you our crystal, the like of which is not found in all the world. No diamond can sparkle more brightly than ours; and the whole world is our market for whetstones. Bro. Moderator, as you are a lover of the beautiful, we present to you a Hot Springs crystal. That you may never feel poor, we present to you a Hot Springs diamond, and that you may never feel dull, we present to you a Hot Springs whetstone! These we have in great abundance. You may [show](#) this to your dull [speakers](#).

But ours is also a boarding city, and it is needless to say we welcome our boarders. It is not customary to welcome customers, but to *thank* them. You have heard addresses of welcome belabored with eloquence, but eloquence is not needed now. You have heard it "spread on thick," which was necessary if the welcome was thin. But ours is thick enough, perhaps too thick, as some may covet not you, *but yours*. Not all of us, even in Hot Springs, are saints and angels. It is possible in a city like this for strangers to be entertained by angels unawares, but watch the angels, as there are two kinds. John says try the spirits, but he didn't refer to ardent spirits. Hot Springs has charge of that case. We keep them for trial, keep them *on* trial, and we keep *up* the trial. But let strangers beware lest these spirits try them. Indeed, if reports be true, we would not like to have them tried by every Baptist jury lest it happen unto them as it did to those evil spirits in the camp of Israel when "the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up." Up is right, as they "fly to the head."

But I ask your attention to another peculiarity of our city. On a limited scale, here is perhaps the greatest combination of wealth and poverty, sickness and health, misery and pleasure, to be found in all the land. This is called the World's Sanitarium. The rich come here for pleasure, the poor for alms and the afflicted for healing. Of the latter classes you can hear stories, as true as holy writ, more horrifying than the ghost stories of your youth. Often are the poor shipped here on a charity ticket and dumped penniless at our depot. These are not our poor, but *yours*, and, as you are the representatives of the world's charity, I want you to know how we are imposed upon with the outside poor and afflicted. I hear that the Government bathes on an average of 600 to

1,000 daily of these indigent poor. But there is no charity fund here, and no charity home, and both these ought to be provided by those from whom the poor come, and to whom they rightly belong. We don't ask you to provide these, but to see that it is done. Acquaint yourselves with some of the facts, and your hearts will move with pity.

Next, I wish to interest you in our sore need as Baptists. Our church is out of place, and not in keeping with the place. A better church in a better place would give us access to hundreds that we do not now reach. If there is any place where the gospel can be preached to all the world, here is the place. Our people, sorely burdened with poverty and daily calls for charity, desire and deserve your sympathy and co-operation. Brethren, "if there be any virtue, any praise, think on these things, and those things which ye learn and see and hear, do; and the God of peace shall be with you."

But enough concerning ourselves. I wish now to introduce you to our people—to acquaint them with some of the peculiarities of our guests—I should say customers. Who are these that have come from the North, South, East and West, and have set down here to take council together? Who are they? From whence came they? And for what came they? Whether any do inquire of this or that one, he is my partner, my fellow-helper concerning the truth; or if they all be inquired of, *"they are the messengers of the churches—the glory of Christ."* In apostolic days the churches, with uplifted hands, chose messengers and sent them out on the Lord's business. But note well, they were the *"messengers of the churches."* In the second and third centuries some of these messengers claimed to be delegates of their churches, which, of course, put church authority in their hands, and church authority is all the authority Christ left his people in the world. How the church could hold authority after delegating it I know not, or how they could delegate authority I know not, or how they could resist the delegated authority I know not; for they had been taught not to resist "the authorities." These delegates were generally the pastors of churches, and in two or three centuries they succeeded in wrenching authority from some of the churches, and thus arose an unscriptural congregational episcopacy. But not satisfied with authority over their church, they sought and fought to extend their authority over several churches contiguous to them. When they succeeded in this, they sought and fought to conquer more churches, and to conquer them the more. Thus grew the metropolitan episcopacy, and then the diocesan or provincial, and this grew into the national; and when the two greatest of these sought and fought for supremacy over the other, the bloody victory fell to the bishop at Rome, and he at length acquired the title of Universal Bishop, and from this he acquired the title of Pope, first of all Christendom, and then of all the world. Not satisfied with the confines of this little planet, he extended his authority into heaven, and then into Hades, and then into hell; and the final claim was, that all authority from the highest heaven to the lowest hell had been delegated to the pope of Rome. And this meant authority over men's bodies, minds, souls, property and destiny for time and for eternity. As all authority had been delegated by the Father to the Son; and as the Son had delegated it to his vicegerent, the pope, then the Father, Son and Holy Spirit must await, expecting till the pope, by fire and sword, should put all authority under his feet. Whether the pope, after subduing all things unto himself, proposes to deliver the kingdom back to the Father, and himself become subject, I know not, but I trow not, as he has "exalted himself above all that is called God or is worshiped." And, mark you, all this (and the half has not been told) was hatched out of that little egg that at first was innocently called "delegate." Are there any real delegates here claiming authority from their churches? We will save our welcome for you until the time of your departure, and if you are in a hurry for the welcome, then you must hasten your departure. Let me emphasize. I introduce to our people the *"messengers of the churches."* Not messengers or delegates of the Convention.. *Members* of the Convention and messengers of the churches. These are the glory of Christ. Delegates who rob churches of their authority dishonor Christ. These messengers claim no authority, not even over a hair on any man's head, nor will they allow any one to exercise authority over a hair on their head. These are the champions of civil and religious liberty, and their mission and commission is to make all men as free as themselves.

But note another peculiarity. These are not messengers of the church, but of the churches. Not one of them is a messenger from a State Baptist church, or Southern Baptist church, or national, or general, or universal church, for if so, he would be from a big church and the others from little low-down local churches, and there would be inequality and preeminence. A heavenly principle would be violated, and his place would not be in a Baptist Convention, but in the Vatican at Rome, or some milder copy of it. *These be brethren.* They have no lords, no

rulers, no masters. "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them, and are called benefactors. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your servant. And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all."

Not even our President has the shadow of ecclesiastical authority. If there are sovereigns here they are on the floor. Our President, in allowing himself honored with election to this service, has really been abased. If we say go up he can go, and if we say come down he has to come. Don't you see how the earthly principle is reversed by the heavenly? No one-man authority here. The majority rules even the President. Even a delegate, claiming all the authority of the big church, would be cut off by the messengers of the churches. Christ built but one kind of a church, either a kingdom church to be increased, or a congregational church to be multiplied. These are messengers of the churches. Can you even imagine in that expression differing orders of rank either in the messengers or the churches? A telescope or microscope has never been invented that can bring such inequality even to the imagination. Christ is glorified in maintaining an equality of members, a parity of ministers and a comity of churches. To whatever extent preeminence goes to a messenger or a church, to that extent Christ is robbed of his glory, for he is head over all things to his churches—churches of same faith and order once for all delivered, else there might be schisms or divisions and heresies which cannot glorify Christ. There will be contentions about conventional matters, but that is to be expected from soldiers having on the whole armor and belonging to militant churches. But when the majority exercises its authority the fight will subside. They are sent here to fight for what they think is right, and then to abide by what the majority may decide. At one time you may say: Behold a fight in the camp of Israel, but when the vote is taken the war will end, and you can then say: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

The Baptists are a peculiar people. The churches sending messengers here are all modeled after the apostolic churches, and these after the church at Jerusalem, and that was the original first church which traveled about with the divine Carpenter and Master Builder. This first church, located for a while at Jerusalem, but getting too large and too lazy, the Lord permitted persecution to scatter it, and in their dispersion this church of Jerusalem became the church of Judea, Samaria and Galilee, going everywhere preaching the Word. But when they had rest they walked in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, *and was multiplied* by the members organizing themselves in their several places of abode into the churches of Judea, churches of Samaria and churches of Galilee, of which we afterward read: "Added to" in Jerusalem, but when persecuted it multiplied. Addition makes *more*, multiplication makes *many*. The Lord is glorified when his churches are multiplied. Indeed, addition, subtraction and division are all for a healthy multiplication. Multiplication is more important than location. Location is not always essential. The first church was not a local church. It located until it thought it necessary to be local, then it dislocated, by the will of God. We have all heard, and, I trust, read of the church that immigrated to this country from Europe. It was a church all the way. It is not right, because not Scriptural to call a church a local church. It was to an unlocal church that Christ said: "*Going*, disciple you all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, teaching them to guard safely all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you in all the days, to the consummation of the age." What more authority has a local church? Christ may be more glorified in a going church than in a local one, however well located it may be. I don't object to a church locating as a means to multiplication; but I do object to using the word local as descriptive of our churches, unless we do it to distinguish from a migratory church. They don't have to be located to be churches of Christ. "Whosoever two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them." We don't have to locate in Mt. Gerizim or in Jerusalem. Our religion and churches and doctrines are *too much* localized. They ought to be going and discipling the nations. Seeds are for sowing—broadcast.

We are trying to change, our location, but some are so wedded to the place that they had rather stay and starve than to move and thrive. Our literature abounds with these hurtful words, "delegate" and "local." I trust some one will move, and that the motion will receive a thousand, yea, two thousand seconds, to expunge these unscriptural terms from our nomenclature. They are misleading. Christ is more glorified in many little churches than - one big one, and this discriminating adjective "local" is intended to disparage the congregational church. If the church Christ built is persecuted in one city, it can flee to another; but the church that occupies all space

can't change its place. It can't even go to heaven, as that belongs to the universe. With this congregational construction it is proof against destruction. If all the mosquitoes were one, we could combine our forces against him and prevail; put as it is, it is a hopeless case. I never heard of a local mosquito, nor of local being used of any figure of the church. I never read of a local assembly, building, body, bride, city, congregation, candlestick, flock, fold, family, field, house, household, temple, vine, vineyard, woman, or wife. They may be local, but it is tautological tomfoolery to say so, except to distinguish them from some other kind. But there is no other. The kingdom is not local, but the church is necessarily so. When a church dies *in* a place, it dies only *to* the place, and scatters itself to others. Christ says, "I will *remove* the candlestick *out of its place*." It is made of pure gold, the most enduring and indestructible of all metals. The more you melt it, the purer it becomes; the more you beat it, the more it spreads; the more you rub it, the brighter it shines. Christ does not destroy his candlesticks, but removes them out of their places. If Christ walks in the midst of the candlesticks and holds the stars in his right hand, how can you destroy them without destroying him? Christ is glorified in being the head of every man and of every church; and if being the head of every church makes him multicapital, being the head of every mall makes him more so. If it is not necessary for every man to become one, that He may be the head, so of the churches. Behold these messengers of whom Christ is the head of every one, and they come from the churches of which the same may be said. Every man complete in himself, and every church complete in itself. Here is individual liberty and church independency. All, with differing gifts and nationalities, yet in one Spirit have been baptized into one body, that is, one kind of body like the human body, with the head over the members, and the members having the same care one of another, "the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." These have all drunk of one spirit, even the spirit of peace, truth and unity; having one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. The brother of low degree is exalted, and the brother of high degree is humbled, so there is equality, and they talk and walk and work together *as brethren*. While these messengers have been sent, and are servants, if the least one, in any particular, had preferred, he would have stayed away. His liberty was not lessened by being sent and being a servant. I speak in the language of Canaan. They were sent by the law of love and they serve in the law of liberty. What a peculiar people are Baptists!

A brother of another persuasion said to me the other day: "I am glad you have been sent back." "Sent," said I; "am I not free? Am I not free indeed?" After a long correspondence I despaired of getting clergymen's rates over the Union system of railroads, because I could not give the name of the moderator under whose appointment I was laboring at Hot Springs. Will Baptists never make themselves known? We are to blame for most of this. Who gave one man authority to order another in the service of Christ? If I should receive order from any man, or body of men, to go anywhere or to do anything, it would not be my will at all to go to that place, or to do that thing. Who dare get between me and a throne of grace, or to super- cede the Holy Spirit as my guide?

To be more explicit,, and to make ourselves better known—and I am sure this whole Convention will endorse this confident spirit of boasting—if this, the greatest Convention that assembles on the earth, should order me to continue in my present field till further orders, I would resign next Sunday. This Convention, great in numbers and wisdom, is weak in authority, and why? Because He who has all authority never left it to a large annual gathering like this, but to a little weekly gathering like that on the other hill, called his church.

And again, in order to allay a little apprehension or suspicion among some of our own brethren, I make this further statement, and I am sure I will have, the hearty, if not the audible, amen of even our Boards if in your great wisdom you should suggest plans that my little church will approve, we will adopt, them, *but not otherwise*. You have the wisdom, and we the authority, and, trembling under a sense of that responsibility, we seek your wisdom to enable us the better to exercise our authority, and that is why we rejoice in your coming. Advise us in all things, command us in nothing. If it is right for the Spirit to contrary the flesh, and right to contrary wrong, it would be our duty to be contrary to any order that would be contrary to the liberty and authority, vested in us by the great Head of the church.

Let me repeat. These are messengers of the churches sent to serve, not as slaves, but as sons, free and willing, doing service from the heart, not unto men, *not unto men*, but unto Christ. A glorious service, in a glorious liberty, maintaining a glorious unity, and in this is the glory of Christ. And it is our mission in the world to make every man as free as ourselves. Those in bondage to men ought to pray for our success.

We welcome you, disciples, because you are the disciples of Christ. We welcome you, messengers, because you are the messengers of the churches. We welcome you, messengers of the churches, because you are messengers of the churches of Christ. We welcome you, messengers of the churches of Christ, because you are the glory of Christ. And as Christ is glorified in you, see that he is glorified by you and through you.

Glad you are here. Wish more had come. Hope you will stay a long time, and that your stay will be as profitable to you as to us. Especially are we glad to see our brethren from the East side of Jordan. I was a long time on that side myself, but hearing of the corn and wine and milk and honey that flow in Canaan, the promise land, I am here. And yet there is room. Come one, come all. Come to stay. Bring all the family and the folk, and their families and folk. Remember, you are just on the borders of this goodly land. We are the down-Easters. The Middle and Western States are all in the great beyond. It is further to the Pacific, than to the Atlantic. Out here you can raise most anything. But if you prefer to live on sand, stay where you are; if rice and sugar, come to our Louisiana; if corn and cotton and cattle, come to Texas; If you want to raise hogs not fattened on swill from the still, come to Missouri; if you want to raise a fuss, come to the Territory close down on the borders of Texas. Indeed, you can raise most anything in Texas, but I thought I would make a distribution of our Western products; if you want to raise the wind, come to Kansas; if you want to raise yourselves and a fine flock of children, come to Arkansas (and I suppose the difference between Kansas and Arkansas is the same as between angel and archangel.) How can you raise yourselves by coming to Arkansas? There are two ways open to you—the usual way and the unusual. The usual way you know, and if you should fail in that, you can try the other way, which is the Scriptural way, and that is to humble yourself, and you will be exalted in due time. This is one of the best States in the Union for that, as there is so much to help a man to humility, and when he gets there, then he can look to the Lord to lift him up.

I hope you all will take a ride or a walk over these mountains. A way is there prepared, yea, a high way. And as you go with exaltation of body and exultation of soul, don't forget that it all belongs to U. S.—us. Recognize it, yea, realize it; not only be at home, but feel at home. Seize the keys, do as you please and dwell at ease. If you desire next year to visit Asheville, N. C., the next year you must come back. Come out from there singing "Home Again," and "Home, Sweet Home." Hurry back to your fellow-disciples, who will be found fighting with devils below. And may the God of peace bruise Satan under our feet shortly.

Chapter Two

THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE FAITH.

The following address was delivered at the B. Y. P. U. Encampment, at Estill Springs, Tennessee, June 25, 1907. As many of the brethren expressed a desire to see it in [print](#), I hereby comply, after having given it to my Bible Class.

On occasions like this, with limited time and a great subject, it is necessary to boil down to the last degree. Yet too much boiling boils dry or boils away. As I want to say something, and don't want that to be dry, I must not boil too much. I could not cry if I try, yet if my [eyes](#) are dry, I hope my mouth will not be, nor your ears. Often the dryness is charged to the speaker's mouth, when it is altogether in the hearer's ears. I don't believe in dry doctrines, not even in dry grace; for the grace that bringeth salvation is a bloody grace, while the body washed in pure water is the dedication that grace has [ordained](#) for service.

Christ Took to Water Before He Took to Service. And that was for our example. And then, by all authority in heaven and upon earth, he gave us his commanding precept as well as example. "Make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded." The baptizing and teaching are in the process of discipling. Disciple first to Christ for salvation, then disciple into His doctrine for service, and baptism stands between as the solemn profession of the first and the solemn dedication to the other.

So the gospel order for all men in all the age is Salvation, Baptism, Service. As sure as faith comes before baptism, and as sure as salvation and its blessings are predicted of faith, and there is nothing surer, so sure is salvation before baptism. On this all Baptists are agreed. Now, just as sure as salvation is before baptism, that sure must baptism come after salvation. Who said so? The all authority in heaven and earth. And who is he that says that you may stop at salvation? Who is he? Where is he? What is he? Never will I excuse one from baptism. Now, another step. Listen, preachers! Just so sure as salvation and baptism come before service, just so sure must service come after baptism. And who is he that marks his Master's sheep and turns them loose, to starve and waste their wool? The unfaithful shepherd. And who is he that would turn the sheep loose without even a mark? Who? The traitor. The child should be clothed, and the soldier should be uniformed. Not clothed to become a child, nor uniformed to become a soldier, but because they are. As many as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ. The most shameful nakedness in this world is that found in the service of Christ. O, that they were clothed upon so as not to be found naked. Those not having this wedding garment will be found speechless. A patch on the forehead is neither uniform, nor clothing. Thomas Aquinas said: If there is not water enough for the body, let the head be dipped. If a man is going to serve Christ only with his head, let that be first baptized, or he will think wrong and wrongly. If only with his mouth, let that be baptized also, or it will talk wrongly. If his hands are also for service, let them be baptized, or they will work wrongly. And if his feet are also for service, let them, too, be baptized, or they will walk wrongly. A defect in the foundation makes the whole superstructure defective. This may be in bad taste, but it is not tasteless or dry, for "there is much water there." A bad taste is better than no taste, and often better than a sweet taste. I don't want you to sing, when I am through, "How tedious and tasteless the hour."

This is my prelude; now watch my interlude, and see how I conclude. I must first emphasize Stewardship—the Stewardship of the faith. Then faith—the steward of the Faith. Then the two definite articles—the stewardship of the faith. The last may seem narrow, but definite articles are narrow, and the truth is narrow, and so is the way. Let us walk today in the narrow way.

A steward is a servant, hired to manage a fund or trust, according to instructions. Hence, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful. They must have an abiding consciousness, that what they have they received as a trust, to be guarded and used and distributed according to the will of the owner. The fund or trust was *his* before it was theirs; *his*, while it seems to be theirs; and *his*, by the same right when they give it out for him, or back to him. Stewardship requires careful deliberation, intelligent consideration and diligent administration of *what belongs to another*. In the case assigned me, and which we are to consider, the interest is so great as to require a co-stewardship, or brotherhood of stewards, and this requires a personal fellowship and

active co-operation that recognizes that it and each and all belong to the owner. Whether goods, or faculties of mind or heart, or spiritual gifts—all were given and received that they might be wisely used and imparted.

Let several Scriptures settle the *Principle* involved. Then the Scriptures that contain the *terms*; then it will be easy to draw reasonable and right conclusions.

First then, the Scriptures containing the Principles involved; then those containing the terms. I have taken Jude, verse 3, as a firm foundation on which to build my argument:

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.

The Stewardship is in the "earnestly contending;" the Trust is here called "The Faith;" and the Stewards are "The Saints." Jude began with all diligence to write of the common salvation, but the Holy Spirit impressed him that it was more needful for him to write and exhort, that these Stewards should be earnest in their Stewardship of this great Trust, which was once for all delivered to the saints. And as the Trust was to be perpetuated "once for all," so there must be a perpetuity of faithful Stewards, with an earnestness of Stewardship adequate to all emergencies. It is of the utmost importance to know who the Stewards are, what Stewardship involves, and what the Trust is. What is this called here "The Faith?" And who are these called "The Saints?" I am sure we will all agree on the first answer to be given, but I fear we will not all agree on the second. I shall earnestly contend for a baptized and organized Christianity, called "the church," and not the saints unorganized, though baptized. The gospel is to be preached not only to the lost for salvation, but also to the saved for service.

"Saved to Serve."

Let us go first to the last part of the commission—Matthew 28:20. "Teaching them" (all the baptized disciples) "to keep safely" (the same as contend earnestly); and the "all things whatsoever commanded" is the same as "the faith once for all delivered." That this trust or commission was given to the church, a pattern of which he had built once for all, is evident from the sets of the Apostles, where the Lord added to the church those disciples, made and baptized, and that "every day." Unorganized Christianity has no trust or commission, as unorganized anything is incompetent to do anything. Persecution was made "*against the church*;" the gates of Hades tried to "prevail against the church," for unorganized Christianity never did offend anybody or defend anything. Material for a building is of no account until it is fitted into its place in the building. The loose, left-over pieces, go to the scrap-pile for waste or for fuel. An unorganized saint that cares not to be baptized, or to join a church, would not care for the rest of the "like precious faith." He that is unfaithful in that which is least, would be unfaithful also in the much, and is unworthy and unfit to be a steward of anything for Christ.

My next Scripture is taken from John, 14:15-17:

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

As in the commission, the individuals, whether members, preachers, or apostles, were not to continue by reason of death, and as the divine presence was to continue through all the days to the end of the age with the "Ye," "You" and "Them," therefore Christ viewed them, not as individuals, or officers, but as an organization, which was to continue throughout the ages according to the hell-defying fiat of the all-authority in heaven and on earth. "The science of omission" here is the nescience of infidelity. So in the above. The "Keep" is the same word mistranslated "Observe" in the commission; and the "Ye" are the Stewards, with whom the Spirit was to abide forever; while the "Commandments" answer to "The Faith;" and by "earnestly contending for the faith once for all delivered," the Stewards are "to keep safely the all things whatsoever commanded." In 1

Corinthians 3:16-17, we see this Spirit of Truth was to dwell or abide in the church. Hence, the "Ye" and "You" must be as abiding as the abiding Spirit.

See the same Principle in John 15:13, 14 and 19.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. **14** Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. (*Not those who keep the essentials, but the all things whatsoever.*) **19** If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

He chose them out of the world and called them together, and these two make the *ecclesia* or church, a chosen-out and called-together body. He taught about his church in Matthew 16th and 18th chapters nearly a year before this. These personal pronouns must not hide the church. We will see about this further on. Here his "friends" are the Stewards, the "whatsoever I command" is the Trust, and, the "Do" is a part of the stewardizing. The verb is used in Luke 16:2. The Principle of the Stewardship of the Faith is here clearly set forth, and the Stewards will be shown to be, not promiscuous persons, but saints, walking in the light and life and love and law of their Lord. The all things whatsoever include baptism and church membership. "To the church of God at Corinth, called saints." I say again, saints not in the church are unworthy of Stewardship, even in things that are least. See this Principle again set forth in Acts, 20:17, 28-31.

17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church, and said to them. . . **28** Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. (*This flock or church of God was the one at Ephesus.*) **29** For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. **30** Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. **31** Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

These elders or bishops were "in the church." He has no offices out of the church. The Lord has provided for the edification and perfecting of the church by giving them officers; but unbaptized and non-church saints he has made no de. posit with as long as they are out of the church. The all-authority in heaven and on earth calls for their baptism in water and then addition to the church. Till then nothing is required at their hands and nothing committed to their trust-in a word, unbaptized and non-church Christians are not the Stewards of The Faith. The Holy Spirit never wasted ink on nondescript Christians. This church of God at Ephesus was a flock, to be flocked and fed, fattened and fleeced, to be watched over and warned of false apostles and elders, both outside and inside, who wanted to corrupt The Faith. These grievous wolves were trying to get in among them, that is, in the church at Ephesus, and their object was, by false doctrine, "to draw away disciples after them," "not sparing the flock." Christ commended this church for proving these false fellows liars. The elders or bishops were the leading Stewards, 'so that if the church should be destroyed by these wolves, their office would cease, as the offices *are in the church*. "The saints, bishops and deacons" constitute the church, so that the no-church saints can have no officers for their upbuilding in disobedience. That the churches are the Stewards of the Faith, see Romans 16:17:

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

The "Ye" and "You" and "Brethren," who were to do the judging, marking and avoiding, were the Stewards of the Faith, and their Stewardship consisted in keeping and earnestly contending for it, as once for all delivered. This letter was addressed to "All that be in Rome, be-loved of God, called saints;" yet the whole world is agreed that these saints constituted the church of God at Rome, and that they had been baptized. The word church does not occur in this Epistle till the last chapter, and there it occurs five times very instructively. Phebe was a servant of the church. If there were saints at Cenchrea out of the church, they sent no one, anywhere, to do

anything, that the Lord requires. Such saints are often captured by the devil, and become exceeding zealous for error, and "transformed as the ministers of righteousness," ever preaching Christ of envy and strife," supposing they are adding afflictions to those who are set for the defense of the gospel. Such are the agents of the gates of Hades, and they are zealous to prevail against the church. All the Gentile churches thanked God for the faithful lives of Priscilla and Aquila, but if there were Gentile saints out of the churches, of course they cared for none of those things. We find also that house-hold saints constituted themselves into house-hold churches. The Lord wants all saints added to His church, without delay, though few in number as a household.

The saints must do nothing without the consultation, counsel and consent of the brethren of the church. The next two letters were addressed to "The Church of God at Corinth," sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints. Both letters extended the addresses to others of like character, and some suppose to unorganized saints. But it is an unreasonable supposition. All the saints at Corinth were baptized. "Many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized." That was the divine order, and no exception was allowed Paul thanked God that he did not baptize all, but he never thought of thanking God that any or all were not baptized. Unspeakable evil has come from the recognition, and encouragement to the so-called, but miss-called "Stewards of God," who were and are unfaithful in the first and greatest commandment to the unbaptized saint. Saved they may be, thanks to divine grace, but not fit, ceremonially and mentally at least, to serve as Stewards of the faith once for all delivered. I repeat: the *only* duty of the unbaptized saint *is to be baptized*; to be baptized and the next duty of the baptized saint is to be added to the church, to the church of which Christ is the author and builder and finisher and defender, and which has never been destroyed. So Jude's "Once for all delivery of the faith" is seen in the commission given by Matthew, which was to the baptized disciples or saints. And so of all the rest, then, now and forever.

The next letter was addressed to the churches of Galatia, the Stewards of the manifold, grace of God. They were instructed how to manage the trust committed to them. If there were saints in Galatia not in the churches, they were left out, as all such will be when Christ comes to gather his jewels. The Bride will be made up of the elect and select, who were the faithful collect. The Galatian churches were clearly recognized as the Stewards of the Faith. The letter to the Ephesians is supposed by some to justify the belief that Christ has a universal church, visible or invisible. I don't see how this can possibly be. Acts 20:17 and 28, just noticed, with Ephesians 2:17-19; and 3:15, as read in the Revision; with the whole of chapter four, make it impossible for me to interpret 5:23-33 in any different way. It is common to speak of a wife or husband, father or mother, horse or lion, jury or Sunday-school, as the church is there spoken of; that is, generically, one of a species, comprehending all in the species. The church at Ephesus is so spoken of in Acts 20:28. A universal church, visible or invisible, must have organization and officers and doctrine and government, or it can do nothing.

Such a church could not be a steward of anything. It never meets to consult about anything and has no officers to execute anything. This senseless error about a universal church has deceived more people and wasted more energy and begot more bigotry than perhaps any other deceitful device of the devil. I don't want everybody scattered over the whole creation, living, dead, and yet unborn, to administer on my estate.

What is everybody's business is nobody's business. Everybody's responsibility destroys individual responsibility. individual obligation to the church and church responsibility to Christ constitute the head and heart and hands and heels of my subject. The Stewardship of the Faith is in the church; each church, every church; and as Christ is the head of every man, so is he the head of every church. Not denominational, sectional, state or universal church, for Christ has none such, and I am sure he would not have. They are not worth having. All the good that can be done must be done by individual, or cooperative, *i.e.*, congregational effort. "The Church of God" is a congregation. The expression "Church of God" occurs twelve times, and any man, though blind in one eye and purblind in the other, can see it so in every case. The lion is a ferocious beast; every lion is a ferocious beast; but all lions are not a ferocious beast. That is an inconceivable conception; an unsupposable supposition and an unspeakable superstition. The executive ability is in the real beast and not in the unreal buster. So of the horse, man, jury, church, etc.

An *individual* father may rule well his own house and his own children, but a *universal* father, with universal wife and children, whether visible or invisible, would be as great a travesty as a universal bishop over a universal church. "The house of God, which is the church of the living God, is the pillar and ground of the truth." That means the church is the Stewardship of the Faith.

Ephesians 2:19-22—Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; **20** And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; **21** In whom every building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: **22** In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

All buildings can't be conceived of as one building, nor all churches as one church. This applies to the church at Ephesus and to every other church. Christ built just such a church, "to the intent that unto principalities and authorities in heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God." This is again Church-Stewardship of the Faith. The church is offensive as well as defensive. The keeping or guarding or defending and earnestly contending implies danger and opposition and persecution, and the church is what has been persecuted, and what the gates of Hades have tried to prevail against." The dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war with the remnant of her seed (left from previous persecutions) and which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17). "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 14:1-2). Thus we see that where the Principle of Stewardship is taught, that the churches are the stewards, and the members and officers, each in his part, being dutiful to the church, enables the church to fulfill its responsibility to Christ. Now for some scriptures containing the terms.

Matthew 20:1-16 is very instructive—the householder hiring laborers for his vineyard. The middle verse, the 8th, shows the work of the Steward and all the rest the work of the householder or owner of the vineyard. We see the Steward must do what he is told, no more, no less, and that the responsibility for results was with the master. The laborers did not murmur against the Steward who settled with them, but against "the good man of the house." That is a fine lesson. Study it.

In Luke 16:1-12, we see where and how the responsibility of the Steward comes in. The first one, in Matthew 20, was faithful in doing what he was told to do; in this we see the "Unfaithful Steward" and the stewardship taken from him. And are not Christ's Stewards playing a like game today? Having all the commandments of Christ committed to them for safe keeping, are they not failing or refusing to contend earnestly for all the faith once for all delivered to them? Are they not saying to their Lord's debtors: How much owest thou my Lord?" And in order to be popular, and to be received into their houses, are they not compromising by proposing to let them off with one-half or two-thirds? And think you that the churches of Christ, for failing or refusing to keep safely all things whatsoever Christ had commanded, that the Stewardship will not be taken from them, so that they will have to retreat and take shelter with those whom they excused from a full and faithful settlement with their Lord? When Christ said "all things whatsoever I have commanded," did he not use the perfect tense, and does not that mean that he would not give any other instructions to the end of the age? Had not the faith once for all been delivered when Jude wrote? Did not Jude use the past tense, which implied that the full deliverance had been made before he wrote? Are we not giving full credit to doctrines much later than these? Will something else do as well? Will other and later founded, formed and fashioned churches do as well? Are not many discounting the old and putting a premium on the new? Is not the church question a part of the trust? Are not modern bishops head and shoulders above the old Bible kind? Is all this and much more like it faithful Stewardship of the Faith once for all delivered. Can an unscriptural bishop be blameless as the Steward of God? Does not 1 Peter, 4:10-11 require *all members*, as well as the bishop, to be good Stewards of the manifold grace of God, and to speak as the oracles of God?

A bishop must be blameless as the steward of God, . . . "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, whose mouths must be stopped; who subvert whole houses, teaching

things they ought not for filthy lucre's sake. . . . Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men, that turn from the truth." That was the way to contend for the faith; to keep the all things and to fulfill the Stewardship; but, of course, Paul wrote and Christ lived in the olden time, before men begun to conceive of catching flies with molasses, as their high calling in Christ Jesus. Vinegar catches many flies, but molasses is better. If flies were what we had to deal with, I should insist on molasses. But instead of flies, we, in our Stewardship, have to contend with "Foxes," "Hogs," "Dogs," "wolves," "Serpents," "Vipers," "Ministers of Satan," yea, and Satan himself; so that is a poor steward who arms himself only with molasses. What may be fatal to flies might fatten the foxes, etc. Flies are more fatal to our molasses than the molasses to the flies. It draws and fattens and causes to multiply and drowns only a few. This Stewardship of the Faith requires the whole armor of God, even a sharp, two-edged sword; and if you have two swords better take both. That is, if you live out West where the church is yet militant. This holy war is not over with us, so we have to keep a regular standing army of real soldiers, armed and uniformed and in regular training and in constant fighting, or we could not keep the faith, as every article is constantly assailed.

The Bishop is the general, the deacons are the colonels, the teachers the captains, and the saints constitute the great army of God, so that "saints, bishops and deacons" must "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and in nothing terrified by their adversaries ;" and this spirit of unterrified faithfulness is a token of perdition to the adversaries, but of salvation to the Stewards. This conflict, begun by Paul, was to continue. If the war is over in the East, it is not in the West. Or, the East may have gone into a truce or a trust; but in the West every victory yet requires a battle. Our God is a God of war, and he is still calling for stout and stalwart soldiers. We may cry peace, peace, but there is no peace. Stand, means to stand against, and contend, means to contend against We are not beating the air out West. The gainsayers are there. We have not yet stopped their mouths. They won't quit, so we have "to quit ourselves," but like men, *i.e.*, after conquering a peace. They attack every part of the faith, and especially the Stewardship of the Faith. They sometimes propose to merge, but that means submerge. They want the wolf and the lamb to lie down together, but that means the lamb on the inside of the wolf, and that is too close. But I beg pardon for that and I beg permission for this. The universal church has been assumed, asserted and insisted on to the irrevocable damage of the faith for which we should contend. I don't believe in it. If there could be such a thing it could not do anything. It never has met, it has no doctrines, no officers, no government, no commission. You can't tell who is in it or how they got there. It is an invisible, impracticable, impeachable, impossible, impecunious imp, spread out into shallowness, enlarged into littleness and increased into nothingness. It makes a man feel too large for a contemptible little congregation that Christ organized for work. They think they are in the big church by reason of saving faith, and they don't see the need of being added to another church—a little, local, limited church, too small for their little finger. Let me magnify this minified and crucified church, which is the church of the living God. I have heard you magnify the other; now hear me magnify this, and be patient and sweet, that you may hear.

Paul made converts and then organized them into *churches* and afterwards visited these churches to establish *them* in the faith. He wrote nine letters to these churches. He wrote four personal letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon, but they were all about the churches; how to officer them and to set them in order. But you say there are also catholic epistles. I don't believe it. Why should the Holy Spirit waste ink on unorganized Christianity? What account is it? The letter to the Hebrews was to organized Christians (See chap. 10: 21-25).

James wrote to the Twelve Tribes Scattered Abroad; but in chapter 5:14 he says: Is *any* among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church. The universal church has no elders, and if it had, you could not call them.

Peter wrote to "the Strangers Scattered Abroad;" but in the 5th chapter he tells the elders about feeding the flock or church, etc. He says: the church at Babylon, elected together with them, greeted them. He also spoke of baptism saving them in a figure. Peter never wrote to unbaptized and non-church Christians. Nor did John. How John did insist on keeping his commandments and walking in personal and doctrinal fellowship, and about some "going out from us to show they were not all of us." How could they go out of the universal church? Where could they go to? The Elect Lady had a church in her house, and he insisted that she nor we should give admittance or encourage any other doctrine than that received. His letter to Gaius was of the same sort. This son

of Thunder hurled his lightning at the episcopal Diotrephes, who loved the pre-eminence and who exercised his assumed episcopacy by casting some out of the church.

And Jude speaks of certain men creeping in unawares. Creeping into what? Not the universal church. He calls them spots in their feasts of charity, feeding themselves without fear. They were those who separated themselves, yet would come to eat with them. Such were open communionists. Then Christ, in Revelation, addressed not a holy catholic church, nor the church of Asia, but the Seven Churches of Asia. There was no Church of Asia, for if so, it was beneath Christ's notice. These seven churches he urged to hold fast till he come. Ephesus was praised for exposing the false apostles and for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitans. Good stewards in doctrine and practice, yet bad in spiritual religion. Those of the synagogue of Satan were to try the church at Smyrna with tribulations and persecutions, and they were exhorted to be faithful unto death in their Stewardship of the Faith, and they would receive a crown of life. The church at Pergamos held fast His name and did not deny the faith, even in the days when Antipas, the faithful martyr, was slain among them. Yet they had those who held the doctrine of Balaam, and also those who held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which doctrine Christ hated. They were defensive, but not offensive. Thyatira *suffered* that woman Jezebel, who called herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce the saints. Faulty again in aggressiveness. Sardis had only a few who had not defiled their garments with false doctrines or heresies. Philadelphia had the door of persecution closed on her and the door of missions opened, so she could preach the gospel to all the world. The Laodiceans, of which we are, were lukewarm—neither cold nor hot. We are saying, it makes no difference what a man believes, or what church he belongs to, or whether he belongs to any, or what he thinks of church or doctrine, just so he thinks very lightly. Lukewarmness hates straight-jacket orthodoxy and loves mother-hubbard liberality. This makes any church feel rich while it is miserable and poor and blind and naked. Laodicea was poor with its riches, while Smyrna was rich in her poverty. Now listen and hearken at this:

Revelation 2:7—HE that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Revelation 2:11—HE that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Revelation 2:17—HE that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Revelation 2:29—HE that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Revelation 3:16—HE that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Revelation 3:13—HE that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Revelation 3:22—HE that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Christ spoke to his churches. The Spirit spoke to the churches. And if Christ or the Spirit were to speak again, it would be to the churches. Seven times repeated, yet men having ears will not hear. They think He has been speaking modernly to individuals, to men and even to women, telling them to change what He had spoken of old to His churches. Since Jude wrote, there have been many deliverances of doctrines to newly-invented churches of the denominational kind, which men are furiously contending for.

"I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches." These churches are named only 111 times, but referred to more than a thousand and eleven times. The word does not occur in the 5th chap. of 1 Corinthians, for example, yet there are 27 places for it in those 13 verses. We hide it behind pronouns and signs and figures. Read 1 Corinthians 1:4-14, 10:14, and put church in the places of the pronouns and other substitutes. Try it on 8:16-17: "Know ye not that the church is the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in the church? If any man defile the church of God, him will God destroy. For the church of God is holy, which church ye are." We should not let these pronouns and other kinds of nouns destroy the church of God. In

letters addressed to churches, pronouns mostly stand for the churches. In Matthew 16:19, Peter stands for the church, as these "angels" do in the churches of Asia.

Now a word about "The Faith." The King James Version *let* in the definite article 32 times before Faith, *forced* it in 11 times and *forced* it out 42 times—32 times right, according to the Greek, and 53 times wrong. Those saved by grace through faith are saints, and to these church saints a solemn trust is committed, called "The Faith Once For All Delivered To The Saints." Take a few examples. "A great company of priests were obedient to *The Faith*." First, faith in Christ, then obedience to Christ, called here "The Faith." This obedience begins with profession and baptism. "God be thanked, that having been the servants of sin, ye obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered to you" (Rom. 6:17). Paul preached *The* faith he once destroyed. He never destroyed faith in Christ. The devil tried that on Peter, but failed. He wrecked Peter's courage, but his faith and love abided. Hymeneus and Alexander made shipwreck of *The* faith of some. They erred concerning the truth, saying the resurrection is past already, and thus they overthrew *The* faith of some. Not the faith that had *saved* them, but the faith they were to save from such destruction. "Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in The Faith; not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men that turn from The Truth. (See also 2 Thess. 2:16; 8:6, 14; etc).

It is not the duty of any man to contend for any system of doctrine delivered since Jude wrote, or since Matthew 28:20 was spoken. Yet multiplied millions of professing Christians have furiously done this very thing. "Once for all" means for all time and for all saints. All the rest are doctrines of men which turn from the truth. They first say, the new will do as well; then the new is better; then they insist that the old will not do at all; then they make the stewards say: It makes no difference, just so you are sincere, as we are all going by different ways to the same place, although "The Faith" says there is but one way.

Now a word about the Stewardizing, or contending, or keeping. This must be with an agonizing earnestness and a faithfulness unto death. As the word used in Matthew 28:20, plucked up Episcopacy by the roots, by putting the responsibility and custodian care, or stewardship, with *all* the baptized disciples, therefore the translators translate it "observe." They did this about three times out of some 80 occurrences. This word does not apply to the unbaptized—never—but to the baptized. It is rightly translated "keep" in the following places, and every time addressed to the baptized, and means to guard or keep safely. If ye love me *keep* (guard) my commandments. Addressed to the baptized: He that hath my commandments and *keepeth* (guardeth) them, he it is that loveth me. If a man love me he *will keep* (guard) my words, and he that loveth me not *keepeth* (guardeth) not my sayings. If ye *keep* (guard) my commandments ye shall abide in my love.

Hereby we know that we know him if we *keep* (guard) his commandments. He that saith he knows him and *keepeth* (guardeth) not his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him. Whoso *keepeth* (guardeth) his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected. He that *keepeth* (guardeth) his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him. By this we know we love the children of God, when we love God, and *keep* (guard) his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we *keep* (guard) his commandments. Every time to stewards or baptized disciples.

This word does not mean to *obey*, or to *do*, but to *guard* from attacks, and perversion. "Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we *keep* (guard) his commandments, and *do* those things that are pleasing in his sight—keeping, doing and obeying are different things (See also Rev. 2:26; 12:17 and 14:12). Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that *keep* the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ." That is, guard and protect both the moral law and the doctrines of Christ. The *keeping* has to be done by earnestly contending. Contention for the right, in this wrong world, was the spirit of Christ, and is the spirit of the gospel. (See Matthew 10:21-28; 34-39; Luke 12:49-53; John 7:7; 15:18-20; and all of the Acts). 1 Thessalonians 2:2 says, that after shameful treatment at Philippi, Paul was bold in God to speak the gospel of God *in much contention*. "*Hold fast* the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." Paul's closing words were: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have *kept* (or guarded) the faith." And it takes a good fight to keep the faith yet, and it will be so to the end. As the eyes, ears, nose, mouth,

arms, feet, lungs, liver and heart perform their functions in and *for the body*, and as the body thus acts, so let the members of the body of Christ act *as members of the body*, each doing his best to extend, hold and preserve the faith; each responsible to the church, which is his body, and to which has been committed the Stewardship of the Faith. What is taken from the members is taken from the body, and what is given to the body is given to the members. Let us not become robbers of the churches by the isolation of its members, and by crediting the members with the honors and responsibilities that are due to the churches. "Despise ye the church," was addressed to those who were making the supper a social, or class meal instead of a church feast. Let all come together in one place, and tarry one for another, and eat it as a church. Members despise the church of God when they isolate themselves and divert their mission and other benevolent contributions from church channels. The Stewardship was given to the churches, and its members should help and honor the church with their services and contributions. Tell it to the church. Not to the preacher or presbytery, I close with Ephesians 2:19-21:

19 Now therefore ye (Church at Ephesus) are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: **20** And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: **21** In whom every building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: **22** In whom ye are also builded together (into a church) for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Chapter Three

CHURCH CHARACTERISTICS.

Was the First Church a Baptist Church?

This great question calls for a careful consideration of Church Characteristics. Do Baptist churches of today possess the characteristics of the First Church at Jerusalem—the one Christ built? "On this rock I will build My church." The pronouns are emphatic and prophetic. The Lord knew that many churches would be built on other foundations, and fashioned many ways, but he built his own church after the [pattern](#) of which all the other

churches of the first century were patterned. Let us study the Characteristics of the First Church at Jerusalem, which was the church Christ built, and let us see how far Baptist churches agree with the mother church in Church Characteristics. Personal characteristics are to be considered only as they belong to the qualifications for membership and office. One may be a good man outside of church membership, and one may be bad with it. The church is the place for good men and not the place for bad men. This error with Baptists is accidental and not characteristic. A good man is no better for being outside of the church, and a bad man no better for being inside. The reverse would be better for both. Church membership can't make a man good, but it can make a good man better; and it also makes the bad man worse, as it makes him appear what he is not, and so far, and generally farther, he acts the hypocrite. So we [enter now](#), not into a comparison of persons, but of churches. There are churches many that are of men, but there is but one church of Christ, and that must be like the one he fashioned in all essential church features. Let us study these in comparison with our own, and with others.

1. The First Church was Composed of Saved Persons.

If John the Baptist had baptized the multitude who applied for baptism (see Matthew 3:7-10 and Luke 3:7-9), it would perhaps have sealed their damnation. Why? Because they were destitute of the Spiritual prerequisites to baptism, and hence their baptism could only have been in "form" or, "according to the letter."

A man must first believe in Christ, and "whosoever believeth in the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John 5:10); "hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation" (John 5:24); "has been born of God" (1 John 5:1) and "overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4-5), "is justified" ([Rom](#): 5:1). Yea, he must have the blessings predicated of Repentance, Faith, Love, Confession, or baptism will lead him away and astray, and that to his own destruction. How can a man obey in Spirit without Spiritual qualification? If Spiritual fitness is not inquired into, then soon it will not be required. You need not expect it if you don't enact it; if not taught it will not be sought; if not held it will not be had. If candidates go down into the water without having died to sin, and that means freedom from sin, and with no newness of life, then his baptism, so called, would be a solemn profession of falsehoods. Romans 6:1-11 has no reference to baptism of the Holy Spirit, or by the Holy Spirit, or in the Holy Spirit, yet it is Spiritual baptism. It is not the natural man conforming to the letter, but the Spiritual man conforming to both better and Spirit of baptism.

How inconceivably high does this lift us above the idea of a natural man submitting to a sacrament in order to be saved. How degrading the thought to a spiritual man. I would prefer idolatry in any of its forms to such a perversion of a holy ordinance and its implied holy doctrines. No likeness of any god can save any man from anything, not even any likeness of the true God or of his Christ. We were saved by the death and resurrection of Christ, and not by the likeness of it. There is no more salvation in baptism than any other likeness of things or beings. If looking through the images to the gods is idolatry, so looking through this likeness to the reality is idolatry also. The reality comes first. We are not allowed to have any likeness of God or of Christ, but baptism, a likeness of salvation, is allowed and ordained as the profession of our previous hope before men. It is a "figure" of our salvation, not the putting away the filth of the flesh which is sin, but the answer of a good conscience by the resurrection of Christ. How was the answering conscience made good? "How much more shall the blood of Christ . . . purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." (Heb. 9:14). "And the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins." (Heb. 10:2). "bet us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering; for he is faithful that promised" (Heb. 10:22-24). Baptists are indeed distinguished for keeping the blood before water and Christ before the church. If baptism is the putting on of Christ and identifies us as Christians, ought we not to be Christians before we put on Christ? If the baptism of infants is infant baptism, and the baptism of believers is believers' baptism, then is not the baptism of Christians Christian baptism? And if so, where can you find Christian baptism except among the Baptists? Certainly no others hold it as the rule.

Neither John the Baptist nor Peter, on Pentecost, admitted any to baptism till they gave evidence of conversion, and as baptism is before church membership, the evidence of conversion was necessary to that also.

Read Acts, chapters 1 and 2, and it is clear that the whole church was composed of saved persons. Baptist churches today admit only such as profess to be saved. This is the rule only of Baptist churches. Others don't seek to have saved persons only. Armenians admit only those who are candidates for salvation. They think none are saved before death, and as death takes them out of their churches, none are saved while in their churches. They being witnesses, their churches have none in them that are saved only in process and prospect of salvation; and this prospect exceeding poor, if they are to be saved by works, and that is their only hope and plea.

The question now to be considered is, what is this spiritual kind of material that in the beginning was put into the church—God's spiritual temple? There is an exception, but I think it helps to establish the rule. Christ knew from the beginning that Judas was a devil, yet he chose him, and put upon him all the honors that belong to a true disciple. He preached, wrought miracles, was treasurer, and had the best associations and influences that were ever provided for men. He was solemnly warned at the last supper, and was driven out on his devilish mission; and in the face of all this, he sold his Master and betrayed him with kisses. All this was necessary according to the divine purpose and plan, and as none but a devil could do a devil's work, a devil was chosen to do it. Now, if Judas, an unconverted man in the church, with all of his favorable advantages, was not deterred by detection and exposure "before the act" from its commission, on what ground can we found a hope that the church is the institution for a sinner to join? Yet the Catholic and Protestant world hold to this idea, and the writer entertains grave apprehension that we Baptists, in a large measure, have imbibed the damnable heresy. I fear many of our evangelists think that joining the church might do the sinner good, and with this salve on their doubting consciences they proceed to add fame to their name by large additions as a seal to their ministry.

But how was it in the beginning? With Judas out, the purged church was found tarrying in Jerusalem in protracted prayer-meeting, waiting for the promised endowment of power from on high. (Acts 1): In the second chapter we find they all continued with one accord in one place. Not an unconverted person among them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and spake as the Spirit gave them utterance. Their preaching was greatly blessed, and many were convicted of sin, and when they cried out, asking what they must do, they were not told to join the church for salvation. They were told to repent and be baptized, trusting upon the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and they (as well as the others) should receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Peter preached the same gospel in Acts 2:38 that he preached in Acts 10:43. The Greek idiom requires the above rendering.

The commission in Luke 24:47 has the same idiom: "Repentance unto the remission of sins, trusting upon his name, should be preached among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." So Peter, beginning at Jerusalem, used the same idiom—*epi* before the dative, signifying trust, reliance upon, etc.

The change from the painful conviction of sin to the glad reception of the Word is evidence. To be publicly baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, whom they had crucified, and with wicked hands had slain, and that in the face of fiery persecution, is evidence again; and if further evidence is wanted, it is abundantly supplied in what follows

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart; praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

The last words, as translated, render this doctrine doubtful. Did the Lord add to the church the saved or such as should be saved? If such as should be saved, the Catholics and Protestants are right and the Baptists wrong. If they were saved before they were added, the Baptists are right and the others wrong. The Catholic Bible reads: "And the Lord added daily to their society such as should be saved." King James follows with "the such as should be saved." This makes the salvation prospective, and as all men should be saved, then all should join the church, even infants.

To keep one out of the church until he is saved, and saved forever, is peculiarly Baptist doctrine, and we claim that the text, rightly translated, will prove it. I will introduce a few translations here, just such as have come to hand; also a few commentaries. Were they saved before added or added before saved? That is the question of questions, and upon it rests the doctrine of Regenerated Church Membership.

In my Distinguishing Baptist Doctrines, chapters 13 and 14, I quote from the following authors, to the effect that all are agreed on, say this one from Living Oracles, by Alexander Campbell, or by his disciple, H. T. Anderson, as the right translation, viz : " The Lord added daily the saved to the church." So say in substance Bible Union; Oxford Revision; Broadus, Hovey & Weston; Murdock's Syriac; Englishman's Concordance; Doddridge ; Sawyer; Jami, son. Fawcett & Brown; Samuel Williams; Campbell-Rice Debate, pp. 436 and 459 ; McGarvey ; Rotherham; Lyman Abbott; Homilitical Comt ; Wesley; Adam Clark, who says, "should be saved is improper and insupportable. The original means simply and solely those then saved." That settles Acts 2:47.

Who but Baptists can boast so much of God's grace through faith before baptism and the church? Who is so free as we from baptismal regeneration and church salvation? Do not those who believe in these heresies acknowledge our doctrine of Regenerated Church Membership when they resort to the infantile rite for "regeneration and engrafting into the body of Christ?

But I must be brief on the other Characteristics.

2. They Were Discipled Before They Were Baptized (Matthew 28:19-20 and John 4:10). Others, as a rule, believe in discipling by baptizing. See A. Campbell, and Pedobaptist writers generally, and especially their practice.
3. They Repented Before They Were Baptized (Matthew 1:2, 7, 8; Luke 3:6, 8; Mark 1:4; Acts 13:24, etc). Baptist churches require evidence of Repentance before baptism. No others do.
4. They Were Convicted Before They, Repented (John 16:8-9; Acts 2:37; 1 Cor. 14:26-27). Baptist churches only make enquiry about this work of the Holy Spirit. All Baptists do not, but they violate the old-time rule of Baptists.
5. They Repented Before They Believed (Mark 1:15; Matthew 21:22; Acts 2:38 and 19:4; Heb. 6:1). Baptists believe the order is of vital importance. The order reversed is fatal to both repentance and faith.
6. They Were Baptized When They Believed (Acts 2:41; 8:12 ; 18:8). Not when they repented, or when eight days old, etc., as the custom of some is, or when born of a believing parent or parents, as the rule of others is. When they believe, is the time. This is characteristic only of Baptist churches.
7. They Experienced Conversion Before They Were Baptized (Acts 2:37 and 41; 10:43-47; Matthew 3:8-10). "Works meet for repentance" are the voluntary fruits of a good tree.
8. They Were Baptized In Water, and Not With Water (Mark 1:5 and 9, etc). So say the Greek, and so translated by four English Versions out of six, viz.: Tyndale, Wickliffe, Cramner, Rheims. Also America Standard Revision and Twentieth Century. Also George Campbell, Bengel, Lange, Myer, Abbott, Bennett, etc. Roman Catholics and Pedobaptists do not baptize in water, but "with" is their rule.
9. They Were Baptized by a Baptist Preacher. God had him thus named as the characteristic of his mission. Of course he looked after the necessary qualifications, or he could not have prepared a people for his Lord. Baptism was not his most important work, but his crowning work, which showed the vital work within. If one knows he was baptized by a Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Mormon, Campbellite, Christian, etc., then he knows he was not baptized by a Baptist, and weighed in this balance, he is found wanting in this very important particular, as seen in next characteristic.

(The class was asked to bring Scripture proof that the Apostles who were " first put into the church " were baptized by John. The following are some of the Scriptures used in proof: (Matthew 8:11; Luke 3-5, 8; 7:20-30; Acts 1:4-5; 11:16-17 and 19:2-5, etc.)

10. They Were Baptized By One Who Had Authority From Heaven (Matthew 21:28-27; Mark 11:27-33; Luke 20:1-8; John 1:24-33; Eph. 4:4-5). All who were sprinkled or poured upon, or immersed as sinners, have a so-called baptism that is not of heaven, but of men. Those can't be churches of Christ that have the baptism of men.

11. The First Church Had Baptism Rightly Related to Repentance and Remission of Sins. The following Scriptures, rightly interpreted, show this: Matthew 8:7-11; Mark 1:4; Luke 8:8; 24:47 (New Version); Acts 13:24; 19:4 and Acts 2:38. Baptist churches only hold these in right relation as a rule. It is our Characteristic.

12. Only the Saved and Baptized Were Added to the Church. Acts 2:41-47 (Revised Version) Dr. Jos. Smale, of Los Angeles, and some of our English churches, add the saved without baptism, but it is disorder, and they should forfeit their claim and recognition as churches of Christ. They are Baptist churches only in name. True church membership requires both salvation and baptism.

13. No Infants Were Baptized. Acts 2:41-42; 8:12, 18:8; Acts 2:39 with 5:25 and 13:32-88 were used in disproof. "Children;" in these places does not mean infants, but descendents. Also the Greek words, *teknon*, *teknion*, *paideion* and *brephos* were also considered. No Pedobaptist, or rather brephorantist has a reasonable hope of membership in the church of Jesus Christ. That is, if churches in all time are to conform to the original pattern. And what are patterns for, but for copy? "See that ye make all things after the pattern shown in the mount."

14. The First Church at Jerusalem Was Complete in Itself With Christ as the Only Head. There was no Pope, or Bishop, or Presbytery, or Conference there or elsewhere, to which it gave the least heed, or to which or whom it owed the least allegiance. In Acts 1:14, we see they attended to their own business in their own way. Peter could only suggest the business, and others could only nominate the proper persons for the office. The whole church, directed by the Lord (verse 24), decided the matter. That is just the way Baptist churches do today, and they only.

15. There Was No One Man in Authority (Matthew 20:20-26 ; Mark 10:35-45; Luke 22:24-27; Eph. 1:22).

16. There Were No Elect Few, Called Presbytery, Ruling Elders, etc., known in that day, and all who are thus ruled are not churches of Jesus Christ, for in them no one rules, but "all are brethren" Acts 20:28; Romans 12:8; 1 Timothy 5: 17; Hebrews 13:7-17, etc., are Episcopal colorings. See elsewhere.

17. Church Officers. Christ put the first members into the church (1 Cor. 12:28) and made Peter the pastor or shepherd (John 21:15-16), and chose Judas as deacon and apostle. Acts 1:17 says Judas had the lot of this deaconship, and verse 20 says he had a bishoprick, and verse 25 says that Matthias was elected to take the deaconship and apostleship from which Judas, by transgression, fell. As the apostolic office was temporary, and no one could fill it but "an eye witness of his resurrection," this left only two offices to be afterward supplied by the whole church, under the guidance only of the Holy Spirit-Christ's vicegerent on earth (Acts 6:1-6). There is but one church with bishop and deacons elected by the church. Philippians 1:1 calls the whole church "saints, bishops and deacons."

18. It Had the Discipline of Its Own Members (Matthew 18:15; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:12-18; 2 Thess. 8:6, etc). A church disciplined by an officer or officers is not the church of Christ. Baptists only possess this Characteristic.

19. It Stood for Religious Liberty (Acts 4: 17-20, 29; 5:27-29, 40, 42). So did Paul and so have Baptist churches in all ages. See further on.

20. It Multiplied Like Baptist Churches (Acts 8:1-18; 9:31; 11:19-26). Whatever the circumstances or causes of their scatteration, if they chose, by the direction of the Holy Spirit, they congregated and organized on the voluntary principle, and elected their own officers. Any Baptist church can divide; or any part of it for a good reason can pull out and organize when and where it pleases, because individual liberty is not destroyed or impaired by church membership. The churches of Judea, Samaria, Galilee, etc., thus organized, were recognized by the mother church, and by the apostles, and Christ. This is a golden mark.

21. The First Church Was Persecuted (Acts 8:1-3). So it is characteristic of Baptist churches in all ages to be persecuted. This is a peculiar mark. Henry VIII, Luther, Calvin, etc., and the popes could fight each other, and fight viciously, but that is not suffering persecution. The world, and all that is of the world, hate a Baptist church for evident reasons, and that is why they have been persecuted (John 7:5-7 and 15:18-20). The world is afraid of the churches of Christ, but of no others. They are as terrible as an army with banners, yet they never carry the sword or carnal weapons, but weapons mightier than those to the pulling down of strongholds. A Baptist church testifies against the world that its deeds are evil. The world don't want anything better than a state church, for it can remain as corrupt as before. Indeed, the rule has been that such a church corrupts the world, that is, makes it worse, for the worse parts of the world are where state churches have ruled for centuries.

22. The First Church Kept the Ordinances as Delivered, both in their order and meaning. They were only memorial or emblematic, and Baptism was put before the Supper. Only Baptist churches follow in this. All the others pervert them into saving ordinances, and many put baptism first, even before heaven, and then change baptism in every essential feature. So having no baptism, they "can't eat the Lord's supper" (1 Cor. 11:20).

23. If Christ and the Apostles Should Return to Earth, They Could Not Join Any But a Baptist Church. All have decided that John's baptism was not a Christian baptism, and they could not, according to their rule, receive it. Baptist churches would gladly receive them on their baptism.

24. Such Churches Were to Continue, and Have Continued 'Till Now (Matthew 16:18; Eph. 3:21, etc). We claim to belong, not only to a church like the one at Jerusalem, but to one, the like of which has existed in all the centuries since. I would not belong to any other kind. And this is not left to blind credulity. Suppose you call for the proof. I would be glad to produce it. I have it in great abundance, and of the right kind—the proof that proves, and I can prove that the proof proves the proposition. See if I don't prove it. If Christ has not kept the gates of Hades from prevailing against his church, it was because he could not or would not. If he could not, his power failed; and if he would not, his promise failed; and in either case Christ is a failure, and there is no hope of the salvation of any man. s All modern churches are built on the supposition that he failed to keep his church as he built it. He never built a denominational, sectional or national church, for no one ever saw reference to such a church in the word of the Lord. If denominational, which? If sectional, what section? If national, what nation? Some think he used it in a universal sense, including all the saved in all ages. Then he commenced it in the garden of Eden, and there never was a time when such a church was on earth, and will not be, for all the saved have not been here, and will not be before the end. If a part of the church is on earth and a part in heaven, then a very small part is here, as nine tenths of the host are infants and idiots, and that from the heathen. Was this church persecuted? Are the gates of Hades persecuting the church in heaven? What sort of a church did he build, and that has been persecuted, and driven from place to place, even into the mountains and dens and caves of the earth? Was the church of God at Jerusalem a universal church? Did the Lord add the saved to the universal church? Then the saved were not in it, and his church is not made up of all the saved.

25. The church at Jerusalem was called the church of God. So every Baptist church is the church of God. It is nothing less, nothing more. It is not a part of it, nor is a part of it somewhere, else. It is composed of members each in his part, and all equal in authority. It can meet when and where it pleases, in or out of doors. It has Christ for its head, and the Holy Spirit for its heart. No man or men can exercise authority over it. No member in it has any authority. The authority is in the body when convened. What it binds or looses, is bound or loosed in heaven. There is no authority like this under the heavens. It is Christ's executive on the earth, and he has no other. All of this and more can only be said of a Baptist church. I heard a preacher say that he thanked God he did not belong to the church of Christ, but to a branch of the same. I thank God that I do belong to the church of

God, and not to a branch of the same. Did members at Jerusalem, Rome, Corinth, Philippi, etc., belong to the church of God, or to a branch of the same? Every Baptist church is The Church of God, and not a branch of the same. Every branch has a trunk that bears it, and severed from the trunk, it is fit for nothing but to burn. Where is the trunk of these branch churches? Rome is the trunk of Protestant branches; but Rome has cut off all these branches and consigned them to the fires of hell. If Rome is the heaven ordained trunk, then it had authority to bind and loose, to remit or retain sins, and that means to save or to damn. And that is what it claims. How can a man thank God that he belongs to a branch of such a trunk? Can a branch be better than the trunk that bore it? Shame on such church pride! A Baptist church is not a branch of that trunk, nor any other trunk. It is the thing itself, all to itself. Its members live in Christ, the vine. He is life to the members, but head to the church. The member gets life from the vine, while the church gets authority from its head. Others get life from sacraments and works, and authority from men. I glory in the church of God.

26. With others, church and denomination mean the same thing. The Methodist church is the Methodist denomination, whether taken as a whole or in its several parts. The Methodist Church South is the Methodist denomination South. And so, more or less, with all others. But not at all so with the Baptists. We cry aloud against a denominational church. With others the denominational church is all—with us it is nothing. It has no doctrines, no officers, no government, no meeting place, no mission and no commission. It never did anything, never will, never can. If all Baptists living could meet in one place, it would not be a church, because it could not be organized. As each person would be entitled to an equal voice in all matters, and equal authority in all things, the multitude would defeat every object for which a church meets. Such a church meeting would be as impracticable as the denomination is inconceivable. All the statistics that could be gathered of Baptists would leave many out. They are a host that can not be numbered. Many are numbered with other people. They are Baptists, but no one knows them. Of course, they are out of place, as Baptists often are, or God would not be calling on them to come out. And we doubtless have some numbered with us who are not Baptists. Wish we could exchange prisoners, as all such must be. Would be glad to give ten for one.

27. A Baptist church is composed of volunteers associated in congregational effort, each member in equal authority, and each church, complete in itself and independent of all other churches and of all outside authorities. Thus it was in the beginning.

Hence, church fellowship is founded on a common experience of grace, and a common responsibility in worship, work, labor, sacrifice, doctrine and authority. Denominational fellowship is to be found in the comity of churches or individual concern for the welfare of all the churches instead of all Baptists. A member who is indifferent to the welfare of his own church must be indifferent to the general welfare of all the churches. If the hand or eye or foot respond not to the demands of the body of which it is a member, how can it respond to humanity in general? If any charity begins at home, this is the charity. If one has no self-respect, what cares he for other people? If we love not those whom we know and see, how can we love those we never saw? This loving all God's people alike is fanatical foolishness and ludicrous lunacy. A man that fellowships his own church will be a well-wisher of all other like churches, because all are engaged in the same cause. Individual association is for the church's good, and church association is for the general good. If all the members were loyal to the church's good, then the churches would be loyal to the denominational good, which with us can only mean the common good of all the churches. Hence, one must begin with individual loyalty to his church. No one is loyal to what he lightly esteems. Proper esteem compels loyalty. One who properly esteems his family or country would die for them and so of the church. A Baptist should fellowship a Baptist not so much for his personal qualities as for his ecclesiastical qualities—he is a member of the body or church of Christ—both members of the same body or church or a similar body. or church. So Baptists should have ecclesiastical rather than denominational pride. We can't promote the prosperity of the denomination except through the churches.

Chapter Four

CHURCH LOYALTY.

1 Corinthians 11:22—Despise ye the Church of God.
(Read Romans 12:4-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-28.)

What think you of the cross of Christ? may be the greatest question for us; but perhaps a question of equal importance to Christ is: "What think you of the Church of God?"—which is his church, and for which he gave his heart's blood, and his life, and which he loves as he loves himself. So I ask you: "What think you of the Church of Christ? "After defining two terms, I will try to help you answer this [great question](#). "Despise "means to think down on, to look down on, to-subordinate, to lightly esteem. Hate is of the heart; despise is of the head. See the distinction in Matthew 6:24:—"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

This means that if you don't go so far as to love one and hate the other, you must subordinate one to the other; esteem one better than the other. In 1 Corinthians 16:10-11, we read "**10** Now if Timotheus come, see that he

may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do. 11 Let no man therefore despise him : but conduct him forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren."

The church could not keep the world from hating Timothy, for that was appointed to all faithful [ministers](#); but they could keep the world from thinking lightly of him. That is to say, the reputation of the preacher is in the hands of the church. Not his character, but the how he shall be rated. They hated Christ, but they could not destroy his character. In Jeremiah 4:30 we read: "Their lovers shall despise them." A mother may despise her son whom she loves, because she knows he is good-for-nothing. So a wife her husband. None of you have a cause for hating the church of God; but do you despise it? How do you rate it as compared to other things claiming your Loyalty? This I will help you to answer.

Next I must define "The Church of God," for nothing under heaven needs so much to be defined. Nine-tenths of the so-called Christian world think they do God's service when they use the term in a bewildering or perverted sense. There is but one God, one Christ, one church, one body, one faith, one baptism, though there be many that are called such. All the world, in all the ages, could not change the meaning of the word of God, not even by universal usage and legislation. Nay, let them seal their perverted meanings with the [blood](#) of millions of martyrs, yet the true meanings are written in heaven, and were written from heaven, and they will judge us at the last day. As Christ is yesterday; today and forever, so is his word. "The word of the Lord abideth forever." Woe to him who perverts it. May we know what The Church of God is? The expression occurs twelve times, and there is no excuse for mistake.

In the test it means "The Church of God at Corinth," and of which the Corinthians were members; all of whom "came together in one place to eat the Lord's Supper," and they should have "tarried one for another" before eating. This was the one body unto which, in one spirit of love and fellowship, they had been baptized with the one baptism; and they were censurable for not keeping the faith and ordinances as they were delivered to them, for safe keeping. Both of these epistles were written to "THE CHURCH OF GOD AT CORINTH." Note that, "We have no such customs, neither the churches of God," means the churches of God in various places. In chapter 15:9, and Galatians 1:13, Paul says he "persecuted the church of God," which, in another place, he says, was "at Jerusalem." He persecuted no other. In 1 Thessalonians 2:14 he says: "The Churches of God which in Christ Jesus are in Judea." Not denominational churches, for there were none. In 2 Thessalonians 1:4 he says: "We glory in you in the Churches of God." In 1 Timothy 3:5 he speaks of a bishop, which always means the pastor of a single church, as "taking care of the Church of, God." In verse 15 he speaks of "behaving one's self" "in the house of God, which is the Church of the Living God. That means that the congregation that meets in a house is the church of the Living God. In Acts 20: 28, he tells of the flock, or church, at Ephesus, in which the Holy Spirit had made the Elders bishops, and that they "must feed the church of God which he had purchased with his own blood." But neither Paul, nor Christ, nor these elders, thought they were big enough to feed, or take care of a universal church of God. The Church of God, which Christ bought with his own blood, was, and is, a business-doing body—a called-out and called together assembly; and these churches, singly and collectively, in cooperation, constitute the sole agency for advancing the interests of the kingdom of churches. The Church of God in a city, means the whole Church of God is there, and if the whole Church of God is there, then none of it is anywhere else. See the 36 places where the church is used in the plural number, and the 75 places where it is used in the singular, and if you don't then know what the Church of God means, then God can't teach you.

The following figures are also used for the Church, and confirms the one meaning. They are all local, but it is tautological nonsense to say so. Whoever was so foolish as to put the word local before these figures? Try it in your mind: "Assembly," "building," "body," "bride," "city," "congregation," "company," "family," "flock," "fold," "field," "house," "household," "lump," "temple," "vine," "vineyard," "wife," "woman," "Mt. Zion," "New Jerusalem." Introduce your wife as your local wife, and see what will happen. She would think that she was the contemptible, little wife, while the big one was somewhere else. And, mind you, every time a man speaks of the "local church," he has in his mind a big church, compared with which the local is a contemptible, little thing.

Hence, all such must despise The Church of God, because they subordinate it to another, which is not another. No error ever did more to destroy Church Loyalty.

I desire to disseminate and perpetuate the following editorials in *The Western Recorder*, by Dr. T. T. Eaton. The one followed the other in *The Recorder*.

ECCLESIA IN MATTHEW 16:18.

"Editor of *The Western Recorder*: Will you not give, briefly and clearly, your reason for believing that the word *ecclesia*, in Matthew 16:18, means the local assembly?"

Fraternally,
A Constant Reader."

Most readily. We have seven reasons, but here we will take space for only three, either of which we believe to be decisive.

1st. It is conceded that, according to the *usage of classic Greek*, the word *ecclesia* means a local assembly. It is also conceded that it means the same thing according to the usage of *the Septuagint*, which is the Greek version of the Old Testament, in use in Palestine in the time of Christ. Can it be believed that our Lord, in using this word for the first time, would, without any explanation, give it a meaning entirely different from what it would be understood to mean by those to whom He spoke? It is not ingenuous for a teacher, without a word of explanation, to use words to his pupils with a meaning entirely different from what they understand the words to have. Christ knew that the Disciples would understand Him to mean a local assembly by His use of *ecclesia*. Knowing that, He used the word to them, without a word of explanation. To charge Him with using the word with an entirely different meaning is to charge Him with disingenuousness, and this is not to be considered for a moment.

2nd. The usage of our Lord Himself compels us to believe that He meant local assembly when He said: "On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Christ used the word *ecclesia*, so far as the record tells us, just 22 times. We will set aside, for the sake of the argument, this passage, Matthew 16:18, as doubtful, and look at the 21 passages, to determine our Lord's usage of the word. Whatever that usage is, must be applied to this passage. In Matthew 18:17, Jesus says: "Tell it to the church, but if he neglect to hear the church." This is the local assembly. In Revelation 1, 2 and 3 Christ uses the word *ecclesia* 18 times, e.g., "the seven churches," "to the angel of the church at Ephesus," etc., and in every one of these cases there can be no sort of question that He means the local assembly. It is Christ that says this, because the one who told John to write what is here recorded, says of Himself: "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death." Again, in Revelation 22:16, we read: "I Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches." Certainly here *ecclesia* means the local assembly.

Thus in every one of the 21 instances in which Christ uses the word *ecclesia*, there can be no question that He meant the local assembly. The probabilities, therefore, are twenty-one to nothing that He meant local assembly in Matthew 16:18—the passage which, for the sake of the argument, we set aside as doubtful. A probability of twenty-one to nothing is a certainty. Hence, it is certain that Christ meant the local assembly when He said: "On this rock I will build my church."

3rd. Christ, in Matthew 16:18, promised to build His church, which certainly was very dear to His heart. He did not promise to build but the one. If He meant anything else than the local assembly, then we have this result, viz.: He promised to build His church and then never made the slightest reference to it afterwards; but in speaking on the subject of church twenty-one times, He, in every case, referred to something entirely different from what He promised to build. That He should speak twenty-one times about the church He did not promise to build, and never make the slightest allusion to the church He did promise to build, is simply incredible. Can

there be a reasonable doubt that the church Christ spoke of twenty-one times, and the only one He did speak of, is the church He promised to build?

These are three of our reasons, each one of which, by itself, we think is decisive. We have four others we will not now give. "A three-fold cord is not easily broken."

After this comes the following:

Our neighbor arranges its "deadly parallel" on us, and claims to see a contradiction in the following quotations from the editor's tract, "Faith of the Baptists."

"Turning to the New Testament we find the word church used in two special senses, first as a local body of baptized believers, and second as including all the redeemed of all ages and lands."	These local churches, the only kind known to the New Testament, were independent bodies and were subject to no central authority."
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It would have been amusing had our neighbor attempted to point out the alleged contradiction. The "two senses" are simply the literal and the figurative. "All the redeemed of all ages and lands" are conceived figuratively as a church, whet! they become a local assembly in Heaven. We reaffirm both those sentences. We will give a chromo to the man that will point out the contradiction.

This editorial was endorsed by the following:

- Dr. Jesse B. Thomas writes: "I go farther than you in questioning whether the 'church' is ever used in the New Testament as 'universal'—for exegetic reasons assigned."
- President B. I. Whitman: "I am bound to say that I see no flaw in your position."
- President Henry G. Weston: "From your point of view you make out your case on the question you are discussing."
- Dr. Wm. C. Wilkinson writes: "Your editorial is a good specimen of steel-chain logic."
- President G. M. Savage writes: "All that yon say on the church, I believe with all my heart. I accept what yon there accept, and repudiate what you there repudiates. . .There is but one thin in your article that I wish you had plainly said, additional; that is, that the rock (petra) foundation is Christ."

No doubt but nine-tenths of Southern Baptists would be glad to add their endorsement. The other definitions of "church" are full of deadly poison.

If a woman is to keep silence in the church, and the church is universal, then she must keep silent in the kitchen and the parlor, for she is everywhere in the universal church. Indeed, she must be silent in heaven, if she gets there, for it is claimed that the universal church will meet in heaven, to part no more.

So the first charge is made out: Those Despise the Church of God Who Subordinate the Real to the Unreal; the Congregational to the Universal; the Practical to the Theoretical. At the first, the Lord added the saved, who, it

is claimed, were in the universal church by virtue of saving faith; these he added to the church which was at Jerusalem, and which he himself had built. If they were in the big church by faith, why add them to the little church? Were there two churches at Jerusalem?

(2) Those Despise the Church of God who subordinate it in matters of judgment. "Judgment begins at the house of God," "Which is the church of the living God." In 1 Corinthians chapter 5, we see that "The Church of God at Corinth "had judgment of those that were within; and in chapter 6, we read that they shall "judge the world," and even "angels." In Romans 16:17, the church is called on to judge doctrine, and to withdraw from those who cause offenses contrary to sound doctrine. In 2 Thessalonians 3:6, the church is charged to judge those who walk disorderly, and to withdraw from such. The same in verse 14: "Have no company with those who obey not the word." Read also Philippians 1:9-10:—"9 And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment 10 That ye may approve things that are excellent: that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ."

Only those who have exercised themselves in righteous judgment here, will be qualified to sit on Christ's throne to judge the world and angels. Those who go to the courts of unbelievers for judgment, esteem them superior in judgment to the Church of God.

(3) Those despise the Church of God who appeal from her Authority. There is no higher court. Every appellant says by his actions, which speak louder than words, there is a higher court of Authority than the church of God. Christ says in Matthew 18:17: "Tell it to the church, and if he neglects to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." That settles the case. There is no higher tribunal and no other tribunal. The Church of God is the Supreme Court of heaven on the earth; so that whatsoever it binds on earth has been bound in heaven; and whatsoever it looses on earth has been loosed in heaven. No king, or czar, or potentate ever had such authority as this. Christ left authorities on the earth to try earthly things; but the heavenly things belong to his church. I knew a man turned out of a church for selling whiskey, just before the meeting of the association, and he laughed at the church, saying he would appeal to the association. He tried it and found out for the first time that there was no authority in such matters in an association—none of any kind outside of the church.

(4) Those Despise the Church of God who subordinate her peace and prosperity to their personal whims and family interests. Often this is a theological whim, or notion, or opinion, or hobby. How many pastors and churches have been sacrificed by one member because their doxy was not his doxy. If the pastor should be too loose or too strict on some moral or doctrinal question, as he holds it, then destruction sets in. He may be a very strong or very weak Baptist, and may believe that the majority should rule, but he considers himself the majority. The church is small compared with him. It is not quantity that he counts, but quality. If he is a drunkard or adulterer, or some such mishap has fallen on one of the family, then the church must not put her honor, or the honor of Christ, or his cause above his and his family. Such would be willing, yea, would insist on discipline of such cases on others, but not on him and his. Who has not seen churches wrecked and ruined because the church was put above the individual and his family. One such said to the visiting committee: "If I must choose between the church and the horse race, the church can go to hell." Others have put it in milder form about card playing, flinch, dancing, etc. Their whims are put above church honor and authority. They despise the church of God.

(5) Those Despise the Church of God who esteem Lodge Membership and Fellowship above that of the Church of God. Of course this is limited to those who profess to belong to Christ. I have seen them regularly at the lodge, and seldom at the church. In front in the lodge, and in the rear of the church. Early at the lodge, and late at the church. Forward at the lodge, and backward at the church. At home in the lodge, and a stranger at the church. Brothers those in the lodge, and misters those in the church. Proud of the lodge, and ashamed of the church. Gives to the lodge, and withholds from the church. By putting the lodge above the church, do they not Despise the Church of God?

Zelucas, king of the ancient Locri, made a law, and the penalty for first violation was the forfeiture of one eye, and for the second violation the penalty was the forfeiture of two eyes. His son was the first to deserve the double penalty. Will the king ignore his law? Then he is not worthy to be king. Will he ignore his son? Then he is not worthy to be a father. What will the king do? He will both vindicate his law, and have mercy on his son. So he required his son to forfeit one eye, and he forfeited the other. Thus justice and mercy met together and kissed each other. Thus it should be in the church. Principle before personal pleasure or profit; the church above self.

(6) Those Despise the Church of God who put Association with the world above that of the Church. They have professed to be saved, and they know their Lord wants the saved added the same day to his Church, but they prefer to be identified with the world. Everyone is identified in association either with the world or church. He takes his choice. He claims to belong to Christ, but he don't want to belong to his church. He is invited, urged, exhorted, and may be pulled and pushed and persuaded by a host of anxious friends, as well as church, pastor and the Holy Spirit, and impelled by an inwrought sense of duty, yet despite all this, he prefers so stay out and continue to be identified with the world. Of course, he will soon go back and walk with the world, and forget he was ever purged from his old sins. He is told he will walk in darkness, and soon in doubt. He cuts himself off from the means of spiritual life, and the result will be worse than cutting off from the means of physical life; but he persists, and WHY? Because he had rather be associated with the world than the Church of God. The archangel, with the most powerful telescope, or microscope, or any other kind of scope, can't detect a flaw in that verdict. If he is converted, it is far better for him, and the church, and the cause, and the world, to associate with the people of God, but he prefers to be numbered with the world. Did Christ say, come out from the world, and be separated from the world? Yes; but he prefers not to do it. Christ's honor and authority, with individual and church pleasure and profit, are not enough to induce him to break fellowship and membership with the world. He prefers to be in the devil's big church; in the kingdom of the world, which is soon to go down and come to an everlasting and ignominious end, than to be in the everlasting kingdom and dominion which is soon to fill the whole earth. Such will not be cast out, because they are already out. And when he comes and shuts the door, it will be too late to knock for admittance. Saved they may be, but so as by fire, and they *suffer loss*, and what a loss! Eternal loss! There will be no rewards for well-doing after the judgment. Great are the rewards of those who go in and labor in the vineyard. The same with Trunk, Lapsed or Excluded members. They ought to bleat, and bleat, and bleat until they get back into the fold. I was never lettered out of a church, and if I should be excluded, I will bleat to get back, and when I shall die out, I expect to join the general assembly as soon as I can. I beat my letter every time the letter gets behind. I join first opportunity if I can, letter or no letter. I belong to the company called saints, and that means the church of God.

If the devil can thus blind saints, and lead them contrary to their eternal interest, then what can he not do with sinners? I try to magnify God's Saving Grace to sinners; but is not that amazing grace, indeed, that "keeps" those who have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and who, it seems, try to fall away, or don't care if they do. It takes more grace, it seems to me, to preserve an enlightened, quickened, forgiven, justified, sanctified, saved saint, than it does to save a poor, blind, depraved sinner, led captive by the devil at his will. Think of a sinner saved by grace, and, in return, prefers to serve the devil. The Lord wants the service of no man until he is baptized and joins his church. I repeat: The Lord took to water before he took to service, and walked 65 miles to do it; and in the beginning the Lord added daily the saved to the church. Don't want to be associated with the saints? Rather be associated with sinners? Then see how they play with so called, but miss-called letters of dismissal. Right here the churches are reaping the fruits of their own folly. A church can't dismiss a member by letter. It can only recommend him. Paul calls them, in 2 Corinthians 3:1, "Letters of commendation from you, or to you." He is dismissed from your membership, and you are no longer responsible for his conduct *when he joins another church*. But he thinks he is dismissed by the letter, and is out of the church, and back gain in the good old fold of the devil, and he feels good, and perfectly at home, and perfectly at peace with the world, the flesh, the devil, and may think he is at peace with God, but he has only to wait till the good shepherd comes feeling round with his rod. Yes, there are thousands who take their supposed letters of dismissal, and put them down deep in the trunk, or far back in the drawer, to keep safely, that is, keep safely from the church. Others will put the letters or themselves in the church, and then hide themselves out. Thus they

run from the service of the Lord into the service of the devil. They go about the streets begging the world to employ them, and the Lord to excuse them. What an easy prey for the devil! And if the devil don't use them, it will be because he doesn't want them. This scandalous conduct of Christians has called forth such designations and classifications as Regulars and Irregulars, Oncers and Noncers, Workers, Jerkers, Shirkers, Dirkers, Hired, Tired, Retired, Attired, Billy, Silly, Nilly, Lilly, Trunk, Spunk, Defunct, Skunk, Annual, Quarterly, Monthly, Weekly (spelled both ways). "And such are some of you."

(7) Those Despise the Church of God Who Subordinate her Worship and Decline Attendance on her Meetings. They are bound by covenant to do so if God permit. They are all bound alike, and it is as much the duty of one as an other. But see how they put the church on trial, perhaps before they arise in the morning. The devil suggests something for their attention and attendance instead of the church meeting. If it is business, the devil wants them to decide that their business is of more importance than the church. He may do this even on the Lord's day. Or, he may tempt with a diversion, such as a visit, an excursion, lounging at home, loafing with another of the same stripe, or sponging on a church-going member, to keep him away. One of these, or such like things they put up against the church early in the morning. Reason is the attorney, comparing this with that; judgment is the court that decides the case; and the will is the sheriff that executes the decree of the court. Thus the church is put on trial perhaps early every Sabbath morning. Which will win? One must go up and the other down. WHICH? Why of course the one you think is of the most importance will win. You can't put any of these things above the worship or service of the church without subordinating or despising the Church of God. You attend to the most important things, of course. Better read Zechariah 14:16-19; Hebrews 10:25; John 20:19, 26; Acts 2:1; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2, and many such like.

If the Church of God is the most important institution in the world, then its meetings are the most important in the world.

"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 cares and toils shall end.

Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.
Sure as thy truth shall stand,
To Zion shall be given
The greatest glories earth can give,
And brighter bliss of heaven."

Where the church is, there Christ is in the midst. Some had rather be where Christ is not, and where the devil is. All who despise *the* church meeting despise the church.

(8) Those Despise the Church of God Who Subordinate her Service. We profess to be servants of the church, as that is the way we serve Christ. But God and angels and men know that we are the servants of those whom we serve, and of that which we serve. We are all servants. The Church must be served. The world also demands our service. When these seem to conflict, then which? Why the one we esteem the highest and most important. Even a fool knows that much. These need not conflict, but when they do, the best comes first.

Let a pastor work his garden at the Saturday hour of meeting, and let the passing member ask him if he is not going to church, and he replies that his garden needs his attention more than the church; and it would be no plainer from the conversation than from the silent action. Of course, it would be too ugly in the pastor, but how does it look to the pastor when the member does the same thing. But you say the pastor is paid to serve. But the members promised to serve without pay. This was the way Christ ordained it. Then is not the obligation of both equally binding. You obligate yourself to render your little service without financial compensation, because it requires but little of your time. The pastor gives his whole time to service, and, of course, his temporal wants must be provided for. But the obligation to serve the church in these respective ways is equally binding on both. "Go in my vineyard and work today," is spoken to every saved man and woman. "To every one his own worm." They are all rewarded according to their works, and all chastened for unfaithfulness. Read here Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. Read the whole chapters. Also Ephesians 6:10-18. Also Matthew 6:24; John 8:23; Romans 6:16, etc. Nothing must be put above the Worship or the Service of the Church.

(9) Those Despise the Church of God Who Withhold Their Support. There are many things needing and deserving our support, and there should be no conflict; but when there is conflict, which is neglected most? The least esteemed, of course. The devil would hardly deny it, liar as he is. It is a principle of universal application. We support those things most we like best and deem the most important. Which gets the most of your support—the lodge or the church? The theater or the church? The circus or the church? I have seen a whole wagonload of church members come in 10 to 20 miles, in bad weather; and stand and freeze and starve waiting for the show; and they pay more to the show than they pay to the church in a whole year. They go to the races, now called Fairs, to catch the silly saints, and they will stand around all day for days, and thus give more sacrifice to that than the church of the living God. Some give more for whiskey and tobacco than they give to the church. Christ paid his way through the world, and he wants his people and his church to do the same. He never wrought but one miracle for himself, and that was to pay a doubtful debt for him and Peter. The Church must live, and the world is not expected to support it. We support a thing as we esteem it. How does the church stand this test?

(10) Those Despise the Church of God Who Fail in its ASSISTANCE. The Church must not only be supported, but Assisted. It must not only live, but it must work. It has the greatest mission of any institution on earth. More good and everlasting results will come from its mission than all others. The Church must not only support itself, and the cause at home, but it must assist other churches in evangelizing the whole world. Those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death must have the light. Those under the dominion of Satan must be delivered. The Church is the divine human instrumentality in saving men. Every man engaged lawfully in this work must be member or an officer of the Church, and all things must be done by her direction, or sanction, or authority. None others have any authority in these things. Not only the first part of the commission, but the middle and the last were committed to the church, so that all engaged in this important and responsible work must be under subjection to the wisdom and counsel of the brethren, and even then corruption of doctrine and practice creep in. To turn every fanatic loose with his ambitious, ambiguous, ambidextrous, amaurosious, amorous, amphibious, amble, amiable amenities to deceive the very elect, would have wrecked the object and purposes of the gospel. Christ had too much common sense to have inaugurated such a perilous policy. In the multitude of counselors there is wisdom. Let all things be done decently and in order, and let nothing be done without the consent of the brethren. Not only must individuals combine in churches for the nearer and smaller matters, but the churches must combine in the greater and more distant matters. Educational institutions, publication societies, orphan asylums, and many such like things are essential to the progress of these great interests. These are the greatest works in the world. The Church of God needs the assistance of all its members. Other interests also need our assistance, and when there is to be discrimination, *which will get the advantage?* Of course, that which we most highly esteem. There can be no other answer. Did you ever know a church member to pay the merchants, doctors, lawyers, teachers, laborers, etc., and put the Church of God last? I have, for I was a deacon for many years. Religious papers are a great help to the cause of truth, yea, a necessity in these times. The truth must be printed and read. Paul wrote letters to the churches, and asked that they be read (Col. 4:16). That was the best that could be done in those days. The devil has his printing presses; so has the world; so have errorists; so must the Church of God make occasions to cut off these other damaging and damning occasions to injure the cause of truth. The greatest work in the world is in the church. It needs assistance. "Help, Lord! "Ye men of

Israel, help!" "Curse Meroz, because they come not up to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Which will you help most? That, that you think is the most deserving. If you think down on the church; if you subordinate its interests and work, then you Despise the Church of God. A great secretary said, that if the Baptists would send him all the bones that rot on their lands, that he would have more missionary money than was ever put in his hands for the work. A wise man, Dr. Solomon, said, that if he had all the money that go to buy feathers for the women's hats, that he could burn and rebuild all the churches in Kentucky, and give all of them pastors for every Sunday, and at a good salary. O, God's "people will not consider." "They are perishing for lack of knowledge." A woman who gives more for a hat than for the Church of God, puts her hat above the Church of God. I don't ask you to give more than you give, but to *give more wisely*. Give less to the little things, and more to the great things, and it will be better for you, for others, and for the cause of Christ. Prophecies, tongues, and the getting of knowledge will come to an end; but there are eternal interests, and those who spend their all on things that are temporal, and that perish with the using, to the neglect of the things that are eternal, are doing themselves and the cause irreparable and eternal wrong. If you would see the great mission of the church, read the epistle to the Ephesians. What is to be compared to that? "To the intent, that now unto principalities and authorities in the heavenlies, might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose, which he purpose in Christ Jesus, our Lord." O, that we knew how to "behave ourselves in the house of God, which is the Church of the Living God." Perhaps we all work enough and give enough to other things, but we don't Assist the Church of God enough. Peach one is honor bound, yea, with double honor, to do and to give according to his ability. If all were thus honorable, the Church of God would not be so poor as to beg bread and live on the cold charities of the world. "Let there be equality, and not the few burdened, and the many eased." Here is where the trouble comes. Our financial system, if we have any, is contrary to the word of God, and, of course, we suffer.

God directed the building of one house for his glory, and that was the costliest house ever built. Neither David nor Solomon would live in a finer house than God's. I don't believe any blood bought man or woman should spend more on themselves than they spend for the Church of God. I believe we would all have more to spend on ourselves, and enjoy it more, and get more out of it, if we did not rob God by withholding what is his due. Duty means debt, and we are all indebted to God more than we can pay. So he asks only a small proportion of our income. If Judaism owed God one-tenth, what does Christianity owe him? Certainly not less. But being now no longer under the law, but having the liberty to .purpose in our own heart what we shall give, let us not abuse this liberty, for God loves a liberal and cheerful giver. If we sow sparingly, we shall reap sparingly; and if we sow bountifully, we shall also reap bountifully. Give, and it shall be given to you, good measure, heaped up, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. Now, fathers and mothers, will you continue to spend your money for that which is not bread? Will you continue to give your children stones for bread, and scorpions for eggs? Yea, poison for food? This you do when you feed them on the secular, fictitious and filthy trash of the day.

(11) Those Despise the Church of God Who Usurp her Functions. The Church is the Steward—the custodian of the Faith. The doctrines and ordinances were committed to her. All authority was left with her. She judges of the qualifications of those seeking her membership, or the unworthy would rush in to destroy her peace and prosperity. The devil would want no wider door than to allow any one to judge of his own fitness. The unworthy often think they are too fit for the really worthy. The Church judges those that are within, so as to put away such as she deems unfit. The Church imposes and deposes official obligations. The Church judges of the qualifications of deacons and preachers and pastors. The Church must call its own pastor. Now, when some Diotrephes presumes to take these functions from the church, and to officiate on his own responsibility; that is, decide who should become members, or who excluded; or to appoint deacons, and to depose them; or to appoint or disappoint pastors, or to impose, oppose or depose them; or authoritatively decide doctrine; or to ordain preachers, or to locate them; or to administer ordinances, either baptism or the Supper; and all these have been done by usurpers of authority, and I charge all such with despising the Church of God by thus putting themselves above the church in such functions.

They may think they are big-hearted by thus relieving the church of such responsibilities, but such usurpation never came out of a big heart, but always out of a big head, and the definite article might be the one to use in all

such cases. The eleven inspired apostles would not dare to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Judas without submitting the matter, both the nomination, and the election, to the whole 120 disciples. Nor would these twelve appoint deacons without submitting the matter to the whole multitude of disciples. Acts 6:5: "And the saying pleased the whole multitude; and THEY chose the seven." One of our greatest men was baptized without church authority, and another ordained without church authority, and another said before a minister's state meeting that the commission was not given to the church, but to disciples as such, and he meant unbaptized disciples. If that is not anarchy, then I don't know what that means. Who begun the execution of the commission on the day of Pentecost? Were they left unbaptized, and out of the church? Were the 120 an unorganized mass? If God put in the church first the apostles, then prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues, then where was the church, for all of these were there, before and on that day? Did they work as a mass and not as a church? Then why a church?

If the mess of a mass in a muss would be more effectual than organization, why did Christ do so foolish a thing as to build a church? If the whole divided Christian world is the Church of God, then how could the church at Corinth be the Church of God? And if there were "churches of God" in those early days, even in a province, were they the same as we have now in the denominations? Are the denominations as such churches of God? If so, are they the same as we read of in the Scriptures? Is the sum total of the churches of God the Church of God? Why this dogged effort to break down all the scripture characteristics of a church, if not to destroy church functions, and turn them over to any fanatic and free booter, who, Diotrephes like, would love the preeminence, and take in and cast out of the church whom he would. It is those who love to have the preeminence that usurp church functions. They first try to get everybody in the church; then the church, of course, can't operate by reason of the multitude, and multitudinous disagreements; so Mr. Diotrephes can have the pre-eminence. The same authority that administers one ordinance administers the other. They begin to usurp baptism and ordination, and the rest will come in time. All these roads lead to Rome. When messengers are made delegates, and anybody can be delegate, then the gates of Hades have prevailed against the church. God forbid!

(12) Those Despise the Church of God Who prefer the churches (?) of men. As there have been gods many, and lords many, and christs many, and bibles many, so are there churches many. Any one who has sense enough to choose, and a few have been allowed that privilege, or rather have that privilege because they escaped conscription; and millions have been conscripted with the sword; and millions by the sword of the, mouth; and millions. have been kidnapped in infancy; yet millions escaped all these, and deliberately chose a church which they knew was started in modern times, and by uninspired men, and some of these church founders were the wickedest men the world ever saw, and the rest the most presumptuous the world ever saw; and yet they prefer that to an institution of God, set up by Christ himself, who called it: MY CHURCH, and said the gates of Hades should not prevail against it. These gates will surely prevail against all other institutions, including these churches of men. These all say, no salvation out of the Church of God, and they are certainly out, and if judged out of their own mouths, as Christ says he will do, and also out of his word, which we know he will do, then what will they say in the judgment? Every member of such organizations either went in by choice, or they stay in by choice, and in either case they prefer that to the Church of God.

The Church of God is over 1800 years old, and has come down through persecutions, even baptisms of fire and blood, all of which did not and can not prevail. It is in the world today, doing business for its Lord as in the beginning, having the same government, officers, constitution, ordinances and doctrines, differing however as at first, because each has the right to think and decide for himself. But freedom to differ, and even to fight for the supposed right, is a thousand times better than enslavement of mind and soul to usurpation of popes and bishops, such as the Bible knows only to condemn. But those made free to differ, are as united as the others, and they have the only agreement that counts for anything in the kingdom of Christ and of God. The agreement is intelligent and voluntary, and not slavish, for that kind is an abomination to God, and ought to be to all men. If one can be in the Church of God and will not; if he can be free with that freedom that comes from a knowledge of the truth, and will not; then the consequences are of his own choosing, and that without excuse, unless God requires us to know things we can't know, and perish such a thought! Everyone can know where his church (?) started, and when, and who started it, and he takes his choice between that and the one that has come down

through 1260 years of opposition and persecution, according to prophecy. Was your church persecuted 1260 years? The true church was. But you may ask, can we tell which of all the so-called churches of today was this persecuted church? If you can't know, then you are under no obligation to know. But if you can know, then you must know, or suffer the consequences. Can it be both identified and traced. Read what follows in this book, and decide for yourself. The Lord has no denominational churches, nor can such be forced on him, for he decided in the beginning not to build such, and he is the same yesterday, today and forever. What account would such a thing be, if indeed such a thing could be? It never met, never did anything, and never will, and never can. Every thing that was ever done was done by individuals and organizations of individuals, called bodies, and a congregation is not a body unless it is organized for business. We read of an unofficial assembly in Acts, 19th chapter; but it was a mob, a mass, a mess, and all it could-do was to get up a muss. It was unlawful-not the congregation, but its presumption in undertaking the business of an ecclesia, which is always a lawful assembly. They were told that the lawful assembly, or ecclesia, would prosecute them for trying to do business; and so all lawful churches ought to prosecute the unlawful ones for trying to take business out of their hands, or into their hands, which is the same. So all unlawful assemblies today, which have taken the Lord's business in their hands, have and aim to take it out of the hands of lawful assemblies. If infant baptism prevail, and this is their aim, they believers' baptism is at an end. If Episcopacy, or Presbytery, or Papacy prevail, then that church government, given from heaven, and which has done more for this world than all the gold in its banks and bowels, will be overthrown. All liberty, and freedom, and individual responsibility, etc., that have come to natural and spiritual men, are the fruits of this heavenly democracy, united into congregationalism. There was no democracy in this old, tyrannical world till Christ brought it from heaven; for he came to lift up the lowly, to pull down those exalted, and "to make men free and equal." "There shall be no one in authority among you, for ye are all brethren." Now, why choose to belong to an unscriptural church, and that means unlawful, so far as Christ's rule goes, and it will ultimately go all the way, as he is to uproot all the Father did not plant; why, I say, choose to belong to a so-called church, that Christ never organized or authorized, rather than the one that has Bible characteristics? If you put these above The Church of God, then you Despise the Church of God. But maybe you have not thought of these things. Then think of them now.

The body that exalts itself above the head is a "beast," and the "Beast" did this when it thought to "change times and ordinances." Then this beastly body must have seven heads and ten horns. So there is no end to this unholy ambition.

A human body is the likeness of Christ's church. In this body we see unity in diversity among its members. Services differing, like those of the hands, feet, eyes and ears, yet all working together, "fitly joined together and compacted, by that of which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, malting increase of the body unto the building up of itself." This is inexplicable and inapplicable except to a congregation. These members of the human body are not only "joined together," and working together, but in full sympathy, "having the same care one for another," so no one can say to another, "I have no need of you." "Not one member, but many." "If all were one member [as bishops in the general conference], where were the body?" "But now are there many members but one body." The feeble and uncomely members are necessary, and ought to have more abundant honor, for God tempered the body together so there should be no schism. "Now ye [church of God at Corinth] are the body of Christ and members each in his part" (1 Cor. 12). Look a little at the likeness. "Joined together"— congregation; one head—Christ; complete in itself—a body, or *the* body. The eyes "oversee," but do not lord it over the others; the tongue speaks, but never against the members; the hands strike, but in defense of the members; the feet, the servant of all, and lowest of all-these all working together to execute, not the law of the hands or eyes, for these can make no laws, but in all their cooperative labor, they do the will of the head. When a body gets to making laws, it puts itself on an equality with the head, or exalts itself above the head, and thus shows itself the body of a beast. I would not belong to such a body. The figure of a human body is an argument in favor of congregationalism, so potent that flesh and blood, and principalities and powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world and spiritual wickedness in high places, can't answer. If all the human bodies were made into one body, and became a great image, like the one Nebuchadnezzar saw, some little stone might strike its toes and grind it to powder, or it might fall of its own weight; but organized as it is, on a small scale, each complete in itself, the human body becomes an institution

which the gates of Hades can not prevail against. These gates may close on one every second, yet the multiplication is so rapid and widespread that the body, as an organization, is destined to ride the surging billows and land at last on the uttermost shores of time. "I speak concerning Christ and his Church."

Why belong to a church of man's devising? "Come out of her, my people!"

Chapter 5

CHURCH COMMUNION.

1 Corinthians 10:16, 17—*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The loaf which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we the many are one loaf, one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.*

Acts 4:23 contains one of the most philosophical statements to be found. "And being let go, they went to their [own company](#)." These two suffering apostles did this from both principle and choice. Many do so today from choice, and not principle. I am glad all have the civil privilege to choose their own company. This is the result of Religious Liberty, "the trophy of the Baptists." No one has the moral or scriptural right to associate himself with a company of errorists in either morals or doctrine; but all have [civil liberty](#), and with this they have

associated themselves with the company of their own liking, and often without regard to the truth as it is in Jesus. Hence, we have the Methodist communion, Presbyterian communion, Baptist communion, etc. This means the place we have chosen to commune. The word translated "Communion" twice in the text, is also thus translated only in 2 Corinthians 6:14 and 13:14. The same word is translated "Fellowship" 13 times, and "Partner" and "Partaker" 14 times. I prefer the last two to the first.

When one chooses his community to live in, he becomes a partner or partaker of the common interests of the neighborhood, and having so many things in common, there is a communion in the common interests. There is fellowship, partnership, communion. This is the right sense of the word, and the mystical or spiritual communion is the result of the partnership. Partners in business have not only a financial fellowship and partnership, but this should beget a sympathy in other matters—a sort of personal fellowship extending to the family in matters of health, hope and happiness.

Communion, partnership, fellowship are based on agreement. "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" Partners in business must be agreed, or they will not have sweet fellowship and communion. We choose, or should do so, the church company or communion we most agree with, for without agreement there will be no fellowship. Differences of a serious character require divisions. "Mark those who cause divisions contrary to the doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them" ([Rom. 16:17](#)). This is the cause of so many denominations. They are divided on what they esteem important doctrines, and for the want of agreement they are compelled to separate themselves.

THINGS THAT DIFFER MUST DIVIDE.

On this principle cosmos was brought out of chaos. Chaos was mixed communion, which was not pleasing to God. So he made things that differed to divide. He told the waters to separate themselves from the land, the light from the darkness, etc. "And God saw that it was good." Anyone can see that. Then he made the seeds, animals, birds, fishes, etc., each after its kind, and told them to preserve their species by non-intercommunion. Mixed communion would have frustrated the divine plan in creation. The Lord don't want half-breeds, but full-bloods. A hybrid and mongrel are abominations to God. Pure gold and silver, etc., means that all unlike substances called "alloy" are separated from the metals. There is such a want of agreement in the mixed substances as to injure their beauty and value. Let things that differ divide, is the universal law of God. Let corn, oats, wheat, etc., be sown in separate fields, lest they mix and become corrupted. Let "birds of a feather flock together," and animals of a kind herd together. Flocks of quail, geese, duck, sheep, bees, ants, etc., may appear selfish to ignorant people, but it is a selfishness that is well-pleasing to God. The peace and prosperity of all depends upon keeping separate. "Thou shalt not plow an ox and ass together" (Deut. 22:10). Why? There is too much difference. They are not agreed. There is no fellowship, and there should be no partnership. They can't commune together. The greatest travesty I ever saw was a two-horse show called "The Happy Family." There was as great a variety as the owners could get together. There were fowls, beasts and serpents. It was the most miserable set I ever saw. The monkey was the only happy one, and his happiness consisted solely in tormenting the others. If they had been let go, how they would have gone to their own company. They were sick of mixed communion. There was no agreement, hence there could be no fellowship and no partnership. Do you ask if there was NO fellowship? Yes. How much? As much as there was agreement. I can commune with a hog in hunger, thirst and suffering, because we hold those in common. But I could not go any further in communion than we are agreed. When he eats filth and wallows in the mud, I must be excused. On those points we must separate. Should the hog insist and accuse me of selfishness, I know such selfishness is well pleasing to God and man. Where we differ we must divide.

Let us now apply this rule to the race of man. There are differences that necessitate divisions, or destruction would follow.

God made of one blood all the nations that dwell on the face of the earth; but because of differences he divided them into nations, and gave each its bounds of habitation. If God had left all together they would have worked

their own destruction with greediness. There is such a thing as race fellowship and also national fellowship. If one should boast of his liberality, and transgress the race line, and marry an orangutan, and his so-called partner didn't kill him, then God or man should attend to it at once, for such a man is not fit to live on the earth. Race fellowship is destroyed when carried beyond the bounds. So National fellowship must be confined to one's own nation, or he will be accused of having no national fellowship. There is a difference in color that makes social fellowship impossible. No sensible white or black man would want to give his son or daughter in marriage to the other color. The black companion may be the equal or superior in many respects, yet differences exist that forbid such a union. Dr. Eaton told of a visit to a South Sea Island king, and in his company was a black man and a mulatto. The king cordially received all but the mulatto. God made the white and black man, and he wants them to continue as he made them.

A politician destroys his Political fellowship when he tries to hold communion with both or all parties alike. A man is required to take sides on political questions, and show his colors or hold his peace. No one can fellowship both sides of any question. Such fool pretenders are found only in religion. Those who pretend to have so much religion that they can fellowship all, are generally found to have none at all. Mark all such, and avoid them.

There is also such a thing as Social fellowship, and woe to those who do not restrict it. We have a golden custom of introducing strangers. A mutual friend, knowing both parties, thinks there would be pleasant association because of agreeing qualities. Thus the unfit and unworthy are not admitted. To throw open the doors of social fellowship would be disastrous in many cases, and especially so with females, as a great multitude of male dogs would spend their lives seeking whom they might devour. These rascals are generally the best dressed and best polished in manners. The only safety is in close social communion.

So of Craft fellowship. Farmers, merchants, doctors, lawyers, teachers, preachers, etc., confine their craft fellowship to those of their craft. When Paul was in need he introduced himself to a tent-maker, and being of the same craft, he found fellowship.

Let farmers, doctors, bankers, teachers, lawyers, etc., hold their conventions and consult or commune together. So of firms. What is everybody's business is nobody's business; and the man who tries to attend to everybody's business has none of his own. Christ said, when you make a feast, don't call the well-to-do, but the poor, maimed, lame and blind. Let the unfortunate get together and have fellowship in their sufferings.

But society takes on more serious forms of organization, which requires still more restrictions. When a man and woman seek a partnership for life, the utmost care should be taken to secure Matrimonial fellowship, or communion. "Let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband." Monogamy is close communion; polygamy is open communion. The parties must seek points of agreement and congeniality. No old fool should marry a young one. The cultivated and the uncultivated would make a mismatch. The rich may marry the poor with the understanding that one has enough for both. Some differences may be adjusted, but the greatest care should be taken lest, for want of agreement, matrimonial fellowship or communion be broken.

After this comes the family, and family fellowship must be restricted to the family. If a man come to your house boasting that he is too liberal and too large for one woman and one set of children, kick him out of your house, and out of your yard, and out of your front lot into the public highway; then let the public take up the kicking, and let the kicking continue as long as there is anything to kick. Such a man (?), too big for one woman and one set of children, is too big for God or man, and is not fit to live with us little fellows. Some men are too large for one church, yea, too large for one denomination. Some are too large for all Protestant denominations, and they try to take the Catholics into their communion; yea, some, after studying "Comparative Religions," become too large for any one of them, or all of them, so they take in Atheists. There may be some that take devils into their fellowship. When a man grows beyond the proper size, there is no telling where he will stop.

After the family comes Consanguine fellowship, and this, like all the others, must be restricted to the bounds appointed, or it will be destroyed. The man who claims kin with everybody knows nothing of consanguine fellowship. Paul and Barnabas had ministerial fellowship, and fellowship in labor and suffering, but it all went to pieces when it came in contact with consanguine fellowship. Barnabas wanted to take his nephew, John Mark with them on their second missionary tour, but Paul objected, and they both being strong-minded men, they had a sharp contention, and separated, each taking his chosen companion, and they went their own ways. A beautiful illustration of this is recorded in Genesis 29:10-14—"10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. 11 And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. 12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father. 13 And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things. 14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month."

The kissing was an expression of consanguine fellowship. But this should be restricted to the kin, and very close kin at that. The man who would kiss all because kin to all, is a little lower than the beasts, for, as a general thing, they have their own families and friends they prefer to the rest.

Let us now pass from the natural to the religious relations and fellowships. The world is full of religion, and religions. They are too numerous to mention. Buddhism, Confucianism, Mohammedanism, Judaism and Christianity are enough for us. How much Religious fellowship is there among these religions. As much as there is agreement, and can't be more. Read the 8th chapter of 1st Corinthians and the last half of the 10th chapter. I quote some of the latter. The word translated in 18th verse: "Partakers," and "Fellowship" in the 20th verse, is the same translated "Communion" in the 16th, which is our test. Read and digest—"18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? 19 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? 20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. 21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils. 22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he? 27 If any one of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. 28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not. for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake."

We will have use for this principle further on.

In Acts 14:15-17 and 17:22-29, Paul struck on to some points of agreement, and thus religious fellowship begun. This increased as he turned them to his doctrine of the true God, and our relations to Him. When he saw so many altars of sacrifice, and one to "The Unknown God," he met them at that altar, because there they were agreed in some way. When he saw them making sacrifice for sins, he had fellowship in that, because Paul knew that sin requires sacrifice. They differed about the kind of sacrifice; but both had the same experience of a troubled conscience. They both were partakers of alike experience of a coming condemnation and death. But this was as far as Paul could go at first. Before they could have more fellowship they must have more agreement. So Paul led some on into Christian fellowship: "Howbeit certain men slave unto him, and believed,. . .and a woman named Demaris, and others with them." They could not fellowship Paul's religion until they agreed with him in it. Then they became partners, and changed their company and communion.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

We will now dismiss the other religions, and study those called Christian. There are many of these in name. Here fellowship, partnership and communion increase as agreement increases, and it can't possibly go any further, and we need not deceive ourselves and others about it. I have a great deal of religious fellowship for the

Jews, because I agree with them on the Old Bible, its prophets, and many of its teachings and prophecies. We have the same God, the same law, the same Abraham for our father, the same Moses; but we divide on Christ and Christianity; hence I can not have Christian Fellowship for them. As far as we agree we can walk together, and any further is hypocrisy.

I can fellowship Catholics only so far as we can agree. We agree on the dead, risen and ascended Christ, but their living Christ lives in Rome, while mine lives in heaven.

But dropping them out, let us study communion with the Protestant Divisions of Christendom. Here Fellowship greatly increases, but the rule holds good-fellowship only as far as there is agreement. Any more is pretense, if not worse. Why are we divided? Because we differ on Christian doctrine. Who set up the divisions? They did. The Baptists had been protesting for a thousand years. They are yet doing business at the same old stand and in the same old way in all essential things. When they came out of Rome, we did not disfellowship them, but they us. They set up their own communions, and disdained and persecuted us. God called them out of Rome, but he did not call them to create divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine we had received. I rejoice that we are now increasing in agreement, but we yet differ as to the church and ordinances, to say nothing of many vital doctrines. For these differences they would exclude any of us, and we any of them, and at the same time recognize the excluded as genuine Christians. If I wanted to unite with any of them and preach what I now preach, they could not receive me without suicidal results. If any of our preachers announce that he believe what is peculiar to any of these denominations, we would depose if not exclude him. This is necessary for us and them. No one will deny this; and no one will condemn it. The Lord's Supper being in the Lord's Church, and to this we are all agreed, they having another sort of a church, and having different ways of getting in the church where the supper is, then the difference must keep us from the same table. We invite all to it the way we got there, and the only way left us, and "keeping it as delivered," we must be faithful to the trust.

Christian Fellowship may and should abound as far as there is agreement, but divide we must when differences require it. And don't forget that we are not responsible for a single one of these differences. If they had not first differed from us, we would not have been compelled to differ from them.

But let us magnify some points of agreement, and be very thankful to God for them, and pray earnestly for a continuous growth in nearness to a real union. Let us joyously walk together as far as we can agree. As many as believe in public prayer, come and pray with us. Can you join us in our songs of Zion? Come and welcome. Our songs and prayers are very much alike. Is any in our neighborhood poor and in distress? Pass the hat to all for a collection. Each may take care of its own poor, but some are of the world; yet they are citizens and the poor of all Christian people of the neighborhood. Let all partake, and thus become partners in such cases. Do you believe in public worship? So do we; come and worship with us. But do we not also agree in mission? Yes; but not in mission work. Pedobaptists believe the nations should be disciplined by sprinkling the babies. So their name and creed say. We can't join them. But you say, we all believe in preaching the gospel to adult sinners who have not been "engrafted into the body of Christ" by a sacrament. Suppose, in a union effort, such are led to Christ—then what? Let the convert take his choice of "modes" without instruction? But our orders read: "Teach them all things whatsoever I have commanded you." You say, we must not do that. Christ says, we must. Whom shall we obey? If we attempt to walk together where we do not agree, we will lose what little fellowship we have. The way to get along peaceably is to divide wherever the differences require it. There is only one rule for us all, and those who depart from it are responsible for themselves; and those who fellowship them by association, patronage, or any other way, become partakers with them in the transgression. A union with Pedobaptists in mission work is union in pedobaptism. They not only carry that doctrine with them, but they carry it out. Let us walk together in social, civil, moral, political, and also in religious matters, as far as agreed. We adhere strictly to this rule in all the other matters; why not in religion? We withdraw social, civil, political and moral fellowship from those of the contrary part. This is right. But how much more so in religion? If we can't compromise the lesser matters, how can we compromise the greater? Like animals, birds, plants, political parties, etc., we differ, and the world knows it, and the world also knows these differences have caused divisions. Then why lie about it? Unity is a thousand times better than union. Let us work on our differences

and getting them healed, we will not have to touch the union question with one of our fingers. That will take care of itself. Any magnetic needle will point to the pole if there is no hindrance. Remove the hindrance, and you don't have to show the needle where the pole is. If you force it to point to the pole despite the hindering cause, the force must continue as long as the hindering cause remains. Such force would be against nature, as regards the needle, and against religion in the other case. We ought to have some religious common sense. Those who meet in Christ by repentance and faith have Christian fellowship. Two Christians met in a foreign land, and they knew not each other's tongue. Each wanted congenial companionship, and this required signs. One made a cross with his two forefingers, then laying one hand on his bosom, with the other he pointed to heaven. They embraced, and became loving companions with no further knowledge of each other's doctrinal views. They could pray and sing together in different tongues, and love and help each other in many ways, but they could not baptize each other or commune at the Lord's table, because Christ did not leave those solemn ceremonies to be thus used and abused. We agree on this. If one should say, those two men could set the Lord's table, I have no controversy with him. I have no ammunition small enough for such. They have Christian communion, but not church communion, unless they belong to the same church.

DENOMINATIONAL COMMUNION.

The Lord put the supper in the church, but not in the Denomination, because there was no such thing. Some want Denominational Communion, and some inter-denominational communion, but both these must be unscriptural, because the Scriptures knew no denomination. Yet circumstances have brought about the denominations, and as everyone ought to be in the one of his own choice, he must have Denominational fellowship, partnership, communion. This, like all the others, must be restricted to his own denomination. The man who has as much for one as another has none at all. There are such vain talkers, but they are deceivers. Every honest Christian works for his own denomination. When you find one carrying around for distribution the books setting forth the peculiar doctrines of other denominations, with the boast that he was as ready to work for one as the other, you know that like Judas, he is after "the thirty piece: of silver." The man who would willingly sell false doctrine would also sell his Lord. What denomination would want or have him? If Denominational Fellowship is selfish, then it is a holy selfishness. God is pleased with the principle, and so are all right-minded men. The world knows these divisive denominations exist, and the man is to be pitied or despised who would in any way try to lie out of it. If he has chosen one of them to walk and work with, I can respect him, but not otherwise.

CHURCH COMMUNION.

So far we have spoken of the Communion twice spoken of in the 16th verse. That is a communion with Christ in his broken body, and shed blood. That is, the communicants thus express their fellowship, partnership, or common interest with Christ in the sacrifice of Himself, as He was sacrificed in our stead. "Died for us" means died in our stead; that is, died the death we owed to God's just law, which says, "the soul that sins shall die." If he died in our place, then we died with him; and if he arose for our justification, then we arose with him. If he is our substitute for both sin and righteousness, then we stand in him. We are to be made like him in mind, soul and body. This he secured for us in his suffering and sacrifice for us. Hence, we are partners with him in that great transaction, in all that was or will be accomplished by it. But who are the we of the two texts? Not everybody. Then who? The 17th verse tells us who the "We" are that sit at the Table. We have been considering in verse 16 church communion and union with Christ. Now it is community and unity between the members. Communities are not always in unison; fellowships are not always fraternal; partners are not always peaceable. In the Lord's Supper it is required that there shall be both community and unity, as well as communion and union. Not union in everything, for then we could not eat the Lord's Supper; but union in some essential things to be now considered.

We mentioned some of the variety of fellowships and partnerships, and the word translated communion twice in the text, and in only two other places (2 Cor. 6:14 and 13:14) is also translated "fellowship" thirteen times and "partner" and "partaker" fourteen times.

There are the fellowships growing out of race, color, nationality, society, both simple and organized, whether for business in its various professions, or marriage, family and consanguinity, etc. Here are fellowships and partnerships requiring some sort of unity and community.

Then we spoke of Religious fellowship, Christian fellowship, Doctrinal and Denominational fellowships, and have now the next and most important of all—Church Fellowship, Church Partnership, or Church Communion. In most of these matters, especially the political, professional, social, religious, Christian, denominational and church fellowships, everyone has, or should have, chosen his own company. So that each belongs to the communion of his choice, and that means his choice of a place to commune, and since all should have a place, he should be restricted to his place, or it would not be necessary for all to have a place. If any place is right then one place is wrong. Such a view leaves no place for fellowship or partnership, and converts union and communion into a flimsy farce that would be sacrilegious at the Lord's table.

If the Lord's table was intended for the whole race, then none are restrained but beasts and birds. Yet that would restrict it to the race. If for the whole religious world, then it must be restricted to them, and the irreligious restrained. And all of these "must meet in one place," and "tarry one for the other," and that after exercising discipline, lest some professing the qualifications should not possess them.

If it was intended for the whole Christian world, then Jews and heathen must be restrained and the table restricted to Christians. And these must "all come together in one place," as the table is local, and "tarry one for another," and the unworthy of these must be restrained, as "with such we should not eat."

As this would be impractical and impossible, the table of the Lord was not intended for all Christians. All Christians should have access to the table, but there are other requirements, such as baptism, church membership, and orderly walk, both in doctrines and morals. If the table was intended for all Christian denominations, or to one such, then the same "impossible" practicability confronts us as in the above. It could never be observed by our denomination for the same reason. But a community of some kind must observe it. "The many" must be "one body" of some kind. The Christian world is not a body, but a mass, and as for unity, it is a mess. So of each denomination. When the number gets too large and too much scattered, you can't get them into one place and one body; nor can you wait for them to come together, or know whom to discipline.

Christ did not put his table into a large portion of a denomination, such as "Conference," "Convention," "Assembly," or "Association," for there were none of these in apostolic days as a permanent organization. The one that met at Jerusalem, after attending to its special business, adjourned *sine die*, and did not eat the Lord's Supper.

So we are driven by logic, facts and scripture to locate the table in the church. Paul was writing to the church at Corinth. The four "we's" in the text and the thirty-three pronouns in the latter half of the next chapter, all refer to the church, or to members of the church, and they are about the Supper. It is Christ's will that every saved man shall be baptized, added to some church, and to continue steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine, as qualifications to his table; and those who approach it unworthily, that is, in an unworthy manner, and that includes the proper qualifications, established by thorough self-examination, and church discipline, eats and drinks condemnation to themselves.

The table is in the church, and for orderly church members. Here is the Community and Unity we desire now to ascertain. I will give you several translations of the text, such as are before me.

Anderson.—Because the loaf is one, we, the many, are one body, for we are all partakers of the one loaf.

Ox. Rev.—Seeing that we, who are many, are one loaf, one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

Emp. Diaglott.—Because there is one loaf, we, the many, are one body; for we all partake of the one loaf.

Living Oracles.—Because there is one loaf, we, the many, are one body; for we all participate in the one loaf.

Rotherham.—Because one loaf, one body, we, the many are; for we all of the one loaf partake.

Gould.—Because we, the many, are one loaf, that is, one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

Mine.—Because of the one loaf, one body the many are; for these all from the one loaf take a part.

Bible Union.—Because we, the many, are one loaf, one body, for we all share in the one loaf.

Syriac.—As therefore that bread (loaf) is one, so we are all one body; for we all take to ourselves from that one bread (loaf).

American Edition.—Seeing that we, who are many, are one bread, one body; for we all partake of the one bread. (Loaf in the margin).

Conybeare and Houson.—For as the bread is one, so we, the many, are one body; for of that one bread we all partake.

Twentieth Century.—Just as there is one loaf, so we, many though we are, form one body; for we all partake of the one loaf.

Wesley. —For we, being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of the one bread.

Broadus, Hovey and Weston.—Because we, the many, are one in the one loaf.

Worrell, Sawyer, etc., translate like many above.

So it is clear to any mind not beclouded with prejudice, that those who partake of the one loaf must be one of the body that partakes. That the body means the church, (see 1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:3-6 and 16; 5:23-24; Col. 1:18, 24, etc). That the body spoken of in the text means the church at Corinth, is plain enough for anyone who can intelligently read the eleventh, twelfth, fourteenth and sixteenth chapters of this epistle. Any other conclusion is inexcusable and censurable. Membership in a supposed universal church by reason of faith and salvation, is not counted as sufficient by our Lord, since it is his will that all "the saved be added to the church" which he built—the business-doing congregation or body to which his interests and ordinances are committed. The one who partakes of that one loaf says, by that most solemn of all acts, that he is a member of that body or church observing the ordinance. But some "sport themselves with their own deceivings," "feeding themselves without fear." If it is right for one who is not a unit in the body to partake of that one loaf, then Christ was wrong in setting the example, and the Holy Spirit was wrong in writing our text, and also in all the restrictions and qualifications prescribed. No proposition is clearer to my mind than this—that the unity of the text requires every participant to be a unit in the body partaking. The one cup and the one loaf are forty times mentioned, and many times made emphatically emphatic by repeating the article and pronoun. So the first item of unity is Church Membership—Church Fellowship—Church Partnership.

But this unity also requires Moral Fellowship. "With such do not eat" refers to moral characters. They refer to church members; but not all church members are to commune. The man referred to in 1 Corinthians chapter 5, was wrong in his moral conduct, but he was no worse than those in the church who had been leavened by his example and influence, which they favored by consenting to such a marriage. A man who lives in adulterous marriage has no right to partake, nor have those who favor, or apologize for, or try to excuse such a marriage,

for they are all alike guilty. Nor has a church who retains such characters in her membership and fellowship any right to set the Lord's table. Do they not provoke the Lord to jealousy. All such should judge themselves, and condemn themselves, and be chastened of the Lord, lest they should be weak and sickly and die, and be condemned with the world. This unity requires moral integrity, both in sentiment and practice. But another requisite of this unity is Personal Fellowship. That these should first be adjusted, (see Matt. 5:23-24; 18:15), with their connections.

The fellowship expressed by membership must be real. "If you love not your brother whom you have seen, how can you love God, whom you have not seen?" "If you forgive not your brother, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you." The celebration of Christ's sufferings and death is no time and place for a farce. It is no place for hypocrites. But you don't have to agree with a brother in politics, nor in ethical codes of man's devising, but in God's ethical code.

Again, the unity of the text requires fellowship in Doctrine (Rom. 16:17). "Now we beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

Difference on some doctrines should be tolerated, but there are vital doctrines that to err on is fatal. Such as the Divinity of Christ, the Inspiration of the Scriptures, the Personality of the Holy Spirit, the Necessity of Repentance and Faith, Salvation by Grace, and the Resurrection. Doctrines contrary to these should cause immediate separation. Lest this should look like an apology, let me say that we should aim at the Unity Christ prayed for in John 17:6, 11, 22; and for which Paul prayed in 1 Corinthians 1:10; see also 12:25; 11:19-20; Ephesians 4: 3, 13; and Psalm 133.

"Purging out the leaven" means first out of ourselves after self-examination; and then out of the church after church examination or discipline. The members and the church need at least an annual spring cleaning. The seven days of unleavened bread should teach us the importance of giving ample time to the casting out of malice and wickedness; first out of our own hearts and lives, and lest we fail to detect it in ourselves, let us subject ourselves to the brethren who are united with us in this responsible matter. For the New Scriptural use of leaven, see Matthew 13:33; 16:6, 12; Mark. 8:15; Luke 12:1; 13:21; 1 Corinthians 5:6, 7, 8; Galatians 5:9. It symbolizes both bad morals and bad doctrines.

There is an insane clamor for Union in these days, whether we are One or not. Let such remember that unite occurs but two times in the Word of God: Genesis 4:6 and Psalm 86:11; Unity but three times: Psalm 133:1; Ephesians 4:3, 13; while One occurs a thousand times; such as one body, one fold, one shepherd, one faith, one baptism, etc. Now, we have many bodies, many folds, many shepherds, many faiths and many baptisms; and unity and union is impossible while that state of things exists.

Christ did not pray that his disciples might be united, but that they might be one. He made Jew and Gentile one—of the twain one new man—reconciling both to God in one body by the cross, and by one Spirit, they both have access to the one God, through the one Lord Jesus Christ. It is not said of the Trinity that the three are united, but that they are one.

A man and wife may be united and yet not be one. So of church members. The church should not only be united, but one—like the loaf. The grains in their natural state could not be united into one loaf. They must go through the powerful process of the upper and nether millstones, and the winnowing and sifting, so that the leaven of disunity might be removed; then the pure flour can be made into one loaf. The many natural non-cohesive men and women, by the powerful operations of the nether millstone of the convicting spirit, and the upper millstone of saving and sanctifying and cleansing grace, are united into one body, Jews and Gentiles bond and free, male and female, and have become one body.

This one body is symbolized by the one loaf, and those who partake of the one loaf say, by that most solemn act, that they are members of the one body, and that means church; and church or body never means denomination. Never; no, never.

Inter-Church communion means Denominational communion. The restriction is to the denomination. That would make it a denominational ordinance, and that would make the denomination a church, and the observance of it impossible. Who are in the denomination? All of those whose baptism we receive. The two must go together. This also requires a church to sit in judgment on the denomination, while it has only "judgment of those within." Interchurch communion also requires one church to sit in judgment on members of another church, or do away with discipline. Christ made no provisions for church members to run around, and lie out, and loaf about, and "eat the sacrament," and then do as they please, or do nothing if they please, and then force themselves on those who have no confidence in them, but whom they are bound to invite, because the commandment of God is made void by our tradition. "With such no not to eat," but "withdraw from them." This confines to discipline, and hence to the church. The other is evil only, and that continually, as it makes void scripture example and precept by an unscriptural sentiment.

But, say some, does not Acts 20:5-11 show that Paul and his companions communed with the church at Troas? King James' Version may justify such an inference, but any new translation that I have seen settles that clearly. It reads thus:

Luke, the author of the Acts, after naming seven brethren who had gone before, says:

Verse 5. "But these had gone before, and were waiting for us at Troas." Waiting for whom? Of course, for Paul and Luke, who were to come after. Who were waiting? Those, of course, who had gone before.

Verse 6. "And we sailed away from Phillipi, after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days, where we tarried seven days." Who were the *we* who sailed from Phillipi? Of course, Paul and Luke. Who were the *them* to whom they came? Evidently those who had gone before and were waiting for Paul and Luke.

Verse 7. "And upon the first day of the week when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow, and prolonged his speech until midnight." Who does *we* here refer to? Evidently, of course, to those who had come to Troas. Who does *them* refer to? Of course, to those to whom *them* refers in the 6th verse. (Here a break occurs in Paul's discourse by the fall of Eutychus.)

Verse 11. "And when he was gone up again and had broken the bread, and eaten, and had talked with them a long while, even till break of day, so he departed." To whom does *them* here refer? Evidently to the same brethren previously mentioned. Let it be observed that no one is here mentioned as eating except Paul, which was evidently a common meal, as it was natural for him to have taken some refreshments before departing on his journey. So say Sherwood, Albert Barnes, Jameson, Fausset and Brown, Alex. Campbell, and others.

Verse 13. "But we going before to the ship, set sail for Assos, there intending to take in Paul; for so he had appointed, intending himself to go by land." Who does *we* refer to here? Evidently to those who went to Troas, and who, while there, came together to break bread, and the same with whom Paul talked a long while, and the same who came away from Troas and sailed for Assos.

Now, if there was a church there, it is strange, indeed, no mention is made of it, or that its members greeted Paul or his companions on their arrival, or that those members took leave of them when they departed. Such mention is made in other places where resident disciples were met with. Upon what legitimate hypothesis can you account for the omission here? Now I do not *know* there was not a church at Troas; neither do you *know* there was. But if there was, I must say that, which you will admit, it is one of the strangest things that Luke could give all the incidents he did in connection with the visit of Paul and his companions and yet avoid making the

slightest allusion to it. Therefore, I think the most natural and reasonable conclusion is, that there was no church at Troas at that time, unless it was composed of Paul and his fellow-travelers.

But if this were true, then it was a church without a local habitation.

The truth is, from the simple expression, "when we came together on the first day of the week to break bread," is drawn the inference that the Lord's Supper was celebrated, and that by a regularly organized church, and that that church was located at Troas. The absurdity is plainly on the face of any such inference.

Long after this, Christ sent seven messages to "THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA," and left out Troas. No where is there an allusion to a church there. All admit that Church Communion was practiced at its institution, and at Jerusalem, and at Corinth, and in all other places where referred to. Then why press a known error in Acts 20:5-7, for an exception, and for confusion and contradiction? Errors of translation beget errors of practice, which errorists are loath to give up. Thousands of Baptists loaf around another church all their life, doing nothing for the cause, and, as a poultice for their evil conscience, they insist on "eating the sacrament," to get what magical or mystical virtue it might possess. They support the church they left behind with their absence, which, in most cases, is a great blessing. "Spots they (often) are, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you," "feeding themselves without fear." A man who was publicly drunk on Saturday, came with a good member, both of another church, and both presented themselves for "communion." "With such no not to eat." What should be done? Invite both? They are both in good standing in their own church, as their church, like thousands of others, has no discipline. Some have not life enough to exclude a member for anything. Both must be invited, or the church must judge the members of another church. In either case the Scriptures are ignored. If the Supper must be protected by discipline, as all admit, then the question is settled, and the limit is fixed to members of the church. If the Supper is in the church, and is to be eaten by the church, and as a church, then the question is settled from that standpoint. It is like voting, whether to receive members, exclude them; or the call of a pastor, or what not; if it is to be done by a church, in church capacity, then the voting must be limited to the church. And all agree that the Supper is a church ordinance; but some think that, by "courtesy," the invitation may be extended to visiting Baptists, while the same "courtesy" should not be extended in voting. Do you ask, what harm can come of it? I answer, a world of harm. When all authority in heaven and earth says: "With such an one no not to eat," but "purge out the leaven," and "put away from yourselves that wicked person," you set up a custom of "courtesy" without warrant or precedent that makes void this great commandment. It is impossible to obey this great commandment, to protect this solemn ordinance, by discipline, while bound by that senseless, useless "courteous" custom. It tramples under foot all the all-authority in heaven and earth.

Let the world see that we are sincere when we call it a church ordinance, and that we practice what we preach, and practice on our own people, and this bug-bear of a bugaboo will vanish to the realm of shades and spooks and hobgoblins where it was born, and where it belongs, and where it should die, and be buried to rise no more, forever more. Amen.

When Baptists say, it is close baptism, they maybe sincere, but are inconsistent; for when one leaves the Baptists and goes to the world, as thousands do, or to other denominations, they are still baptized, but debarred; so that can't give satisfaction. As long as we practice such an inconsistency they will browbeat us and bully us, so that thousands are kept away from us, or enticed away. The-scripture, precept and practice on this would hush the fuss and stop fight on this subject. And what do we gain by the modernly-invented custom? We simply quiet the croakings of a few roustabout Baptists who want to eat the sacrament to compensate for their lay-outs from duty. If we can make it an expression of fellowship of members of other churches, then it can be made an expression of fellowship, and Pedobaptists have the argument on us. Christ "put in the church first the apostles," and after "purging out that Judas of the leaven of malice and wickedness," as he tells us to do, then he instituted the ordinance with only the elect Eleven, leaving out his mother, and thousands of Baptists who were in Jerusalem at that very hour. If this is not an argument for church communion, then I don't know what an argument is. It ought to settle and satisfy all who want to know the truth.

But indulge a few more remarks. I write this at such moments as I can snatch from other pressing duties. Attribute the repetitions to this, as I can not re-read every time I write. Moreover, the repetitions are the things that are prominent in my mind, and such as I esteem important. Some logs are so hard to split, and some rocks are so hard to break, that many blows are necessary to do the work. But the hardest resistance, and the toughest obduracy, and the most stubborn prejudices in all the world confronts religious truth. When Baptists tell other Christians that they should be baptized like Christ was baptized, and like Christ taught, it hits hard, and ought to be irresistible; but when a Baptist tells a Baptist that he ought to observe the Supper as the Lord did in instituting it, and like he commanded it through those who spoke and wrote, as the Holy Spirit brought to their minds His teaching on this subject, for no one will say that Christ practiced one thing and taught another; then what shall we say when they treat it just like the prejudiced ones on baptism? It needs explanation, and here it is as near as I can give it. One has been made to believe that John baptized "with water," and the other has been made to believe that "Disciples," in Acts 20:5, was the church, and that Paul and his companions communed with them when they (the church) came together on the first day of the week. But both are misled by false translations. And the Baptist is most to blame, because all new translations leave out "The Disciples," while all do not correct the "with water." While no argument can be made for error, yet some arguments for truth are more plausible than others. The last three requirements in entering a Baptist church are, a satisfactory profession of saving faith, baptism and reception into membership. Some Baptist churches put the first and last together—the last to be valid after baptism. But there is the vote to receive them into membership. The table is in the church (not the house), but the "BODY" wherever it may meet. You can't partake unless you are one of the body. "For we, the many, are one body, one loaf, for we all partake of the one loaf." There is but one way to get to the table. On this we are all agreed. The "visiting brother" has the first two requirements, but not the last; he has not been received into membership. Shall this be required of some and not of others? Some say, invite the visiting Baptist as a member of another church, and some say, by a like "courtesy" we can regard him for the time being as a member of our church. Then he is, or is not, a member. If not, it is a farce and a falsehood.

If he is really for the time a member, and should be one of those that we should not eat with, then try him, and purge him out, and with him "no not to eat." Especially do this, as is often the case he is a member of a church that is too dead to do that much-needed thing for him. He is a member or not a member, and why falsify at that the most solemn place and time in our lives? Not commune with a Baptist? Have you no fellowship for Baptists outside of your own little company? That is the slogan borrowed from Pedobaptists. It is as respectable when one uses it as when the other uses it. Yes, a thousand times yes, commune with all Baptists and all Christians; but that is not the way or when or where to show it. We all tell Pedobaptists, that it is a perversion of the holy ordinance, to detract it from church fellowship with Christ in his "broken body and shed blood," to an expression of our feelings for Christian people. And I tell the "visiting brother" the same thing. We have plenty of ways of expressing our feeling for one another, but this is not one of the ways. The fellowship one for another was expressed when they were received into membership in the body, and by continuance of the same; but at the table we express the fellowship between the church and Christ, or the "body and the head." Language can not make this clearer. In one ordinance—baptism, "each one" expressed his individual fellowship for his buried and risen Lord, and his individual partnership with him in his great sacrifice of himself for us individually. But he also "gave himself for his church;" he "bought it with his own blood," and it is proper that this ordinance—the Supper—should be kept sacred for the expression of that one thing. Anything else is a perversion. One is heaven high above the other. I saw my wife partake once when she seemed to realize that it was her last time; she seemed to use all her powers to lift herself to a "discernment" of its true import. Her agonizing countenance melted my heart, and I prayed as perhaps I never did for the Lord to help her to a spiritual feast of that sacrifice. As the feast of the Passover was necessary to sustain Christ's body on the way to the cross, so might that spiritual feast give her strength for the awful ordeal awaiting her. I communed with her, though I did not partake of the Supper, not being a member with her there. Christ gives us a thousand times and places and ways to commune with one another, and sets one time and place and way to commune with him, and shall we rob him of that? Then let Baptists quit communing with one another at the Lord's table, and let the church, as such, hold communion with her Lord. I have never, thank God, violated his expressed will in this holy ordinance in that way. I officiate in ordinances for churches, but they are the church in all church actions.

Perhaps baptizing is rightly classed with ministerial function, but not so with the Lord's Table. That is not a preacher's ex-officio. A church should observe that ordinance—preacher or no preacher—as it is a church ordinance, and the ministry is an office in the church; so the church is before and above and independent of all of its officers. But baptism, while in the care of the church, is administered to those that are without. One is outside and the other inside; not inside the denomination, but inside the church, and there is no lawful way to it but through the door of the church. And baptism is not the door, but the uplifted hand lets them in or puts them out. Guard well that door, lest the unbidden of the Lord enter.

Chapter 6—Part A

CHURCH PERPETUITY It Is Scriptural.

PREFACE

In May, 1900, I delivered twelve lectures, by request, on "Distinctive Baptist Doctrines," at the Southwestern University. Ten of these, by request of the class, were published in book form, by Folk & Browder, Nashville, Tenn. The book closes with these words: "My two lectures on Church Perpetuity, which, with the others, were requested for publication, are withheld for the present; but I trust soon to give them with good measure. To all who heard or may read, fare ye well."

In the following pages I try to fulfill that promise. I have added much to the matter of these two lectures. There is a strange and strong effort to discourage and suppress investigation along this line. My conviction that the subject is of immense importance and profit, compels the venture of "what I have written." Let those who object, inspect.

INTRODUCTION

There are three words used almost indiscriminately in the discussion of [Church History](#), viz.: "Succession," "Continuity" and "Perpetuity." Not one of these words expresses the whole idea, but each one is nearly right, and sufficient for honest inquiry. In the sense of popes and kings succeeding each other, the word is not to be used of church history, because one church does not take the place of another. Sometimes one church dies as an [organization](#), and some of the members may constitute in the same, or another place, and thus one may succeed the other. But this is hardly involved in this discussion, except where churches may have been driven from place to place, or from one country to another. The church at Jerusalem was multiplied into the churches of Judea, Samaria, etc., but these did not succeed the church at Jerusalem, because that church had not died, as when popes and kings succeed each other by death. That particular idea of supplanting, or taking the place of another, must be eliminated.

"Continuity" is not far from the true idea, as these churches were a continuation and extension of the first church. So out of continuity there came perpetuity, as in human history. These other churches did not spring out of the ground, but came from the first church. There was continuity, but this is not what we are to prove in this discussion by history. If that was the principle of propagation, clearly established in the beginning, and is the principle yet, and has been as far as we know, then, as in Beehives, we can reach a satisfactory conclusion, unless the opposite is clearly proved. Perpetuity fits the kingdom better than the church, unless we use the church in the kingdom sense, a sense I wholly and heartily and holily discard. The kingdom "endureth forever," is "everlasting," but these terms don't fit the church, which is an organized body within the kingdom. The exact relation of the church, or churches in the aggregate and kingdom, I may not clearly discern, nor can I clearly discern the exact relation of Father, Son and [Holy Spirit](#); nor that of soul and spirit; nor the natural and spiritual, or day and night, or winter and summer. There is a blending, a place of meeting, but who can tell where? We don't have to, thanks to goodness and mercy. We know the kingdom was first mentioned, and that the church did not supplant the kingdom. They both must be entered. It is not enough to be in the kingdom. Matthew mentions kingdom nearly as often after the church was mentioned as before; Mark, Luke and John never mentioned church, but kingdom often. The kingdom was before the church, as the church was composed of citizens of the kingdom, organized for work and worship. The Lord added those in the kingdom to the church.

There are many things predicated of the kingdom that can not be of the church, and vice versa. We know that when the church became the most frequent term in use, that the kingdom was not done away, but is often referred to even to the end of Revelation. We know the church and the kingdom are not the same, nor is the aggregation of churches commensurate with the kingdom, as many are in the kingdom who are not in a church, and many in the church, who are not in the kingdom; that discipline can put out of the church, but not out of the kingdom; that one can die out of the church, but not out of the kingdom; that many lose membership in the church by lapses, disintegration of the church; but none of these forfeits citizenship in the kingdom. There is room and need for both church and kingdom; they are not hostile, nor in competition, nor is either in the way of the other, but both helpers together. We can discern both, but we can not discern the exact difference, nor the exact relation of the two. Thus it is in many things closely related.

The exact relation of husband and wife is often perplexing, even to the parties themselves. The continuousness of the kingdom is not disputed—I mean the kingdom set up by Christ. But as to the continuousness of that institution that Christ called his church, which the gates of Hades should not prevail against, that shall be the aim of the following pages to establish. The rare, family and church have existed from their beginnings. As the kingdom and the church are so closely related, we will go over the ground covered by both. The same power that could perpetuate the kingdom, could preserve the church. Perpetuity of the kingdom, and continuity of the

churches in the kingdom are both plainly and abundantly taught in the Scriptures. This ought to be enough for the faith of the saints, in the absence of all history. But history shall also testify. Let us go on to see:

1ST IF PERPETUITY IS SCRIPTURAL.

2ND IF IT IS REASONABLE.

3RD IF IT IS CREDIBLE.

4TH IF IT IS HISTORICAL.

CHURCH PERPETUITY IS SCRIPTURAL.

First let us notice a few scriptures concerning the Kingdom. Kingdom is a correlative term, like husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant; that is, it depends upon its correlative parts. No husband, no wife, no parent, no child, etc. So a kingdom must have a king, subjects, laws, territory. So of the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom 'set up by Christ in the days of the Caesars was to endure for the age. See the following scriptures on the kingdom.

Psalms 145:13—Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations.

Psalms 146:10—Jehovah will reign forever, Thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye Jehovah.

Daniel 2:44-45—**44** And in the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. **45** Forasmuch as thou sawest that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.

Daniel 4:3—How great are his signs! and how mighty are his wonders! his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.

Daniel 4:34-35—**34** And at the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth forever; for his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation; **35** and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Daniel 7:14—And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, 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.

Daniel 7:18—But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.

Daniel 7:21-22—**21** I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; **22** until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

Daniel 7:25-27—25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change time and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. 26 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. 27 And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness-of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

Luke 1:31-33—31 And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Hebrews 12:26-29—26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven. 27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken may remain. 28 Wherefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken; let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe: 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

Revelation 11:15—And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become *the kingdom* of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever.

There was great effort to overthrow the kingdom, which, of course, was visible, and the same power that could preserve the kingdom could preserve the church, although the powers and authorities, visible and invisible, did their utmost against both, and all, as we will see.

THE THRONE ALSO EVERLASTING.

I quote these scriptures, not for the teachers of theology, but the learners, who might not turn to them.

Psalms 89:27-29; 132:17-18—27 I will also make him my first-born, The highest of the kings of the earth. 28 My loving kindness will I keep for him evermore; and my covenant shall stand fast with him. 29 His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven. 30 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. 31 Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie unto David 32 His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. 33 It shall be established forever as the moon, And as the faithful witness in the sky.

Isaiah 9:6-7—6 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, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this.

Hebrews 1:8—But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

Revelation 3:21-22—21 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. 22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit with unto the churches.

So we see the Throne was not to be overthrown.

THE KING IS ALSO EVERLASTING.

Exodus 15:17-18—17 Thou wilt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of throe inheritance, The place, O Jehovah, which thou hast made for me to dwell in, The sanctuary, O Lord. which thy hands have .established. 18 Jehovah shall reign forever and ever.

Psalms 5:15-16—15 Break thou the arm of the wicked; And as for the evil man, seek out his wickedness till thou find none. 16 Jehovah is King forever and ever.

Jeremiah 9:10—Jehovah sat *as King* at the Flood; Yea, Jehovah sitteth as King forever. But Jehovah is the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King: at his wrath the earth trembleth, and the nations are not able to abide his indignation.

Micah 4:6-7—6 In that day, with Jehovah, will I assemble that which is lame, and I will gather that which is driven away, and that which I have afflicted; 7 and I will make that which was lame a remnant, and that which was cast far off a strong nation; and Jehovah will reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth even forever.

John 12:32-34—32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself. 33 But this he said, signifying by what manner of death he should die. 34 The multitude therefore answered him, We have heard out of the law that the Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

1 Timothy 1:17—Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory forever and ever. Amen.

THE TERRITORY IS ALSO EVERLASTING.

"The earth is the Lords, and the fullness thereof. He made it and redeemed it for an eternal possession." The meek shall inherit the earth, and dwell therein forever. Read Genesis 13:15; 17:8; 48:4; Psalm 2:8-9; 37:9-11, 18, 22, 29, 34; 72:7, 8; Proverbs 2:21, 22; Isaiah 2:2-4; 60:21, 22; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Amos 9:11-15; Micah 4:1-7; Matthew 5:5; Romans 4:13; Galatians 3:18, 29; Revelation 11:15; 21:1-3, etc. The Hebrew *erets* occurs six times in Psalm 37, three times translated "land," and three times "earth." The late revisionists say, in margin, they all should be earth. Christ says, in Matthew 5:5, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth;" and Paul, in Romans 4:13, says the promise to Abraham was the "WORLD." So read:

Psalms 37:9-11; 18, 22, 28-29; 34—9 For evil-doers shall be cut off; But those that wait for Jehovah, they shall inherit the (earth) 10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: Yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and he shall not be. 11 But the meek shall inherit the (earth) and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. 18 Jehovah knoweth the days of the perfect; and their inheritance shall be forever. 22 For such *as be* blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and *they that be* cursed of him shall be cutoff. 28 For Jehovah loveth justice, and forsaketh not his saints; They are preserved forever; but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. 29 The righteous shall inherit the land (earth), and dwell therein forever. 34 Wait for Jehovah, and keep his way, and he will exalt thee to inherit the land (earth): when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.

Ephesians 1:13-14—13 In whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Revelation 5:9-10—9 For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed men to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. 10 And hast made them unto our God kings and priests: and they shall reign on the earth.

So the earth is to be redeemed from the curse of sin, and will become a "new earth," wherein the righteous are to dwell forever with the Lord. At last the Father will come down also out of heaven to tabernacle with men, and the kingdom will be given back to him. See Revelation 21st chapter and 1 Corinthians 15:23-28.

"THE STATUTES," "BOOK OF THE LAW" OR "WORD OF GOD" WAS ALSO TO CONTINUE, OR "ENDURE FOREVER."

"The Word of the Lord liveth and abideth forever." It was thought to be lost in the Babylonian captivity, but see Nehemiah, chapter 8, what interest is taken in the reading of the blessed book. Since the days of Christ what diabolical efforts have been made by Pagan emperors and Papal popes to utterly destroy the Word of the Lord; but He who preserves all things was watching The Laws of His Kingdom. It was hidden in the dens and caves of the earth and buried in the graves of Papal archives with the rubbish of relics, but God brought it out of both. It has been counterfeited, and interpolated, and misinterpreted, and wrested, and reviled, and spit upon, but it still lives and abides, shining the brighter by the rubbing off of the rust and rubbish. Now He who could preserve the Law of the Kingdom could also preserve his subjects. It was prophesied of them that they should be persecuted as He was, by men and devils, but they should not prevail. Remember, the church is not a house, but a household, composed of "Living Stones." Read

Matthew 6:11-12—11 Blessed are ye when *men* shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. **12** Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.

Matthew 10:21-23—21 And brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child: and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. **22** And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved. **23** But when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

Mark 10:29-30—29 There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake, and for the gospel's sake, **30** but he shall receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions: and in the world to come eternal life.

Luke 6:22-23—22 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for, the Son of man's sake. **23** Rejoice in that day, and leap *for joy*: for behold your reward is great in- heaven; for in the same manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

Luke 21:12-13; 16-19—12 But before all these things, they shall lay their hands on you, and shall persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake. **13** It shall turn out unto you for a testimony. **16** But ye shall be delivered up even by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends: and *some of* you shall they cause to be put to death. **17** And ye shall be hated *of* all men for my name's sake. **18** And not a hair of your head shall perish. **19** In your patience ye shall win your souls.

John 15:18-21—18 If the world hateth you, ye know that it hath hated me before it *hated you*. **19** 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. **20** Remember the word that I said unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also. **21** But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 16:2—They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God.

2 Timothy 3:12-13—12 Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 13 But evil men and impostors shall wag worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

Revelation 12:17—And the dragon waged wrath with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest *of* her seed, that keep the commandments *of* God, and hold the testimony of Jesus.

Revelation 17:4-6—4 And. the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication, 5 and upon her forehead a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

Also Matthew 13:21; 23:34; Acts 8:1; 22:4-8; 26: 11-15; 2 Thessalonians 1:4; Revelation 6:9-11; 7:13, 14; also Daniel 8:12, 24-25, etc.

This part of the prophecy has been verified by history. The true witnesses have been thus persecuted. Have the Promises been fulfilled? Then the true church is in the world today. Notice some of the Promises of Preservation and Perpetuity

Matthew 16:18—And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 28:18-20—18 All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. 19 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: 20 teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Romans 8:35-39—35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 Even as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we were accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:24-26—24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be abolished is death.

Ephesians 1:19-23—19 That ye may know what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might 20 which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, 21 far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Ephesians 3:20-21—20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 unto him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 5:23-33—23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, *being* himself the saviour of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives also *be* to their husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; 26 that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, 27 that he might present the church to himself a glorious *church*, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself: 29 For no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; 30 because we are members of his body. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. 32 This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church. 33 Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself: and *let* the wife *see* that she fear her husband.

Be sure to read Daniel 7:21-26 and Revelation 11:15-18; 19:1-21. I would like to comment on these scriptures, but any comment, I think, would weaken the scriptures. If in the face of these Words of God, one should doubt the perpetuity of the church, then reason would be useless. And don't forget that this discussion is made, necessary by such doubts, yea denials, and, that of late by some of our own people, who have apostatized from the faith of our fathers. They laugh and mock at this, as the higher critics do at Inspiration, etc. How could an invisible church provoke opposition and persecution? How could they persecute what they could not see, or touch, or handle? "Has reason fled to brutish beasts?" The church that started has continued through persecutions. Is that true of your "church," dear reader? Why was yours started? Did Christ start it, and has it come down through floods and flames? if not, you don't belong to the church of Christ. It is the church of him who started it, whether Henry, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Campbell, J. Smith, Mrs. Eddy, etc.

PERPETUITY IN PARABLES.

There are seven of these in the 13th of Matthew. The first, the seed of the kingdom, represents the word, falling on four classes of hearers, three of which it seems was wasted, but the fourth brought forth 30, 60, 100 fold. So the sowing was not a failure. In the next the seed represents good and bad men. Christ and the devil are the cowers. The tares came up with the wheat, but did not choke out the wheat, nor root it up, but itself was routed out in the time of harvest, at the end of the age. The tares greatly damaged, but did not destroy. The tares did not turn to wheat, nor did the wheat turn to tares. The field endured both to the end. So the gates did not prevail. Again, the kingdom of heaven was likened to a grain of mustard, the least of all seeds, yet it grew to be the greatest of all herbs. That means success. In the next it is like to leaven, which operated till the whole was leavened. In the next it is like a treasure hid in a field which a man bought. The field is the world; the man, the son of man; the treasure, the hidden people of God. Christ sold all he had and bought the field containing the hidden treasure, and the treasure was "sealed until the redemption of this purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." The devil would take this field if he could, but if Christ's word is true, then the devil and his forces are to be cast out at the last day, and he will reign with his saints on the earth forever. So that will not be a failure. So of the pearl of great price. A man who would sell all he has, and give it for one pearl, will very likely look after the pearl, and keep and defend it if he can. Christ would die for that pearl. Yea, it is hid with Christ in God. So the devil must first take God and Christ before he can get the pearl. "Kept by the power of God."

In the next we see that the gospel net that was cast into the sea, did not break, though it gathered of every kind, but was drawn to the shore, which is the end of the age, when the separation will take place. The bad fish did not turn to good fish, nor did the good turn to bad.

So in all of these trials through which the kingdom and church were to pass, defeat was threatened, but the success was final. All the organizations of so-called churches, is on the theory that there was a failure; that the kingdom or church did come to an end, and that it is the pretense for the starting of others. The King had a hard time of it in this wicked world. They got him on the cross, and in the grave, with a stone sealed, and a guard, "but he was not holden of it," (Acts 2:24) or them, but triumphed gloriously. The Word of the kingdom also has

had a hard time of it. It has been imprisoned, tortured, and burned, but here it is, "living and abiding forever." The Subjects of the kingdom have also received the same treatment 2 Corinthians 4:8-11: "[We are] troubled on every side, yet not distressed; [we are] perplexed, but not in despair; 9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; 10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. 11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

Some one said "that Baptist succession has not yet been proven, and we very humbly add that nothing vital depends on proving it."

Perhaps not. Yet the honor, power, majesty, glory and dominion of Jesus Christ depends on the *fact*. If succession is not a fact, then those who have fallen asleep in Jesus have perished. He promised to keep his church, and if he has not, either his power or veracity has failed, and, in either case, we are without hope in the world. If he did not keep his bride in exile, when all the world persecuted her, and when she counted not even life itself dear unto her, but left all and clung to him, and trusted him, if he did not keep her then, it was either because he would not, or could not—either of which would be fatal to our hopes. Yet nothing may depend on *proving* it.

Why this catering and pandering to infidels about ability to prove an acknowledged fact, I know not. It stuns reason, defies judgment, imagination refuses to conjecture. Let us leave it to the barred and bolted vault of God's hidden mysteries, hoping that in eternity it will be explained, and we will be advanced enough in knowledge to understand it.

Comparing my faith with that of Abraham, the father of the faithful, I find his faith characterized as follows: Romans 4:20-22. "He staggered not at the PROMISE of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being FULLY PERSUADED that what HE HAD PROMISED, HE WAS ABLE ALSO TO PERFORM, AND THEREFORE it was counted to him for righteousness." Now this is a parallel case. Did HE promise to keep his church? "That's *the question*." Then I stagger not at the *promise* of God through *unbelief*, but am *strong* in *faith*, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what HE had promised HE is also able to perform, and therefore walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham.

That Christ made the promise, and spoke the fiat concerning the perpetuity of his church, no one is reckless enough to deny.

If the church of Christ died in the wilderness, or anywhere else, during the persecution, or any other time, show us the place and time in history. Who or what was it that prevailed against it? Show us "where they laid it, and we will take it away." In what mortuary report can we find a record of its death? Where is the historian that has chanted its obsequies? The body of Christ dead! ! ! Where is the place of its inhumation? Tell us, that we may go and weep there.

Who saw the dismal glare of the funeral pyres?

And sung the requiem by the sullen fires?

Had it funeral rite or curfew's tolling dirge?

Produce the supposed dead body of Christ, and grant us an autopsy, and we are ready to lift up our hand toward heaven and swear by him that liveth forever and ever, that it is neither dead nor sleepeth. For he himself, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us: which hope we have an anchor to the soul both sure and

steadfast and which interreth into that within the veil; whether the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest FOREVER after the order of Melchisedec.

Could Christ take care of his church? If he could and did not, it was because he would not. Then he forsook it, and broke his promises and oath. Yea, the Father also, and also the Spirit.

Then where are we? What are we? What hope have we? But you say it can't be proved. That means, it has not been proved to you. Like doubting Thomas, do you demand the utmost demand of your natural senses? Thomas got it and surrendered. Christ's word and others should have satisfied him, and it ought to satisfy you. Don't fail to read on, for who knows but you, even you, may not yet say: "My Lord and my God:" If His word is not true, then let us all go a-fishing. But we are not through with the subject yet. See this whole subject foreshadowed in the following illustration:

Matthew 7:21-27—Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. 24 Everyone therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock (petra): 25 and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house and it fell not; for it was founded upon the rock (petra). 26 And everyone that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: 27 and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house: and it fell: and great was the fall thereof.

Would Christ be so foolish as to build his house on sand? No; He built it on the petra or firm foundation. Let us study this Church foundation.

PETRA—PETROS.

"On this Rock I will build my church." Is this Rock Peter, or Christ, or Peter's Confession, or God's Revelation of the Divinity of Christ to Peter? Or the inner Revelation and Confession? Some things plausible may be said of any one of these positions. The Catholics and some modern Baptists hold the first; Protestants and most Baptists hold the second. I have almost been convinced that the third is the true interpretation ; then I shifted to the fourth, and then fell back to the second. Plausible arguments can be made on most any position, even the first. But this is the way I now view it, and the reasons therefor. God is called a Rock in the following places: Deut. 32:4, 15, 30 , 1 Sam. 2:2; 2 Sam. 22:2, 3, 32, 47; Ps. 18:2, 31, 46; 28:1; 31:2, 3; 42:9; 61:2; 62:2, 7; 71:3; 78:35; 89:15; 94:22; 95:1; Isa. 8:14; 17:10, etc.

Petra is found in the new Scriptures sixteen times: Matthew 7:24, 25; 16:18; 27:51, 60; Mark 15:46; Luke 6:48; 8:6, 13; Romans 9:33; 1 Cor. 10:4; 1 Peter 2 :8, etc.

Thayer says the distinction between *Petra*, the massive living rock, and *Petros*, a detached fragment, is generally observed in classic Greek. *Petra* is never used of a man, and God is never called a *petros*. Christ is called *Petra* more than once, and Peter is called *petros* over 160 times. 1 Corinthians 10:4: "They drank of that spiritual Rock (*petra*) that followed them, and that rock (*Petra*) was Christ." Again I am confirmed in this by what was said of the foundation, and that was what Christ was talking about—building his church upon a firm foundation, so that because of the foundation; the winds, rains, floods, etc., of persecution, beating upon it, and furiously assailing it, should not overthrow it. The stability is not predicated of the building, but of the foundation. So the church can not be overthrown, not because Christ built it, but because he built it on Peter (?). Its stability is in the foundation—Peter, a boulder(?). In Matthew 7:24 it is *petra*, not *petros*. Peter was the personification of unstableness, as we will see. I believe Christ was the *petra*, because Isaiah 28:16 says: "Therefore thus saith the Lord God—I will lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-

stone, a sure foundation, and he that believeth shall not make haste" (See also Gen. 49:24; Ps. 118:22; Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11, 12; Romans 9:33; 10:11; 1 Cor. 3:10, 12; Eph. 2:20; 1 Peter 2:48). In all these we know that Christ, and not Peter, is the foundation stone. 1 Corinthians 3:11: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, *which* is Christ Jesus." If this does not prove it, then what need have we of proof.

This is further confirmed by a change of gender. Thou art Peter, and on this *petra*. He did not say, thou art Peter, and on that rock, but on this rock, a very different kind. Nor did he say, thou art Peter, and on Thee I will build. That would have been so plain. *Petros* is explained in John 1:42 as signifying a stone, not *petra*, but *Kephas*. He is thus called in 1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5; Galatians 2:9. Christ is the foundation, the chief corner-stone, the head of the corner, the cap-stone, etc. *Petros* and *lithos* go into the building, but *petra* never, for the building, with its foundation, is on the *petra*. The idea of building Christ, the apostles, prophets and saints to the end of time on Peter! That road certainly leads to Rome. Christ is the foundation, and *petra* supports the foundation, therefore Peter supports Christ (?). Was Christ and his church built on Peter? Did he say on that *petros* or on this *petra* ? If Peter could support Christ and his church, then he could have built the church on himself. Christ, and not Peter, is the *petra*, the foundation, the chief corner-stone, the capstone, "the all and in all."

See this movable, changeable, contemptible *Petros* in several places. In Matthew 14:28-31 he starts to walk on the water, but soon turns coward, and cries like a baby for help. In Matthew 15:15 Christ rebukes his want of understanding. In Matthew 16:22 Peter opposes his Master (pope like), and in reply Christ rebukes him, saying: "Get thou behind me, Satan, for thou art an offense to me." (Infallible pope?) In Matthew 17:4, we find him talking foolishness, on the mount of transfiguration. See him in Matthew 26:33, "following afar off." Hear him lying to a little maid; cursing and swearing. What a stable foundation (?) In verse 40, Christ begs Peter to stay awake and watch with him just one hour. Begged him three times, while in that awful agony, but the sleepy head slept on. Hear him in John 13:8, saying: "Thou shalt never wash my feet," and then, with the fallibility of a pope, changes to: "Not my feet only, but my hands and my head." See this rash pope (?) cutting off the ear of Malchus, the High Priest's servant, and the Lord had to undo his work. He raced with John to the sepulchre and got beat. John had sense enough to stop on the outside, but Peter ran into the tomb, where there was no Lord. Hear him, disheartened, saying: "I go a-fishing" —back to his old trade. When the Lord asked him: "Lovest thou me?" he cowardly dodged the question three times. In Acts 10:13-14, the voice from heaven said: "Rise, Peter, slay and eat." But he said he would not do it. In Acts 15, James beats him making a speech in solution of the vexing question. In Galatians 2:11-14, Paul rebukes him for acting the hypocrite. In his first epistle, 5:1, he calls himself not pope; not the foundation of the church, nor the *petra* supporting the foundation, but simply elder; and in his second epistle, chapter 1, he calls himself a slave. Peter was in the foundation, but so were the other apostles and prophets, and Christ only in a special sense—"the chief corner-stone."

Peter knew that the twelve were addressed through him as their representative, just as the "angels" were in the second and third chapters of Revelation; that the binding and loosing power was not in him, but in the church, as is infallibly taught in Matthew 18:17-18. We know that the great power conferred in John 20:22, 23 was on all the apostles alike. Peter knew that in the council at Jerusalem, when a great question was to be decided for all time, that he had no authority to decide it, for when James made the speech that "pleased the apostles, elders and the whole church," that the settlement came in the appointed way. He knew that he had no power to appoint a successor to Judas, or to appoint deacons in the sixth chapter of Acts. That was also done by the whole church. In Acts 8:14, the other apostles sent Peter and John into Samaria. Did Christ build the Kingdom on Peter? Is Christ the foundation of the kingdom, and Peter the foundation of the church? Now, those who try to put the church on Peter must have a kingdom-church in their minds. Catholics say the Visible, the others say the Invisible church. I wonder if the devil can see the invisible church, and what he wants to destroy it for. It never did anything.

Our Sunday-school literature of 1907 has the church built on Peter. I quote as follows "There can be no reasonable doubt that Jesus' words, fairly interpreted, mean that the "rock" on which the church is to be built is not Peter's faith, nor the Messiahship and divinity to which his confession referred, but Peter himself."

From another: "Peter" means rock, and it was as if Jesus said, "Thou art stone, and upon this stone I will build my church." The "church" includes those who believe in Jesus Christ and make the confession that Peter had just made, being taught, as he was, by the Holy Spirit.

From Western Recorder: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock"—evidently referring to Peter as spokesman for the apostles. The apostles and the prophets are the foundation. (Eph. 2:20). The new Jerusalem has the twelve apostles for its twelve foundation-stones. (Rev. 21:14).

But Christ said, Luke 6:46-48, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? 47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: 48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock."

In both places the rock is *petra*. Better put your foundation on sand than a *petros*-boulder.

But read further from the Recorder: "My church"—his elect people, and no "visible" organization. When such are spoken of, it is the church in Rome, the churches of Galatia, etc. "*The gates of hell*"—the gates of death. "There shall never be a time when some of that elect people shall not be living upon the earth."

Then Christ did not build a church. He has always had an "elect people." Did he build them into a disorganization, or an invisible organization? Then it is a sin to have a visible organization. Where is his building? Were these 12 foundation-stones, with Christ the chief corner-stone, laid on Peter? Forgive the thought.

Here is another scripture that fits this subject: Luke 14:28-32, "For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he have *wherewith* to complete it? 29 Lest haply, when he hath laid a foundation, and is notable to finish, all that behold begin to mock him, 30 saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. 31 Or what king, as he goeth to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and asketh conditions of peace."

Did Christ begin to build and was not able to finish? Did he fail to reckon the strength of the opposition to his church? Did he make peace with the adversaries, or did he surrender? Will you "mock" him with a failure to do what he started out to do?

Chapter 6—Part B

CHURCH PERPETUITY It Is Reasonable

Reason and Revelation Confirmed by Analogy and History.

Some things are of the earth earthy, and some are of heaven. The heavenly things all bear the marks of their divine origin. "Every house is built by some man," and since it is man's work, man may build at any place and

time that necessities may require. This, like all human works, bears the marks of human origin. The mordant tooth of time will devour it, will bring it to an everlasting end, because it has no reproducing power in itself, and it has not this power because man, [the builder](#), could not impart it. No house, or watch, or work of man's hand, ever contained life or seed in itself. Nor need they, since men are always, and everywhere, and when their work is needed they are generally glad to perform it. And this is the very best man can do. But God is one, and creation's day having passed, his works have come down through the journey of ages, through the self-perpetuating power which he put within them; otherwise he could not have "rested from his labors." When he made the grass, and [herbs](#), and trees after their kind; fishes, fowls, beasts after their kind, he only made one or one pair of each, and then put in them the self-propagating principle; and if you can bear it, each one of all these species on earth today is the legitimate product of its predecessor, and thus has come down by succession from the original. Mules and mongrels and hybrids don't propagate their species. The line may be long, and impossible to trace, but this we know—God finished his works of creation in the beginning, and stamped them with perpetuity, and put the law within. We see this law in operation today, and so far as history testifies, this law of self-propagation has ever operated; hence the conclusion in favor of succession is irresistible.

So of the church, if it is of God's building, and designed for perpetuity. Let us study the principle from Reason and Analogy.

THE RACE.

This is true of our own species. I know I am in the succession, not because I can trace it, but because God originated the race with this law of self-propagation—a law we see in operation now, and so far as history testifies, it has thus ever operated; hence the proof and conclusion are irresistible. You may tell me I can't trace it. You may urge variety of complexion and countenance, and customs, as unfavorable to one origin; I may concede these differences from each other, and from the original, and then point out sufficient marks of unity to establish the identity. We may possess many marks in common with other species—such as two eyes, two ears, one nose, etc., and many marks dissimilar to our original, yet who is troubled in establishing the fact, that "of one [blood](#) he has made all nations that dwell upon the face of the whole earth?"

None but God could originate a race like ours. He made the first pair, gave them self-propagating power, and commanded them to multiply and fill the earth, and we are right sure the race was not overthrown in the long wilderness journey. It was often wasted, but never exterminated. The gates of Hades did not prevail. I claim to be in the succession. Men may challenge the historical proof, and it may never be furnished, yet the proof, the right kind of proof, is abundant, and the succession is sure.

HARVESTS.

God, who made man, and who undertook to provide for him, promised that seed-time and harvests should not fail to the end of time. God gave the first harvest to begin with, and put in it this law of progenitor, and promised perpetuity. We know that our last harvest came out of its predecessor, and that may be as far as we can trace it, yet, from principles previously laid down, we assert the succession with dogmatic assurance.

Wasting and decay have continually operated, but have not prevailed, and the law of propagation has never changed. There have been many and sore famines, but harvests have continued by the only law of propagation. One harvest must furnish seed for the next. Man can't make seed. Degenerate seed may be improved, but can't be made better than the original, and man can't originate seed with life, though he is an expert at counterfeiting.

THE FAMILY.

This is a divine institution. So is the church. It has constitution and government. So has the church. The father is the head, and the mother the heart. So Christ is the head of the church, and the Holy Spirit the heart. Natural children have an instinctive disposition to love and obey the parents, and the parents are naturally disposed to

love and care for the children. So of the church. God ordained the family for a perpetual institution. So of the church. God intended for every natural man to be a member of a natural family. So of the spiritual church. God intended that all natural increase should be by the family. So of the church. All have not been, as there have been many unlawful marriages and births. Yet the general rule has prevailed, and families have in the main absorbed by adoption, and other social methods, the many who, without culpability of their own, have been born bastards, or of unholy wedlock. But the family has not been overthrown. So many spiritual children have been born out of spiritual wedlock, but as they have a spiritual disposition, they have generally turned into the fellowship of supposed "lawful assemblies." Neither the family nor the church has been overturned by these lawless proceedings. In the beginning of families there was one family in Eden. In the beginning of churches there was one church in Jerusalem. The first family increased in numbers and multiplied in families. So of the first church. The devil caused the first family to be cast out of Eden. So he did with the first church out of Jerusalem. The scattered members from Eden increased, and multiplied the families. So of the first church. Every family was called after its head, as the family of Abraham. So all the churches are called after their head—"the churches of Christ." All the families that came out of the family of Abraham, are never called the family of Abraham. So all the churches of Christ are never called the Church of Christ. The word family occurs nearly 300 times. The word ecclesia occurs over 200 times. Both are often used in the singular and plural numbers. Each is distinct and complete in itself. The singular is never extended beyond its bounds. ("The whole family in heaven and earth" is a mistranslation; it should be every family or fatherhood.) The families have succession, though it can't be traced. So of the churches. Proof is sufficient, but not historical proof. Then why doubt the continuity of churches, since they have tenfold more and better proof than the other, and that in the face of the hell-defying fiat of all authority in heaven and in earth; yea, the keys of Hades and hell were in his possession. Ah, the multitude of irregulars say it must not be. So we have this cowardly, conciliating, compromising, conforming conservation of error with truth. What is needed is more courage to testify to what truth we have.

THE JEWS.

Here is another illustration of our principle. Matthew begun with Abraham, and traced the succession up to Jesus. Is that to be laughed at? Does it make no difference whether he descended from Abraham and David? Luke begins at the other end, and traces the genealogy or succession backward. He takes a different route, but they both get there. If this succession fails then Christ fails. If he is not the seed of Abraham, and the offspring of David, and of the tribe of Judah, he is not the Christ. So an inspired man now could give more than one route in the genealogy of Christ's churches. It might take an inspired man after the wholesale destruction of historic evidence, as it did with the other. Luke was bold enough to trace the succession on up to Adam, who he said was the son of God. Let those who laugh at succession, laugh here. Read the first chapter of Matthew, and the third of Luke, and the second of Ezra, and the seventh of Nehemiah, and especially the 78th and 105th Psalm, and Acts 7th and 13th, and if you are disposed to laugh at succession, you can exercise your risibles (laughter) to satiety.

In Abraham's day, God separated the Jews for a peculiar people, and promised perpetuity, and though the nations tried to exterminate them, and often earned them into wasting bondage, the first over 400 years and the last over 2,000 years, yet they are preserved a peculiar people, and they will, in due time, receive all the promises to the letter, with good measure, heaped up, pressed down and running over. Yea, they often tried to exterminate themselves. They intermarried with Gentiles and conformed to their religions. Nevertheless God forgot not his promises nor his oath to their fathers. God did not promise to perpetuate their kingdom, but them. Not for their sakes, nor the father's sake, but that he purposed, promised, and predestinated, therefore he had mercy on them, and "led them according to the integrity of his own heart and guided them by the skillfulness of his hand" (Ps. 78:72). "When he slew them, they sought him; and they returned and enquired after God. They remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer" (Ps. 78:34, 35). While wars without and within, and intermarriages, and conformity to other religions, did not help God to fulfill his promises, yet all of these and all else did not frustrate the promise of God. He made them put away their wives, and in due time brought them to repentance. If God could feed those millions for forty years with bread from heaven, and give

them water out of the rock, and give them all the countries before them; if all this and more for national Israel, what could he not do for the spiritual bride of his son? As the Samaritans were not counted for Jews, neither are half-breeds counted today. The Jew who is not in the succession today is not a Jew, either outwardly or inwardly. Satan got into Eden through the serpent, and into the apostolic church through that serpent, Judas Iscariot, and he has gotten into all churches, and sometimes set them on each other, and the world on them also, yet the gates of hell shall not prevail against God's churches. Here is a lesson from Analogy that greatly confirms my faith. I know he is able to perform what he promised.

THE BEES.

All we know about the propagation of bees is that hives swarm out of hives. Until some one can prove that at some time, and for some time, this law was violated, then we must believe that there has been continuity, as all the knowledge we have is that way. The want of proof has nothing to do with it. There must be certain infallible disproof of the right kind. The want of historical proof cuts no figure in it. As we see the law in operation today, and all history testifies to the same, the conclusion is safe, viz., Beehives have continued to swarm out of beehives. Or, if you could prove that for a long time there was no honey, or honey but no bees, or honey and bees but no beehives, then I would be under no obligation to believe that cinch-bugs, or house-flies, or other insects, or several at or about the same time, and some at distant times, resolved themselves into bees, and hived themselves, and went to making honey, in order to keep up the honey business. That would be a great strain on my credulity, and I know that I would not invest very much in the honey. Great swelling words of flattery might be spoken concerning the new bees, so-called, that they had no stings, were more sociable, etc., yet I would be compelled to question their right or ability to make the genuine article. I would greatly prefer the original, yea, would avoid the substitute. "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

HUMAN SOCIETIES.

Lodges and societies have adopted the divine method of propagation, but their origin is not of divine authority. Prayer-meetings, Sunday schools, social and benevolent gatherings are of divine permission, but not of divine organization. They are not the appointed guardians of laws, doctrines and ordinances, and they have nothing to do with them, having no authority in the kingdom of Christ. Privilege, permission and authority are very different things. When men mete out authority, they must meet with authority, and that means by authority. Authority does not spring out of the ground, but comes down from heaven. "The baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men?" "This answers the question of authority. Any unauthorized gathering, even of good men, to execute judgment and justice, even with the best of motives, would be a mob. Such a gathering we find in the 19th of Acts, but it was unlawful, and they were told that they were amenable for their assumed authority. There was a lawful assembly to *which* they were referred for the execution of the law. Good men might organize to release an innocent prisoner, or to punish the guilty, and in either case the ends of justice might be subserved, but it would be lawlessness, and if it involved killing it would be murder, *though the* person might deserve to die. And why? Because God has authorized only "the authorities that be" to take the life of the guilty. God ordained these authorities for the punishment of transgressors. Private citizens have no authority in such cases. They may meet and take counsel, but not council, as they can't execute. Any other view runs into lawlessness and anarchy. "By what authority doest thou these things?" "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." That is where the authority resides, and to this all agree, though they differ as to what the church is.

THE HIGH PRIEST.

There was a period of about 1370 years, with about 80 High Priests mentioned in the genealogy. It may be impossible for us to trace the succession of those named, even with so much inspired history. But who will say that there was no succession because we can't trace it? Does the existence of things depend on our knowledge? Many things have been long in existence of which men know nothing. But this we know, God planned the succession of the High Priests; therefore succession is pleasing to God, and men should not laugh at God.

Melchisedec was out of the succession, and in this he typified our Great High Priest, "who sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood." This made it necessary to change the law of induction. God ordained Aaron to begin the succession, as he did John the Baptist to begin another, and Christ honored this last appointment by walking 65 miles to John, to be baptized of him. Korah, Dathan and Abiram, with 250 others, thought this succession unnecessary, "as all the people were holy and God was with them." If the people had gone to some other than John to be baptized, they would have deserved the same fate of these intruders. "This was written for our admonition, upon whom the end of the age has come." We may ridicule the idea of a "successional juice," but God is pleased with all the succession he requireth, and we know he was pleased with this priestly succession, and also with church succession. Otherwise let every church be a bastard, and not a legitimate child of any mother church. Churches legitimately multiplied, as far as we know, in the beginning. There was continuity of churches; so when this is ridiculed now, the same ridicule belongs to the other end of the line. If God had said: On this rock I will build my High Priesthood, and it shall continue, then we know he is pleased with continuity; and if it failed, the fault was his, and the obligation to continue as at first is unaltered. If I knew that millions have been wrongly baptized during the centuries, thus obscuring the way, that would not relieve me in the least from being baptized according to the law of baptism, one item of which is, that the administrator must have authority to baptize. As sure as there were qualifications and ceremonies required in the one case, so in the other. Suppose there were no restrictions to the priesthood, or church, or ordinances, what would have become of them? I plead for order, the others for anarchy. "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

THE BIBLE.

Now let us bring our illustrations nearer the subject. I have before me a Bible. I now refer to all the books as one. These scriptures of divine truth had their divine origin back yonder, when "holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. With their writings inspiration ceased, and perpetuity was stamped upon the sacred writings. "The word of the Lord endureth forever"—"abideth forever." Now, if this is indeed and in truth the very word of God, it is in the succession. It came down from the first. It may be in many respects like human books; it may be in some respects unlike the original, and unlike other copies and versions, yet the divine marks are on it. We may improve on it as it is; but not as it was. Any change from the original would be a corruption. Its preservation and purity depend on its succession. If you bring me a copy, and claim for it a subsequent yet divine origin, I will try it by this, and if it contradicts any of its statements or doctrines, I will reject it and pronounce it spurious. Many have been thus produced, and tried, and spurned. Bibles don't spring out of the ground, nor do they come up out of the wilderness of man's consciousness, unless inbreathed by the Holy Spirit, who always puts the divine marks upon it. Have men presumed to make Bibles, do you ask? Yes. Their presumption has been displayed in this as well as in church making. And what has man not presumed to do? He has presumed to be the Christ (many will come, saying, I am Christ); to be God—"yea, he has exalted himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped." These christs, and gods and bible-makers, and church builders are not only presumptuous, but impious. I want neither Bible nor church of man's devising.

TRUE RELIGION.

This is another illustration. The religion we profess is of divine origin. It includes regeneration, recreation and resurrection from a state of moral death. It produces such a change of mind, heart and life as to make all things new. Its origin is divine—the work is of God. The thousand human religions are destitute of the divine marks. They may be imitations, but they are counterfeits. They have other and subsequent origins. God is the author of his own religion, and, like all his works, it is stamped with perpetuity. It is destined to smite the Image and to cover the earth. The law of spiritual propagation is within itself. In the operation of this law, in later times, John—a man "full of the Holy Ghost from his birth, "and "sent of God"—says, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Andrew heard and followed him. He then found his brother Simon and brought him to Jesus. Philip also followed him, and when he found Nathaniel, he said, "Come and see." Then the twelve were sent out, then the seventy. Then he organized his regenerated church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. To this institution he gave the commission to disciple or convert all the nations,

immersing them, etc., and the saved through this law of propagation and multiplication "were added to the church;" and when the church was scattered and could not assemble as a church in Jerusalem, the scattered material of the first church, with the converts they made "as they went everywhere preaching the word," were congregated into other churches, and thus "churches were multiplied." But note well: all those churches came out of the first church, at Jerusalem, "which is the mother of us all." Thus we see this first church, "built by the God of heaven," contained seed within itself, and had the command to multiply, to perpetuate itself, by power inherent in its regenerated self, and it had the promise of divine cooperation to the end of time. This law of spiritual propagation we see as clearly as in any of our illustrations. We see this in the law of spiritual genesis today, and, so far as history testifies, it has ever been the law. This church, with these divine marks, is of heaven. Its builder and maker is God. I will build, says the first and the last, and who has all power in heaven and on earth. With omnipotent fiat he stamps his workmanship with perpetuity. He had the keys of death and Hades, could shut and none could open, could open and none could shut, and, as a triumphant victor, he declared that the gates that would close on all other institutions should not prevail against his regenerated church. This little stone should ultimately fill the whole earth. So precious did this purchase of his blood appear to his loving eyes, that he calls it his bride, to which he was betrothed with the indissoluble bonds of a divine oath. He calls it his body, of which spiritual connection he is the head. I don't believe he was ever robbed of his body or bereft of his bride. For, if so, the stars would forever have shut their eyes, the moon withheld her light, and the sun turned black as sackcloth of hair. They would have mourned for the bride as they did for the bridegroom who died that she might live forever. He loved his church, and gave himself for it. I am bold to say that every regenerated church of Christ on earth today is in the succession, and all that have not come down this ancestral line are bastards and not sons—are human and not divine. There are many that have not this succession, but many have, or his Word is broken.

But let us revert to the law of spiritual genesis. Romans 10:13, 15: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. But how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?"

Now, pray, who will do the sending but previous possessors? Did boards of trade, railroad corporations or turf rings ever send a man to preach the gospel ?

Was the commission given to such? The "go ye" was to a special class, to do these things preach, baptize and teach. They were given all at once, and only once, and that to an elect, called-out and trained body. It was the beginning of authority, to be transmitted; and for anyone to presume to assume such a work is "despising authority."

But, said one, if God had failed to fulfill his promise (and the whole discussion proceeds on this supposition); if he had failed to keep his church in the wilderness, and the world left for a long time without this witness; might we not fall back on chance and accidents? Suppose, says one, that from a passing vessel a few leaves of holy writ should float to a heathen island; might not the idolaters read, and understand, and believe, and obey, and be saved, and start a church?

Begone, ye miserable comforters! Ye would ask me to suck comfort out of God's failure. If God's appointed custodian, whom he solemnly declared he would be with in this work "in all the days," even to the "end of the age," and who, he declared, should testify "to the uttermost parts of the earth;" if this divine scheme had failed, not a floating vessel on all the seas would contain the sacred leaves to float; or, if so, they might spoil in floating; or, if not, the heathen inhabitants might not understand the language; or, if they did, like all natural men, they might not understand the sense; or, if they did, as usual, they might despise the meaning, for it would first convict them of sin; and so, after all, they might reject, since the carnal mind is enmity; or, if not this, they might and probably would "neglect this great salvation." After all that could be said, supposing they would search and enquire for the meaning, to the inquiry, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" the answer would likely be, "How can I except some man guide me?" Then how could he guide except he be sent? And who are to

do the sending ? If he has put offices "in the church" for its upbuilding, and propagation, and multiplication, and perfection, and if he did this "to the intent that unto principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purposes which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," then my hope is fixed on this.

If God's word, and oath, and promise, and purpose, which from eternity he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, have failed, then tell me not of accidents and chances. If the church of Christ has failed, then why start another out of heathen, self-taught, on an island, with a few leaves?

If Christ's church has not continued; if these promises have all failed, then tell me not about your island, man made—accident churches. I would not join one of them though it had a thousand bibles to teach it and a million gods to back it. If this Bible, with its triune God has failed, then have I failed, now and forever, world without hope and without end. But should a Bible, by providence, fall into the hands of a poor wayfaring man on an island, or elsewhere, and, by reading, he should see in it the Christ a Savior, and should believe on him to the saving of his soul, that same book would show him the great Savior and exemplar, walking all the way from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized of the only man sent of God to baptize. He would see where this same Lord, long after he ascended to heaven, told the first heathen converts in the house of Cornelius, to send all the way to Joppa for one Simon Peter. He would see, in another place, where this same Christ told another convert, Saul of Tarsus, to go into Damascus and inquire for a certain disciple. He would read where this same Jesus—the Almighty—walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, girt about the paps with a golden girdle, his hair white as snow, his eyes a flame of fire, his feet like fine brass burning in a furnace, his countenance like lightning—like the sun shining in his strength, in his right hand the seven stars, his voice like many thunders, saying, "I am alive forevermore, and have the keys of death and Hades," —"He that hath ears to hear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Revelation 22:16—"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches."

If Christ left his churches in charge of his earthly affairs, and if his mind underwent a change in regard to church order, or ordinances, or doctrines, of course he would have affected the change through the churches instead of individuals like Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Campbell, Fox, Joe Smith, etc.

These words were intended for all generations, and especially for the seventh, tenth, sixteenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when so many presumed to assume authority to set up churches of their own inventions. If these came from the church of God, did he authorize them to divide it into schisms? If not from the church of God, what church authority had they? Can one have church authority without church membership? If Rome was the church of God, then these were schismatic, and if not, they are only the daughters of the woman of Revelation 17:5.

This never-changing Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever, together with this word that liveth and abideth forever, requires every new convert in every place and at every time, to be baptized, which forbids his baptizing himself. Not only so, but it would command him to be baptized at the hands of one authorized to administer it. He who loves righteousness and hates iniquity, could not authorize one to administer it contrary to his faith, and creed, and practice, for that would be sin. No man can get baptism except from one who has received it, who believes it, and who is authorized to administer it; and all of such, after baptism, are taught to be added to the church, a pattern of which was given in Jerusalem. Thus, taught by this book, they would be legitimately connected to another.

I would not belong to a church that is not connected with the wilderness journey, leading through dens and caves of the earth, and through fiery and bloody baptisms of persecution. A church invented by a man and of recent origin could not hold me.

May *man* invent a church? Then any man may; and if any man may, *all* men may; and if church invention is a good work, as is supposed, then all men *ought*.

When Paul was converted he was divinely directed to be baptized by a certain disciple. He afterwards joined the church. He then proceeded to beget others through the gospel-God working with him-and these joined the church at Corinth, and other places where he labored. Felix, nor Festus, Agrippa, nor Tertullus ever made a convert to Christ.

Christianity is not sporadic, or indigenous, but exotic. It must come into a man through channels that are sanctified. It did not spring out of me, nor could I have gotten it from an unconverted companion. A believing companion may sanctify the unbelieving one, but the reverse never. We can only give as we have received. What do you think of the idea of God sending a man to beget others through the gospel while he had never been begotten himself; of sending a man, to baptize who refused to be baptized himself; of sending a man to put another into the church when he was never in himself? All of this is going on, but not of divine origin or sanction. What of a man taking starch, soda, magnesia, etc., and going out to start a corn crop? He must either begin it, or get seed out of the succession. A man can no more start genuine corn than he can start a genuine church. Reason, religion and revelation shut us up to the stream that from the great fountain flowed, and since a stream can not rise above the fountain, what must be the true status of those churches called out of Babylon—the vilest of the vile? God called them out of Rome, but he did not call on them to invent new churches.

But, you ask, was not the church of Christ constituted out of material once bad, such as publicans and harlots? Yes, the God of heaven can set up a perpetuating kingdom out of such material recreated. He did this once, but he did it only once, and if he failed in that, I am sure he would not start another; and I know he never did start but one. Only man is vain and presumptuous enough to attempt a thing that the God of heaven failed in. He also started a perpetuating race out of vivified dust. He did this once, and if this should fail, I don't think the devil would presume to try his hand after God had failed.

But all believe in succession—Catholics, Protestants and Baptists. There is not an ecclesiastical history, we venture to say, in all the world, that does not start out with the ostensible purpose of proving it. The history of the church in the first century, and in the second, third, etc., is the index of all. The only exception to this, outside of infidels, is to be found, and that only recently, among our own people; who, strange to say, have all at once become timid through habits of affiliation. These amphibious, ambidextrous, ambiguous, equivocating brethren display poor skill in trying to dodge the question.

The latest dodge is that Principles have been perpetuated—and if there were none present to make them afraid, they might perhaps, provided you didn't tell anybody, say that Baptist principles have been perpetuated.

I am afraid to ask how kept, lest through fear of being "put out of the synagogue" they answer "in archives." But if they have been kept by men, I will contend that men, keeping Baptist principles, are themselves Baptists, and if Baptists they were church members, hence baptized.

Oh yes, say they, we believe in the perpetuity of the church, but the "invisible church." Now ask them about the invisible church. When was it started? They can't say. What sort of government has it? They can't say. They suppose none. How many ordinances? None. What are its doctrines? It has none. What sort of body is it? It is no body. Where does it meet? Nowhere. Is this the church he built on a rock, and bought with his blood, and that constitutes his body, holding to nothing and meeting nowhere? Then it is invisible. Surely the gates of Hades can't prevail against nobody—nothing and nowhere, no, never. This makes the words of Christ true, but why the words?

Our fearful brethren declare that the principles of the gospel have come down, and not the church, and, in saying this, they flatly deny the word of Christ, who said, the gates of Hades should not prevail against his church.

Now we propose, in the fear of God, to take a position, to define it, and then, by divine help, to establish it.

The God of heaven set up his kingdom subsequent to Daniel's prophecy. It's nigh approach was announced by John, its presence repeatedly asserted by Christ. Men and women entered it during Christ's ministry, and the violent tried to take it by force. This is the kingdom that should "stand forever," and that should "not be left to other people." It was the Father's good pleasure to give to the little flock this kingdom, and Christ delivered it to them in solemn trust. Daniel had said that, in the end, "the saints of the Most High should take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. The kingdom and dominion and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven should be given to the saints of the Most High," and this kingdom was never to pass away. The dream "was certain and the interpretation of it sure."

This means both perpetuity and continuity. Houses, watches, and the works of men's hands, have perpetuity, but not continuity, and need not. But God's works have both—i.e., perpetuity through continuity—or he could not cease from his labors. God put perpetuating power in his works. Man can not.

This kingdom was to be spread by human effort, by making disciples and baptizing them. These baptized disciples were to cooperate in the extension of this kingdom. Hence, they were to be organized in different places into ecclesiae. These called-out and assembled people must be governed by right principles, for Christ constituted them his executors, or business-doing bodies. The bodies were local, because they were assemblies, and visible because composed of real saints. Christ organized one after which all others were to be patterned. This business-doing body he called his church, and these churches were to multiply themselves, and thus spread the kingdom. Each congregation was complete in itself, and independent of the others, and of civil government. These assemblies were and are distinguishable from all other congregations of men by their divine marks.

CHURCH MARKS.

This spiritual house was to be made up of spiritual stones, to offer up spiritual sacrifices holy and acceptable unto God. No one, however rich, or learned, or honored, could join it until he was born again—must be saved before added to the church; hence they were called saints or holy ones—having been washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and that by the Spirit of our God. All other congregations, assemblies, bodies, churches (?) admit the unsanctified, the unsaved, and hence they are unholy.

The second divine mark is the polity of fraternal equality. No one exercising authority upon, or lording it over the others.

Christ emphatically declared that this should not be so with his disciples. The world never produced such a body, with such a polity, and it never saw but one, and that it hates. Those so-called Congregationalists are counterfeits. They violate the very principle their name indicates, and thus they make void the commandment of Christ by their tradition—infant rantism (bombastic talk).

The next mark is—this body is divided into three classes; saints, bishops and deacons, with the saints first in authority, because in majority, and the officers are the servants of the saints by virtue of their office. There is only one business-doing body in this world possessing this peculiarity—the greatest, the slave of all. Equal as a member, but subordinate as an officer.

The mission of this church constitutes another divine mark. Her work is—make disciples—immerse them—teach them all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. There is only one body observing this order, and doing this work, and the work can not be done except in order. The commission of some—most all—reads: Go into all the world, and sprinkle all the babies, and teach the catechism, discipline, etc., and thus disciple them (to our leaders).

Another divine mark of this heavenly kingdom, and hence of the business-doing bodies composing it, is that, like its founder, it disdains all alliance with the kingdoms of this world. The god of this world offered all the kingdoms to Christ, but he spurned the offer. So his kingdom, while in the world, is not to be of the world, but separate from the world. Among all the aspirants to these honors, mark well the one who, in the faith, has steadfastly refused every such overture.

But the golden mark of all marks is the principle that underlies the actions, and all the actions, of all her subjects. The underlying principle is a vital one, so much so, that no action destitute of it can be acceptable to God. The principle is seen in the following: "First make the tree good, and the fruit will be good." "A corrupt tree can not bring forth good fruit, neither can a good tree bring forth evil fruit." "If ye love me, keep my commandments," "He that loveth is born of God." "Everyone that doeth righteousness is born of God." "Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God." "Whether ye eat or drink (or be baptized or eat the Lord's Supper), or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

This divine principle is implanted in regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and is necessary to acceptable obedience. All so-called outward obedience, rendered with a view to obtain forgiveness, salvation, or acceptance with God, is obedience to "another gospel which is not another." It is antipodal to the gospel, and infinitely worse than no gospel. Hence we may expect, under this mark, to find the true church through the past ages denouncing the rite of infant baptism and other acts under the false principle as "inventions of the devil" and subversive of the gospel of Christ.

There are other distinguishing marks, but these are sufficient to identify the true church whenever and wherever found.

Are these marks Scriptural? That has been answered? Are they Reasonable? Let this much suffice. Next, are they Credible and Historical? Read on and see. Have the gates of Hades prevailed against it? We will see.

WE ARE GOING ON A CHURCH HUNT.

All writers on Church History of which we have any knowledge; whether Catholic, Protestant or Baptist, have maintained the doctrine of Church perpetuity: but the new phase, bringing the new issue, in this new era, and maintained by a comparatively few of the wise and popular, is Principle perpetuity. That is to say, Baptist principles have been perpetuated, but not by men; or if by men, not Baptist men; or if by Baptist men, not necessarily church men. In this case, Baptist men holding Baptist principles, are not necessarily church members; as if Baptist principles do not, and have not, required church membership. To support this Principle theory, this Scripture is quoted: "Whoso abideth not in the *teaching* of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the *teaching*, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any man cometh to you and bring not this *teaching*, receive him not." And to this is added: [Armistage's History of Baptists] "Pure *doctrine*, as it is found uncorrupted in the word of God, is the only unbroken line of succession which can be traced in Christianity. God has never confided his truth to the personal succession of any body of men; man was not to be trusted with the custody of this very precious charge; but the King of the truth has kept the keys of the truth in his own hand."

How such a conclusion could have been suggested by such a Scripture is marvelous indeed. Read the Scripture again and see if *man* is not as prominent in the text as is *teaching*. *Man* is the actor, agent, nominative to every verb, and then it is added: "If any *man* come to you and bring not this teaching." Baptist principles were committed to Baptist *men*, to be kept by *them*. The commission converts men to principles. Make disciples (of men), baptize THEM, teach THEM to keep safely all things whatsoever I have commanded You, and lo! I am with You always, even to the end of the world. This is all we claim, but this much we demand. Here is perpetuity of principles, held by MEN in organic capacity, for in no other sense has he, or could he have been with THEM to the end of the world. Evil powers prevailed against individual saints, but the gates of Hades have

not against his church. Christ came not only to teach principles, but he also built a church. You may boast of blood-bought principles, or blood-bought men, but the word of God tells also of the blood-bought church. For the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry and the perpetuity of principles, he puts officers in the church. He is the Savior of the body—the church. The manifold wisdom of God is to be made known unto principalities and powers through the church of God, who had power to raise Christ from the dead and set him at his own right hand, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but in that which is to come, not only gave him to be head over all things to his church, which is his body—the fullness of him that filleth all in all, but he first put all things in subjection under his feet. He is the image of the invisible God, the begotten or Primal cause of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through him and unto him; and he is before all things, and, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church, that in all things he might have the preeminence. For the whole fullness of God was pleased to dwell in him.

With this almighty Christ at the head, and with all things in subjection at his feet, we are persuaded that he is able, not only to keep and present us, as individuals, holy and unblameable in his sight, but that, having loved the church, and having sanctified and cleansed it with the washing of water in the word, he is also able to present it to himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it even as the Lord the church. For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Wherefore we having received a kingdom which can not be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and Godly fear. The Kingdom which Christ, the God of heaven, set up in the days of the Caesars, was never to be destroyed, nor left to other people, but it was to stand forever. His dominion was to be an everlasting dominion, which should not pass away, and his kingdom was not to be destroyed.

In this visible, organic kingdom, the good and the bad were to grow together until the harvest, or end of the world. This is not true of the invisible, for there are none of the bad in that. This visible kingdom, like the net in the sea, is to drag until it is full, and then be brought to shore, and the shore is the end of the world, at which time the wicked are to be severed from among the just, for the kingdom in this state was to gather of every kind, hence, not the invisible. Its perpetuity is also seen in the parable of the leaven, which worked till the whole was leavened; or the mustard seed, which grew to a large tree, or like the stone which the prophet saw till it filled the whole earth.

This infidelity on church perpetuity, which seems to come of the belief, that at one time anti-Christ was greater than Christ, is becoming a serious matter. If Christ can save his principles, he can save his people, and if he can save his people, he can save his church; and this is just what is so particularly promised and prophesied. This we would believe in the absence of all history. But histories corroborate the fulfillment of the prophecies and the promises, not in historic detail, but in a fullness and generalness of statement, that confirms the faith in the promises and prophecies. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away, says the almighty Head.

A succession of principles assures the succession of Pure Religion. The regenerated beget others.

Dr. T. T. Eaton said:

"If Baptist succession be the bad thing some brethren say, then certainly it ought to be given up. There should be no more of it. The churches now in existence ought to have no succession. When a new church is organized, it should have no sort of connection with other churches, or relations to them. Let churches be organized anywhere, anyhow, by anybody. Just let the people be believers, and let them baptize each other, and start a church. This does away with Baptist succession. And if it be the bad thing that is charged, it ought to be done

away with at the earliest moment. Those who oppose Baptist succession have no logical ground to stand on in organizing a church out of material furnished by other churches and with those baptized by regularly ordained ministers. If Baptist succession be sacerdotalism and sacramentalism, then surely we ought not to think of practicing it, and thus keeping up the dreadful isms."

Have not Protestants been instrumental in saving men? Yes, but that is as far as they go, and if not for Baptist influence, all would be christened by a sacrament of damnation. They won't work under the commission as given by Matthew, but against it. Instead of immersing the saved, they aim to sprinkle the unsaved. Instead of teaching all things whatsoever Christ commanded, they would depose and exclude any preacher who did. As soon as Judson and Carey began to follow the commission they were deposed: None of them would allow any of their preachers to preach as Baptists do. I am glad they save some, but sorry they lead all their saved ones astray. They hold enough truth for salvation, but not enough for service.

Any Baptist preacher would be deposed and excluded from any Baptist church if it be known that he believes what preachers of other denominations believe. Other denominations would do the same with their preachers if it were known that they believe as Baptists believe. It was because of these doctrinal differences that they all divided from us and set up churches of their own liking. These are facts. Then on what principle can all be considered as in any sense members of one church? "Is Christ divided?" Paul said that is what the divisions at Corinth meant. Neither Christ nor his church can be divided. "Certain" may go out, but that proves that they were not of us. When this division takes place, it is not the church divided into two or more churches, but those who crept in privily and unawares, and who are in (nominally), but not of the church, .going out, make it manifest that they were not all the church. So there must be schisms to make manifest those who are approved. This is true when doctrines fatal to orthodoxy and vital to church life are involved. So those differing and divided can in no sense be thought of as all members of the church of Christ. Schisms may be composed of converted people, but a schism can't be a church, but a cutting off from the church. Among these many claimants, which is the tried and true church?

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