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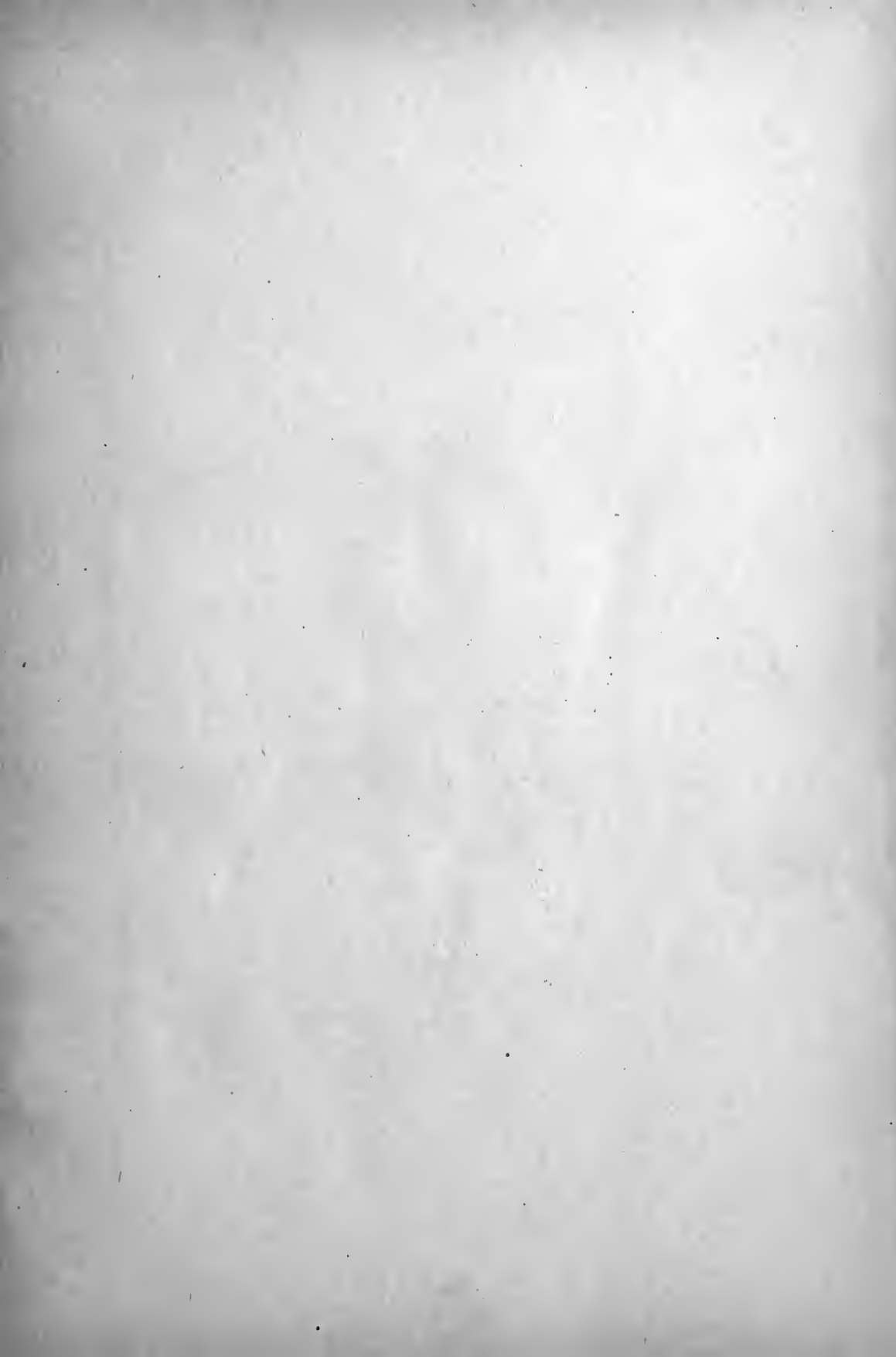


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*Your brother in the work,
W. J. Hubbard.*

TAUGHT THE WILL OF GOD,

BY

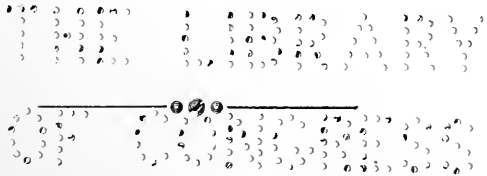
REV. WALTER JAMES HUBBARD,
Evangelist of the Shenandoah Baptist Association,

WITH AN

INTRODUCTION

BY

REV. L. R. MILBOURNE:



LURAY, VA.:

HURST & CO., Printers.

1902.

DEDICATION.

To the committee, Bros. John T. Colston, D. H. Jones, Geo. W. Cone, T. J. Berrey, Eugene Baker, and C. H. Shipman, secretary to the committee, appointed by the Shenandoah Association, in session at Luray, Va., Aug. 29th, 30th and 31st, 1900, to engage and direct the labors of the Associational Evangelist, to which work they called the writer, Oct. 27th, 1900;

To the Shenandoah Association, whose uniform kindness and courtesy have placed the writer under lasting obligations;

To the General Association of the Baptists of Virginia, and to the great Baptist brotherhood, wherever found throughout the world, who have held, at least, theoretically, to the supremacy of God's word, in all matters pertaining to the doctrines of Faith and Practice, and also embracing in these terms, Church Polity;

*To all Christians, looking forward to the uniting of all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerety, in one body, that is say, in one church, on the basis of New Testament teaching, without dogmatism on the one hand, or compulsion on the other, unitedly symphonizing and waiting on God the Holy Spirit in all matters of doubt, controversy and differences, for His conciliating influence and guidance
“into All Truth,”—*

THIS VOLUME

Is respectfully dedicated as a token of regard and esteem by

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

This work, which was begun by us on March 10th, 1901, is now ready to go to press and be submitted to the public.

It has been written under diverse (if not adverse) circumstances and surroundings, and in divers places, —at home, on the road, at depots, on the train, in private and public, etc.

There may be a crudeness about it, as the environment has not always been the best for sober and consecutive thought, and we may mention in addition to the cause given, for lack of continuity of thought and disjointedness in composition, another and greater reason, for this seemingly (if it really does occur) decrepitness, while the truths upon which we have written are as old in statement and form as the Bible itself which contains them, yet they have come to us as a

Personal

revelation. We have been, therefore, in our experience, as a pioneer in formulating our thoughts into sentences and arriving at conclusions.

The wide chasm between the Bible teaching and the

Practice

of professing Christians of to-day has startled us! For example, while the church, apparently, is satis-

fied with division, and silent as to union, the Bible proclaims it everywhere—almost upon every page!

We confess, as we submit the thoughts expressed in these pages to the public, that we do not understand how Christians can

Remain

silent as to unity, stay apart and advocate the

Thousand and More

divisions into which they have separated! The mind that can compass it, reconcile it, and apologize for it, can do greater things than ours! Ours cannot unravel it. The logic of the case to us is so plain and irrefutable, that the silence of the church is mysterious, inexplicable, if not criminal! Again, the many things taught by ministers and the churches which they represent, which have no foundation in the Scriptures, are to us, a serious

Menace

to the well-being of the cause of God's truth. For example, we are solemnly impressed with what our Savior said about false prophets and what makes one a false prophet, Matt. 8: 15-20; Is. 7: 20. It is clearly shown that any one who teaches a falsehood is to the extent of the error taught, a false prophet. If the teaching of any thing that is untrue makes one correspondingly a false prophet, then the teaching of what some are pleased to call non-essentials becomes a serious matter.

Those who teach contrary to the spirit and letter of the New Testament, put themselves under the

Ban

of our Saviour's, "Beware of false prophets," and are responsible in part for the disastrous results which have followed and follow therefrom.

We have no apology to offer in presenting the work to the public. Our

Call

to write has been as distinct as our call to preach.

Believing, then, that we have received a commission to write, we have persevered, in what we consider our God-given task, and send it forth as His message, to fulfil His will, as, we believe, He has for it a specific mission.

Mention must be made here of the kindness and assistance of Rev. L. R. Milbourne, of Charlestown, W. Va., for reading and making corrections of manuscript, and also for an introduction to the book, and for many other tokens of his friendship and brotherly concern that do not come under the head of the immediate help rendered us here.

May we not also mention, as a memorial, that scholar and Christian gentleman, the late Rev. W. R. D. Moncure, who baptized us into the fellowship of the Leetown Baptist Church, and gave a former manuscript, which we hope to revise and publish sometime in the future—the benefit of his mature, brotherly, and we may add, fatherly criticism. We cherish his memory—that of a pure, guileless, godly and saintly minister and man. May his mantle rest and abide on us who remain in the church militant!

The work now passes from the hands of the writer to the reader, to be treated as he may elect; to be the subject of his criticism or utter indifference, acceptance or rejection, revision or abandonment as a whole.

We say goodnight, but to those who shall read, a cherry good morning, a pleasant day, a happy new

year, a prosperous life, a victorious death (if not permitted to live until the Saviour comes), a triumphant entry into heaven, and a blissful eternity!

W. J. HUBBARD,

A. D. 1902.

MIDDLEWAY, W. VA.

INTRODUCTION

BY

REV. L. R. MILBOURNE.

I am personally acquainted with the author of this volume. In reading the manuscript, I was profoundly impressed with the relation of the author's character to the book. These writings show to us the spirit of the man who wrote them. His life of faith in the Son of God, as the only Saviour and Lord, is apparent on every page. The deep longing of his soul for a return, on the part of the church of God, to the spirit and ways of the first Christians, is inbreathed into the heart-searching and heart-moving words of the writer. It is an awakening book, a book that moves the mind mightily toward God, and inspires and encourages the servant of God in his work of love for Him who died for us.

Great subjects are presented to the mind of the reader, and all of them have received plain scriptural treatment by the author, and his conclusions are the result of a faithful comparison of Scripture with Scripture, where truth is unfolded to the author's mind—as he believes—by the Holy Spirit.

The writer is persuaded that the church of God needs a revival, heaven-born and heaven-sent, which will change many of our present methods in conduct-

ing our Lord's work, and restore the primitive order, the only order established by the head of the church, and the one that should be strictly and universally followed. The Bible that shows man how to come to God; the eternal Father, the affectionate giver of all good; the Christ, who alone has salvation; the Holy Spirit, the revealer of truth that saves, and His use of the regenerate who obey God in carrying forward their Lord's soul-saving work, preparatory to His second coming, are all discussed in a pleasing and profitable manner.

The churches are kindly rebuked for their worldliness and exhorted in love to direct properly their energies, so as to secure the presence and power of the Holy Spirit unto the performance of the church's greatest duty—witnessing unto Christ throughout the whole world.

I know the book will amply repay anyone who will thoughtfully peruse it, and I feel that the writing of it will add a bright star to the author's crown of eternal rejoicing.

L. R. MILBOURNE,

CHARLESTOWN, W. VA.

INTRODUCTION

BY
THE AUTHOR.

We take it for granted that the different denominations want to teach us the will of God. They must all clamor for the first place, entitling them to recognition, as the

Real

successors to the Apostles. But in truth, are they doing it?

Men are man-taught, self-taught, devil-taught or God-taught. All of the different denominations profess to be God-taught and -led. No man can lead another Godward and teach him His will who has not himself been God-taught and -led. Paul said, "For I received of the Lord that which also I have delivered unto you," 1 Cor. 2: 23; 15: 3. A man's religion—his teaching of it to others should not

Mirror

his thoughts, feelings and wishes, but God's. And, more, he should not get it second-handed, nor his preaching to or teaching others, for it all should come first-handed—from headquarters—from God, Gal. 1: 12; Rom. 2: 33 36; 1 Cor. 2: 6-16.

Two of God's great truths are

Love and Unity,

Col. 3 : 13, 14, 15, and we set them opposite to that which we have seen and heard all of our lives,—denominationalism.

Then, in selecting the title, “Taught the Will of God”, for the thoughts which follow, it may not be out of place to say, that in this day of so many teachers claiming authority, of so many diverse doctrines, it is necessary, perhaps, more than ever before, to give emphasis to *what* should be taught and *who* should teach it, to discriminate between mere human opinions and dogmas and the teaching of the Holy Spirit; for it is the writer’s belief, that not the word of God, but mere human preference, teaching and interpretation, have

Separated

the people of God.

It is a herculean task, a gigantic undertaking to read, analyze, criticise, and harmonize all the different creeds and beliefs in the world, which men have made, and require others to believe and subscribe to as a confession of faith. It cannot be done, and if it could be, it is not at all necessary that one should do it, for what right have they to impose their views upon you? Not any more than you have to impose yours upon them. The following quotation from a very recent article, is to the point here: “During her reign, Queen Mary burned heretics at the rate of about ten per month. Were these bad men? Not at all, on the contrary; they were eminent in intelligence and character. What, then, was their offence? It was their unwillingness to lie—to subscribe to opinions which they did not hold. Salvation was being knocked off, as in an auction, at the price of an opinion professed. ‘Whosoever believeth may in him have

eternal life,' but that 'believeth' means the betrothal of one' soul to Christ. Concurrence in a creed not self-wrought has the virtue of a marriage without love. A creed is simply the expansive view one gets upon the mountain-top after the long and tedious climb. That ascent has to be made by each man for himself. Every creed is labelled, 'not transferable.' "

It is estimated that there are one thousand or more religions and sects in the world—there being more than fifty religious denominations in the United States.

A person may very well, then, ask the questions implied in the title of this book, Taught—what and by whom?

If one gets away from the Bible, and the Holy Spirit—the unfold of the Bible—an interrogation point stares him in the face whichever way he may turn—over a thousand religions and sects! He is soon aware of the fact, if he is willing to listen, that he may be taught most any and everything, outside of the truth, he may desire to hear! And in addition to all these are the scientist, evolutionist, agnostic, infidel, etc., until one, if he has a mind to do it, may always be hearing or telling some new and strange thing, Acts 17:21. What a labyrinth of confusion, a babel of babbling, a maze of belief, or rather unbelief, into which all these have led and do lead!

But if denominationalism were right, it is logical and proper to multiply denominations *ad infinitum*. No one who advocates them can deny it, and must, to be consistent, welcome every

New

one to the already large number of the sisterhood of humanly organized, distinct and independent de-

nominations! But to the Bible Christian there is but one body, one faith, one Lord, one baptism, Ephe. 4 : 4, 5, 6; see the first 17 verses of the chapter, and 1 Cor. 8 : 6.

If we did not hold to the oneness of the church as we do we could not

Call

for the unity of all believers; holding to it as we do we cannot consistently do otherwise than to call to them to unite! Not on any platform or system of doctrines that man may lay down, but meet without restriction, dictation or human interference whatever, seeking the unity of the Spirit, accepting His guidance and His exposition of God's truth.

Herein all may and should unite. This is not adding to God's word by requiring what God has not commanded, nor demanding more than He has commanded. The fact is, this is the very thing we are trying to avoid—human commands, compulsions, substituted for the Lord's commandments. Herein is proposed freedom of thought and voluntariness of action. It is the freedom of Christ, the Truth, the Emancipator of man from spiritual ignorance and Satanic bondage, and man-made and -taught theology, John 8 : 32; Luke 4 : 18; Gal. 5 : 1. It is a direct and specific

Attempt

at the fulfilling of the Scriptures, the whole New Testament Scriptures and the prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures (Gen. 12 : 3; etc.)—"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," Rom. 15 : 6; Phil. 4 : 2; Cor. 1 : 10. "Let this mind" (referring to the preceding verse) "be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," Phil. 2 : 5; John 10 : 16; 17 : 11, 21, 22, 23.

Again, the Saviour says, "a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." By this (love for one another) "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another," John 13: 34, 35. This is the mind that was in Christ Jesus, and should be in His followers. Another verse; "only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind,

Striving Together

for the faith of the gospel, Phil. 1: 27. Finally, "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind," Phil. 2: 2. And so a multitude of similar Scriptures, but we get the following from those already given, unity of heart, unity of confession, unity of purpose, unity of effort, unity of faith, unity of believers, unity of love and love as brethren—Christ's confirmation, when we meet the requirements of His gospel, must follow His affirmation, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Herein is the consummation of unity, and upon the basis of it, founded upon God's word, "noted in the Scripture of truth," Dan. 10: 21, we say to every believer of it, in the words of Jehu to Jehonadab, "Is thine heart right as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, it is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand; and he took him up to him into the chariot. And he said, come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord. So they made him ride in his chariot," 2 Kings, 10: 15, 16. Here are the ground and bond of union—the

Right Heart and Extended Hand,

union in word, union in heart, union in action. We believe in it, advocate it, commend it, and request every man whose heart is right with our heart to come with us and let us join hands, and unitedly express our belief, and praise and glorify God together.

The sweet cadences are borne to us from afar, falling from the lips of the tender and beloved John, in his second and third epistles, expressing deep interest in his spiritual children and great joy at their upright and circumspect walk according to the gospel. "I rejoiced greatly that I found all of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father," 2 John, 1:4. And, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth," 3 John, 4. It should make our hearts, to-day, bound with unmixed and undisguised joy to see God's people united—walking in the truth "as we have received a commandment from the Father."

We are bold to assert that there is not a

Minister

in all christendom, of any denomination, it matters not how learned and well-qualified he may be, who can justify, to say nothing of proving from the Scriptures, the divine right of separate denominations to exist. They do not exist in the word of God and are, as we have seen from its plain and simple teaching, foreign to the spirit and letter of it.

We know that men give their reasons for the existence of denominationalism, and excuse themselves for standing aloof from others, and, perhaps, try to shift the responsibility, as did Adam upon Eve for eating the forbidden fruit, upon the conduct of others, of being and remaining apart from their fellow-Christians, while it stands out a naked, undeniable, inde-

structible, and warning fact, staring us in the face, it matters not which way we go, that there is not one iota of Scripture upon which they are

Standing!

Men cannot side-track the truth and ignore the facts, by saying, O, yes, if we will come over to you, etc. We cannot flippantly dispose of an invitation God-given and obligatory, and arbitrarily act in regard to it and not be blameworthy, for we are faced by a sad condition—a divided church, out of which grows a crying need, a living

Issue,

which will not down, that demands attention, and cries for immediate explanation, solution, and vindication at our hands. We must confront it, and dispose of it as men—Christian men and Christian women. If we, any one of us, are standing in God's way of uniting His people it is our duty to, and we must, get out of His way, for it is His purpose expressed in prayer (John, chap. 17) to perfect them in unity of the faith of the gospel.

We ask the question, "who is on the Lord's side"? Ex. 32: 26. The circumstances are significant, for which see the entire chapter. God's people should

Stand

together!

How urgent, then, should be our entreaty, as we love the truth as revealed to us by God in the Holy Scriptures, to every man and woman, boy and girl, of "every tribe and nation" on this "terrestrial ball," who make a profession of faith in Christ Jesus as their Saviour and Lord, to clasp the hand of his brother-man, of the "common faith," Titus, 1: 4, and partakers and heirs of the "common salvation," Jude,

3, in one great united brotherhood, 1 Pet. 2: 17, of all the believers throughout universal Christendom! Then we will have the one, true, universal catholic church, but not until then.

Who will set himself to the task to help bring about this union—the establishment of the one church of Jesus Christ on the earth?

Paul said, "I am set for the defence of the gospel," Phil. 1: 17, and he rebuked Peter for his blameworthy conduct at Antioch, Gal. 2: 11-16, and Jude, the third verse, exhorts us to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

This book is a

Protest

against innovations and an *invitation* to return to first principles, to Bible teaching and apostolic simplicity and practice. Will you heed it? Will you ask yourself the question, did I join the church of which I am a member because my parents belonged to it, or because it was apostolic in doctrines and practice? Why am I a member of it? From conviction of the truthfulness and fidelity of its teaching; or from pure sentiment and natural conditions—brought up this way, etc.—which? Which one of these contains the motive which should prompt us in church-joining—the one containing the natural or super-natural cause—the human reasons or the divine ones—man's or God's way in seeking church-membership—fellowship among the people of God? In conversation at the dinner-table three or four years ago, with a minister of the Holiness movement, who has since departed this life, the writer said, the mistake that you and your people make is, in trying to restore Primitive Methodism (the doctrine of en-

ture sanctification as taught by Wesley and in the Methodist standards), instead of

Primitive Christianity.

While their undertaking may be a laudable one, and Methodism may have departed from its own recognized standards of theology, yet the proposed reformation does not date far enough into the past ages, and if its advocates should succeed in their efforts, the church would still need a reformation, and so with the reformations under Luther and the other reformers. They started out well—radical reformers—but they were either diverted from their course—faltered in their purpose, or were unable to free themselves from the shackles of Rome, which had bound the Christian world largely for the past eight or ten or more centuries. It required more than human, yea, super-human efforts to free themselves entirely from her influence and rid themselves of all of her erroneous doctrines. This they never fully did, nor has the Christian world done it since the days of the reformers. It remains to be done.

There arose almost simultaneously with the reformation denominationalism—the wedge severing Christian communities and engendering strife—the mother of petty jealousies and malignant and untold hurtful influences. One member suffered and the whole body suffered with it, 1 Cor. 12 : 26.

What might have been the return to the germ idea of

Christian Communion and Union

as seen in the life of Jesus, John 13 : 29, and the first converts under apostolic preaching, Acts 2 : 44, was thus warped from the course it would have taken, the divinely constructed channel through which

this current of new life would have naturally flowed, and turned it into various and rival denominations, thwarting the authority of the Bible from which they professed to get their doctrine and inspiration.

No one can read the history of the reformation and the lives of the reformers, without being impressed and convinced that it was not the Bible that divided them, but views and opinions held outside of the Bible, and the simple and natural interpretation of it—forced interpretations to suit human ideas, instead of human ideas conforming to it.

It was influences other than the Bible that led them apart and has kept them apart until this day. Let no one dare impeach the Bible and charge it with their separation. They parted asunder without its consent, and their coming together does not require the giving up of any Bible doctrine or principle, but the relinquishing of human teachings that have been incorporated as an essential part of their several religious organizations.

Our Saviour says, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," Matt. 15: 9. And, again, "For one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," Matt. 23: 8.

The recognition of the supreme authority of Christ and His word, and the eliminating of all that He and His word have not commanded are the only things necessary to a *world-wide and embracing union*.

It is unreasonable to ask for it and expect it on other than these principles. On what other grounds than these could one propose union and expect his proposal to be heeded? Shall he formulate a

Religion

of his own and ask people to believe it, subscribe to it, and teach it to others? This is what has been done.

The first question to ask such an one is, "By what authority doest thou these things?" Mark 21: 28. If he cannot show his credentials from God as did Jesus, to whom this question was addressed, he and his doctrine must be turned away from—rejected and condemned.

By not heeding the divine warning, "Beware of false prophets," etc., Matt. 7: 15, many strange and false doctrines have crept into the church and the world, and still influence and sway to-day vast multitudes of adherents, and many continue to throng the broad way of error that leads to death and everlasting destruction.

Shall we propose a halt and endeavor to suggest something practical?

May we not say, with almost absolute certainty, that Bible unity will not be effected by belligerent brethren. It is in the realm of the spiritual and not intellectual that the victory of union is to be won. It is not a physical or mental victory that is to be gained, but wholly spiritual. Not that reason is not on the side of union, for it is. It is the hand-maid of the Scriptures here as elsewhere, but the natural man does not listen to reason so must have his carnal mind overcome by grace, Rom. 8: 7.

Mohammedanism may win its victories by the sword and count its adherents by the millions through sheer physical force, but it is as true of Christianity now as when established by its founder, "For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," Matt. 26: 52. In fighting the battle for the unity of

believers, there comes to us through the centuries from that Nazarene, without army, band, pomp, or outward show whatever, who rebuked the two disciples who wanted to call down fire from heaven, and consume a certain city which would not receive Him, Luke 9: 54. "Put up thy sword into the sheath," John 18: 11. Perhaps these over-zealous brethren of a pugilistic nature, may have done more harm by far, by (it may be, however, they were well meant) mis-directed blows than good.

Men are slow to accede that others are better informed than themselves, or have a superior intellect to themselves. To yield to their opponents' arguments and array of facts, might be making concession of inferiority of mind, learning or culture, and be humiliating to themselves in the eyes of the world and a lowering of themselves in the estimation of their friends and brethren. Whoever heard of a controversailist convincing and converting his opponent to his views? If any one ever acknowledged in religious debate, the logic and truth of the disputant whom he was opposing, we have failed to see or hear of it.

And, then, again, if one should gain his opponent by the strength of his argument and force of his logic he might be puffed up by pride, fail to give God the glory and "fall into the condemnation of the devil," 1 Tim. 3: 6. Here, as elsewhere in the kingdom of God, the victory is to be won, "not by might" (intellectual, physical-brute force, human eloquence or otherwise) "nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," Zech 4: 6; see Matt. 12: 19; Luke 17: 20, 21.

The victory is inwrought in the heart of man by the Holy Spirit. It is an inward conflict, fought in

the inner-life of man, where the Holy Spirit overcomes, conquers, and slays selfishness in the individual and self is annihilated in the man and the new man lives to the honor, praise, and glory of God's name.

Happy is he who has gone through these struggles and seen self dethroned and destroyed, and God raised up and reigning in his heart in its stead, and, then, he can cease saying, "Not so Lord; for I have never eaten anything common or unclean," Acts 10: 14, and go where the Lord sends him, and do what God commands of him. What a

Glorious Victory

shall have been won and a great stride taken, when self shall have been expelled from the man's heart and ejected from his life, until it is no longer a detriment to his loving his neighbor as he loves himself, and God enthroned instead, toward the consummation and perfection of His plans in the unification of His children on the whole earth, in view of their ultimate oneness with their Lord and Master in glory!

O my soul, welcome anything from His hand that shall hasten the union of His people, the confirmation of the gospel, and His own speedy coming to earth again in glory and exaltation! Jesus did not argue, but prayed for the unity of believers, and asserted it as an effect following in the wake of His death. "And I, and if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," John 12: 32. The religion of Jesus is not a state religion, and gets not its power from the state but another world, John 18: 36.

Let it be understood, then, that concessions are not to be made only as men may make them on their own free will. Voluntariness is the keynote to Scrip-

tural union; compulsion, over-persuasion, hereditary tendencies and inclinations therefrom, family ties, domestic, social, business and political relations, as influences shaping one's course in the matter of unity, have no place, and are to be deprecated, avoided, and by the grace of God wholly discarded as unworthy motives in so holy an alliance. The individual, acting upon his own convictions, independent of the believing, feelings, and preferences of others, is to act for himself, as if he were the only conscious, intelligent, sentient, and responsible being in the world! Man must act for himself or be culpable in the Lord's sight. He cannot believe and be religious and conform to a creed which he has not made his own and escape blame and accountability at the judgment seat of Christ. A man cannot serve God by

Proxy

and be exonerated from his individual interest in what he believes and why he believes it. He must know what he believes as well as in whom he believes. Both are alike—vitally important in the economy of God.

O for independent, spontaneous action of all Christians in the kingdom of God, of whatever name, wherever found! Just this—and this alone—will bring union! When believers start to thinking and acting for themselves and refusing to allow others to think and act for them, there will be a stir throughout Zion so general and mighty than an Exodus will be instituted and heralded abroad, and God's people will march out of Church-bondage, with a majestic tread that will shake and jar until it—denominationalism—shall tottle and fall into a

United Christianity

that will swell and vibrate with jubilant hallelujahs that shall fill the earth with praise, startle the devil, confound infidelity, and enthrone Christ among men.

Ah, but we hear you say, all this will destroy denominationalism! Yes, it will up-root every plant, Matt. 15 : 13, demolish every wall, remove every partition, level every distinction that is human and God's work alone will remain, as wrought through men according to His instructions and leadings—the divine pattern. There are manifest signs of this time coming, men are throwing off the yoke of human bondage and turning toward God and yearning for the day when, not what Doctors, Bishops, Cardinals, Popes, Creeds, Confessions of Faith, Disciplines, Prayer-books, etc., say, but what does God say in His word, and how does regenerate man respond to it?

The reaction has begun and the end is not yet—not until every vestige of these which have usurped authority are destroyed.

We plead for the destruction of anything, name or what not, that separates Christians and makes them love one another less!

Ah, we do see the glorious day dawning, and the
Age Appearing

of the reign of the Christ! The Holy Spirit is preparing for it, and hearts inbreathed by His presence and partakers of His nature desire and long for it.

It must come; it is prophesied; it is the logical sequence of the gospel teaching, Ephes. 1 : 10; it is the

Must

of the gospel, 1 Cor. 15 : 25; it cannot be otherwise but that it come! It is coming—hail blessed hour, hail united Christendom, all hail the Christ and the children whom God has given Him! Heb. 2 : 13, Amen.

THE CHURCH.

For a number of years past it had been evident to our mind that the church of which we were a member was not a

New Testament Church.

The multiplicity of churches around us made it difficult for us to decide which (if any) was a New Testament Church. The agitation of our mind was followed by an investigation of what constitutes a New Testament Church—a living church as planted by our blessed Redeemer. The conclusion was—if no such church exists, then build it out of Bible material.

Dominated by this conviction we began to look around us for the church or churches corresponding to Bible teaching. Not finding any of the churches perfectly satisfactory, we remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of which we were a member and minister, at the beginning of the investigation.

In the winter of 1898 (12th of Feb.) it was distinctly impressed upon us to establish the church.

This occurred in Middleway, while still a member and minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, when holding the yearly revival.

God graciously blessed and wonderfully led us and so mightily were we moved that we ventured to

suggest to one of the members * of the Methodist church here, that we establish

A Church

according to the divine pattern. To our surprise, he seemed to be utterly unprepared for our proposition—it never having dawned upon him that the Methodist Church was not the New Testament Church. He at once remonstrated with us—wanting to know how we would support our family if we engaged in such an undertaking.

He is not the only one who looked upon the project as foolhardiness; even ministers wanted to know where the rations were to come from for wife and children. Their question shows a disregard for the very truths they are professing and proclaiming.

One of these ministers preached in our hearing on, “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein: for He has formed it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods,” Ps. 24 : 1, 2.

Such faith as they manifested is so far removed from the Bible—who can wonder at so-called Christians and churches having lost their prestige!

God withdrew and withheld our sympathies from them until we realized that we had no place among them—that we were not one of them, the chasm between us in belief and practice was widening and

*Let me say in regard to this brother, that he has been among my best friends since my coming here. In many ways he has befriended me. When I had typhoid fever no one gave me more attention or exerted himself more constantly and willingly in my behalf than did he. And, then, when I have owed him money from time to time he has never hurried me for it—in fact, never as much as asked me for it, always waiting my convenience in the matter. It gives me pleasure here thus to publicly acknowledge his friendship and uniform courtesy.

deepening until in life and doctrine we were totally separated from them.

What was truly effected Spiritually was formally accomplished by our withdrawal from among them on the 28th of May, 1899. My body was taken whither my heart had gone—to the teaching of the New Testament.

Thus we were left without any church affiliation.

Prior to our withdrawal from the Methodist Church, we had written a large amount of manuscript, expressive of our convictions on Bible doctrines—embracing primitive baptism, how performed, subjects of baptism, church polity, etc., which we submitted to the late Rev. W. R. D. Moncure, who, after careful perusal, declared we were a Baptist in every thing but name.

It only remained for us to publicly put on Christ in baptism, which we did, being buried with Christ in baptism, by brother Moncure, after having been received by the Leetown Baptist Church for the same, on the 6th of August, 1899.

Of one thing we were convinced, that a Baptist Church, in theory, is a New Testament Church. And certainly what is right in theory, if not right in practice, may become so, but not *vice versa*.

This makes withdrawal from a New Testament Church in reality a moral impossibility. Such a thing could only be a formality.

Baptists are not made or moulded in creeds of man's invention or fettered by human traditions. They stand alone, like some solitary mountain peak, lifting itself far above the surrounding mountains, upon the teaching of the revealed will and word of God. If they are anything—they are the product of

the Scriptures, and if not that, a miserable counterfeit and failure, and of all men the most hypocritical or self-deluded.

And the church composed of men of God's own choosing must be, inevitably, men of pure hearts and holy lives. Such is a church of regenerate believers.

Of no other church do we read in the Holy Scriptures. This is the divine ideal of a New Testament Church—composed of baptized believers. No

Other Church

has Scriptural warrant or authority. They, who presume to violate this principal, are doomed to ruin and destruction. "Of such," it cannot be said, "is the kingdom of heaven," Matt. 19 : 14.

The law of obedience demands a complete surrender. "If any man," says the Saviour, "will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me," Matt. 16 : 24. They, if they refuse to be led, are none of His.

"Follow Me"

is the gospel in miniature. "My sheep," Jesus tells us, hear His voice, and the voice of a stranger they will not follow, John 10 : 5, 14. They recognize Him and are recognized by Him. He is the head of which they are the body—His bride, the Church.

This is the perfection of oneness for which the Saviour prayed, which He declared, and for which He died, John, 17 : 11; 10 : 16; 11 : 52.

No other conception of Christian unity is worthy of God or in accord with His word. He who became brother to the race would have

All Men

to be brothers. This can be accomplished alone by adoption into the one family in heaven and on earth,

united, like the seamless garment of Christ, "woven from the top throughout" (John 19 : 23); the unity beginning in heaven and completed on earth, is a fulfillment of the Lord's petition, "thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," Matt. 6 : 10.

The denominationalism of to day is utterly at variance with this unity.

The unity of heart and soul which God requires is death to denominationalism. It cannot survive in the presence of this union.

The Spiritual oneness of God's people settles forever the question of organic union. When they are one, unitedly so, as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one, there will be no cause for controversy and division. That we may be so is clearly proven from the fact that we are made of one blood—as distinctly one as the persons of divinity, Ephes. 4 : 3-6; Acts 17 : 26. We are distinctly one in Christian experience, Gal. 3 : 28. There is no material difference between our experience as an American and that of a Chinaman. "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek : for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him." "For whosoever" (it matters not what race, tribe, nationality, or color, or what not) "shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," Rom. 10 : 12, 13. "God is no respecter of persons," Acts 10 : 34.

The regenerate are born of God—of incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth forever, John 1 : 13; 1 Pet. 1 : 23, and are partakers of the divine nature 2 Pet. 1 : 4.

There are moral affinity and Spiritual consanguinity existing between and inherent in them. They are

gathered together in one, Ephes. 1:10. They sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God, Matt. 8:11. They are one new man in Christ Jesus, Ephes. 2:25. They are a Christian community, Acts 2:44. They are distinct and separate from the world, Acts 4:23-35; 6:1, 5; 15:4; 1 Thess. 4:11, 12; 1 Cor. 7:10-17; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Gal. 2:1, 4, 11, 12. (The Catacombs at Rome).

Theirs is the land of Goshen, Gen. 47:6. They operate from within outward, Acts 4:23-31; Acts 13:1-4; Gal. 2:8, 9; Acts 15:14-17. Jehoshaphat is not to join himself to Ahab, 2 Chron. 19:2. God's people are to fight His battles alone.

Nothing but evil resulted from the affinities formed by Solomon and Jehoshaphat.

The alliance of the churches with the world has brought disaster and defeat.

Nothing but speedy and irrevocable separation from it can save them.

The temptation held out by heathen Rome allured it within its grasp, and prepared the way for Papal Rome! Montanism was a protest against the

Ungodly Wedlock

of Christ's Church with the world! So great was the calamity that then overtook it that it has not recovered from it from that day to this! This was the beginning of the dissolution of the priesthood of believers, 1 Pet. 2:9, established by Christ and adhered to by His apostles, and the entrance upon a system of hierarchical ecclesiasticism—Romanism.

Romanism and the Bible.

The return of the people of God to the simplicity of the gospel of Christ is the salvation of the church and the hope of the world.

Uncompromising devotion to Bible teaching and principles will save them from, what it has shown itself to be, an almost universal apostacy. Its baneful effects have been felt in every branch of Protestantism. No reformation has ever fully recovered the people from it. They have borrowed from and engrafted in their organizations many of its pernicious doctrines. Those who have come forth, are still wrapt in its shroud, shackled by its traditions, and bound head and foot in its formalism. The grave from which they came is still open, and the coffin in which they were buried intact, awaiting the interment of their errors. These should have remained in the tomb, when they came forth to new hopes and a better resurrection.

The death-knell of Romanism is entire separation from her. So long as some of the great bodies of Protestants must rely solely upon her for the support and vindication of their favorite theories, she may well feel herself securely established.

Infant Baptism and Affusion,

No standard scholar, of recognized authority in the world of letters, has undertaken to show, unaided by tradition, that *Infant Baptism* is taught in the Holy Scriptures, or that *sprinkling and pouring* were ever divinely sanctioned as forms of baptism. They must fall back upon her for their authority. This authority she consistently claims, as she has recourse to the dogma of infallibility as a subterfuge for her alterations and additions; and they (Protestants) inconsistently accept, and follow what she authorizes. Professedly the one acknowledges the church as supreme authority in all that pertains to discipline, life, and doctrine, while the other adheres to the Bible, with-

out note or comment, as the guide to faith and practice.

The Church arrayed against the Bible.

Here we have the church, so-called, arrayed on the one side, and the Bible on the other, and many great bodies of Protestants giving credence to the church in preference to the Bible. It is evident to all, that if there were no historical church, outside of the Scriptures, that there would be no Infant Baptism, or sprinkling and pouring as modes of baptism. This plainly shows to all the origin and authority for Infant Baptism or sprinkling and pouring as modes of baptism.

It also plainly shows the groundlessness of those, who take the Bible as their rule of conduct, in claiming to show precepts and examples in the Scriptures, justifying their practices.

To be manly is to reject Rome in her entirety and launch out upon the Holy Scriptures. They and Rome are not both equally entitled to supremacy!

There are many who loudly denounce Rome, notwithstanding they make her share with the Scriptures the honor of having originated more than one of the doctrines which they practice. They can point to no other source than her for the command and example.

Nowhere else do they find the command to baptize children or pour water upon adults. Both are of her creations and the larger portion of Protestants have seized upon them as a common heritage. "Honor to whom honor" is due (Rom. 13 : 7). Do not

Charge

these doctrines to the Bible.

To Rome they are due—and let her have the credit of them. Do not treat her with injustice by giving

to the Bible that which does not rightly belong to it, but truly does belong to her! Show no partiality in treatment of friend or foe. Both are entitled to fair dealing and thorough integrity!

Many errors and much confusion may be avoided here, by

A Clear Distinction

between the church of Rome and the word of God.

We say the church of Rome (instead of the Greek church, which is as old and, perhaps, older) because our conflict is mainly with her.

She is in our midst and our contention is more especially with her. Her

Great Strength

is in her unity; the weakness of Protestantism is in its division. She moves *en masse*—in a solid phalanx; Protestantism, in divisions. One is a mighty army; the other companies. The one operates from a common centre; the other from everywhere. The efforts of the one are systematic; of the other, spasmodic.

The work of the reformer of to-day is to

Unite

all the people of God. To bring them together in a common brotherhood. To proclaim their equality and commonality. To show how to reconcile differences, to overcome difficulties, and remove obstacles. To announce the almost practically forgotten doctrine of being led by the Spirit, Rom. 8 : 14. To show that the Spirit presides over the Church as in the days of yore. To show that the Church is a congregation of Spirit-born, Spirit-taught, Spirit-filled, and Spirit-led men. To show that the infallibility of the church is in Him who presides over it—in God, and in its members only as He imparts it to them, Acts 15 : 28.

In this sense God's people are infallible—to the extent of His dwelling in them and speaking through them, Is. 54 : 13; Jer. 31 : 34; Mic. 4 : 2; Matt. 10 : 20; John 6 : 45; 16 : 13; Heb. 8 : 10; 10 : 16.

It is the voice of God in them. They speak His thoughts and do His will. This is the only

Bible Orthodoxy.

The subscribing to a human creed is not worth the paper upon which it is written, it matters not the importance its adherents may attach to it.

The formulating of human creeds has often resulted in the exaltation of one doctrine to the detriment of others.

This is the source of untold evil to the cause of religion. These human productions have too frequently been the brazen serpent which men have worshipped—to the ignoring of God as revealed in the Scriptures. The destruction of them, as the breaking of the brazen serpent, will be a blessing to mankind. The perpetuation of them is the canonization of men.

The worshipping of relics, the erecting of monuments, the memorialization of the dead, the sanctity of an officiating priesthood, taken from the living, yet as distinct from the laity, are foreign to the word of God,—and savors strongly of the “natural man,” (1 Cor. 2 : 14)—of “total depravity.”

It would have been better for us had all these things been buried in some unknown spot, and like Moses' grave, remained unknown to us unto this very day.

Let us solemnly commit to the dust and oblivion; these perishable documents of man's fabrication, and cling to the cross of Him, who hath given us a king-

dom that can never be shaken, Heb. 12 : 28.

The True Church.

The church or churches born out of wedlock—of unholy alliances of man's creation—are excluded from the Father's presence, like (as was) Abraham's son by Hagar, Gal. 4 : 30.

It is the bastard son that mocks and laughs at the birthday of the true one. Gen. 21 : 9.

He persecutes and tries to destroy the elect one, as Herod did, by destroying the babes of Bethlehem, Matt. 2 : 16.

The preservation of the holy seed is the providential working of God in the midst of the whole earth, Is. 6 : 13. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," Zech. 4 : 6.

It is God that saves them from extinction. His providence is no less a miracle than His grace—and grace is more strikingly so than creation, Rom. 8 : 32. "T'was mighty to create, but mightier to redeem." In the ethics of religion, in the economy of grace, the spiritual is given priority and superiority over the bodily—the latter the compliment and concomitant of the former, Deut. 28 : 1-14; Ps. 37 : 25; Matt. 5 : 5; 6 : 24-34; Luke 18 : 29, 30, and many, many more similar Scriptures, but these are conclusive, and suffice our purpose.

A Church, then, of the Bible, are God's *called*—

The Ekklesia—Called Out—

God's come-outers.

They are in the world but not of the world, John 17 : 14, 15; 18 : 36, a distinct, peculiar, blood-bought and, -washed people,—the favorites of God on earth, 1 John 3 : 1, and His especial treasure in heaven, Ps. 4 : 3. They are before His throne and serve Him day

and night, Rev. 7 : 15, when transported to the realms of glory. They suffer no more, nor toil any more, but are led out by the rivers of waters and into green pastures, Rev. 7 : 16, 17. Such in brief is the church of time and eternity—the little stone cut out without hands (Dan. 2 : 34), filling the earth and its heights reaching the heavens. Through it—the light of the world and the salt of the earth (Matt. 5 : 13, 14), the knowledge of the Lord is to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, Num. 14 : 21; Is. 11 : 9; Hab. 2 : 14. This is the child of God's own begetting, against whom, it is said, death is unavailing, Matt. 16 : 18.

It is out of such material that God builds His Church—and it is imperishable and indestructible.

This is the "Rock"—the foundation of God's churchly kingdom—the redeemed of earth, shaped and moulded in His own image, 1 Pet. 2 : 5, bearing the superscription of His own imperial and unapproachable character.

Of all such it may be said, "Thou art Peter, and upon

This Rock

"I will build my church," Matt. 16 : 18. It is out of the redeemed and upon the saved, the Saviour's Church is constructed.

It is divinely built out of human beings—character—in them inwrought by God the Holy Spirit. They are fashioned by God's hand and become with His Son, the ground and pillar of the truth, 1 Cor. 3 : 11; Ephes. 2 : 20; 1 Tim. 3 : 15; 1 Pet. 2 : 6; Rev. 3 : 12. God and they, are associated together. The two—the Lord Jesus and themselves, are identified—their work and interest and lives brought together, Matt. 25 : 40; Acts 9 : 4, 5; 1 Cor. 3 : 9; 2 Cor. 6 : 1. As they

stand with Christ as the "*Rock*" upon which He is building, He superintends, superinduces, and owns the building, Ephes. 2 : 10; 1 Cor. 3 : 9; Heb. 3 : 3-6.

Any other church than this is an alien and stranger to the commonwealth of Israel, Ephes. 2 : 12.

Of this church it may be said, however, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," Ephes. 2 : 19. In fact, on earth, it is the household of God. It is the Saviour's prayer, in part, answered, Matt. 6 : 10.

There is yet a larger and fuller meaning attached to the prayer. To the church it may be said, "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed", Josh. 13 : 1. The kingdoms of the world are the Lord's and His Christ's, and are to be shared by His people, Matt. 16 : 19; 19 : 28; John 13 : 8, 9; 20 : 23; Rom. 8 : 17; 1 Cor. 3 : 21-23; 6 : 3; 15 : 24, 25; 2 Tim. 2 : 12; Rev. 2 : 26, 27; 5 : 9, 10; 11 : 15; 12 : 10; 14 : 1-8; 18 : 20; 19th Ch.; 20th 21st, and 22nd chapters, etc.

The wealth of the world is at their disposal, Ps. 24 : 1, 2; 97 : 1; Rev. 21 : 7; Is. 60th and 66th chapters; Rev. 22 : 24, 25, 26; Mic. 4 : 1-4.

Creation is interwoven with redemption and redemption existed in the mind of God before creation, John 1 : 1-3; and 1 : 10, 14; Matt. 13 : 35; Rom. 16 : 25; 1 Cor. 2 : 7; Gal. 4 : 4; Col. 1 : 6; 2 Tim. 1 : 9; 1 Pet. 1 : 20; Ephes. 1 : 4; Rev. 13 : 8.

That creation should be the servant of redemption is most natural. It is not

Conceivable

that man was made for the world but the world for man.

In creation's morn every thing was pronounced
 "very good." 'Twas man that spoiled and desolated
 a world! Through him the blighting curse fell on
 nature's perfection, and its traces remain and are
 seen everywhere. The visible universe suffered as a
 consequent of man's fall,

The World's Recovery and the Devil Vanquished.

Redemption sees it restored to the place which it
 occupied when man was made in the image of God,
 Is. 11 : 4-9; ch. 65; 66 : 22; 17 : 25; 2 Pet. 3 : 13; Rev. ch.
 21.

The complete abolition of all evil is promised,
 and the wealth of all nations and the riches of all
 lands are foretold as flowing into the church of the
 living God, Is. 60 : 12; 1 John 3 : 8.

And the prophecy is, that God will no more curse
 the earth, or blast its products, or mar its fruitfulness,
 Gen. 8 : 21; Joel 22 : 18-27; Mal. 3 : 11, 12. It shall bring
 forth abundantly, and the ransomed of the Lord shall
 eat and be satisfied and praise the name of their God,
 Ps. 22 : 26; Is. 65 : 13.

The survival of the righteous is assured in the
 destruction and punishment of the wicked, Josh. 1 :
 1-9; 3 : 10; Ps. 2 : 6-9; ch. 110; Josh. 5 : 13, 14, 15; Ps.
 ch. 91; Is. 60 : 12; Dan. 2 : 44; Rom. 8 : 31; Heb. 12 : 20-
 29.

Theirs is a land flowing with milk and honey un-
 visited by drought or famine, Ex. 3 : 17; Ezek. 36 : 29-
 35. Here it is that God inaugurates His

World-Kingdom.

Corroding care, tormenting fear, distracting wor-
 ry, no more harass the children of God.

They dwell alone, Num. 23 : 9, and possess the
 gates of their enemies, Gen. 22 : 17; 24 : 60. This is the

truth in theory set forth in the Bible prospectively and is to be looked forward to as a practicable and positive reality.

That the church thus dwells in the mind of God, and is sharply and definitely marked in the compilation of Scriptures already given, is plainly seen by every thoughtful and intelligent and unprejudiced reader; also see Matt. 13: 38 43; Luke 12: 32. It is the little stone, filling the earth, a grain of mustard seed, becoming the greatest of herbs, the leaven, hid in three measures of meal until the whole is leavened, the little cloud, the size of a man's hand, covering the skies, Dan. 2: 34; Matt. 13: 31, 33; 1 Kings 18: 44.

It must be

Unmistakably Clear

that forces so antagonistic, at such evident variance—as the church of God and the world, Matt. 6: 24, and the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness, 2 Cor. 6: 14, 15, cannot continue indefinitely to occupy the same territory, Rom. 16: 29; 1 John 3: 8.

There may be, for the time being, apparently, a commingling of light and darkness, a blending of the colors, but the one must manifestly dispel the other. That the church is to have absolute and unquestioned possession of the world, is given out with no uncertain sound, John 1: 1-4; Col. 1: 16, 17; Heb. 1: 2.

That these things are to transpire on earth, are not left in the Bible to peradventure or conjecture, Matt. 21: 33-44; Acts 1: 6, 7; 3: 21; 15: 15, 16, 17.

There is perfect unanimity on this point among all the Bible writers.

There may be pre-millennialists and post-millennialists, at the present day, yet the

Subjugation of All Evil

is a clearly revealed truth from Jehovah's lips, the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. Here is to be the theatre of action—the conflict, the victory, the triumph! Acts 1: 10, 11; Rev. 1: 7. Here on earth is, as well as in heaven, the kingdom, Matt. 6: 10.

Christ's Second Coming, or His Coming Again.

Jesus Christ told and frequently repeated that He was coming back to earth again, and His disciples caught up the joyful refrain, until it echoed abroad throughout every inhabitable land known at that day. They never tired of preaching His coming.

They answered objectors to His coming by reminding them that God did not count time as they did, and was actuated by motives, which caused His delay, to which they were strangers, 1 Pet. 3: 12; 4: 20; 5: 7, and all time, all things, all eternity, are His, and He uses them all in His people's favor, Is. 54: 17; Rom. 8: 28.

The most adverse circumstance is used by Him for His child's good, Gen. 50: 20; Ps. 84: 11.

Christ has

Wrested

this world from its usurper, Matt. 10: 8; 12: 28, 29; 28: 18, the devil, to whom for a season it was delivered, Luke, 4: 6; Acts 17: 30, and while he has been the god of this world, 2 Cor. 4: 4, he shall not continue to be, for Christ has effected, through His death, the world's recovery and his (the devil's) ultimate captivity, John 12: 31; 16: 11; Ephes. 4: 8-10; 1 Pet. 3: 19; Rev. 20: 2, 10. The influence which he wields, and the sceptre which he sways, shall be taken from him, for he is himself a captive—a doomed and hopeless prisoner. This he recognizes, and entreats his captor not to torment

him before his time, Matt. 8: 29; Mark 1: 24; 5: 7; Luke 4: 34; 10: 17, 18; Acts 16: 16; 19: 15; James 2: 19.

That he should have power and influence, even temporarily, is one of the secrets of Jehovah. His word speaks of the mystery of iniquity, Matt. 24: 12; 2 Thess. 2: 7; Rev. 17: 5, and the mystery of salvation, Mark 4: 11; Rom. 11; 25; 16: 25; Ephes. 1: 9; 3: 3-12; Col. 2: 2, 3; 1 Tim. 3: 16.

Both of these mysteries hover about man. He is certainly one of the most wonderful and unique beings in all of God's creation, Ps. 139: 13-16; Heb 2: 6, 7, 8; Gen. 1: 26-28; 2: 7. No other being, of which we are told, occupies a similar relation to God and His creation. He is the nearest being to God in the whole universe.

Angels, even, are his ministers, Heb. 1: 14. Christ took not the nature of angels, 2: 16, but was born of woman, born under the law, Gal. 4: 4, in order that He might be one of the race, and stand with it in indissoluble union. Christ is married to man in a voluntary union, Is. 62: 4, 5.

He had rather suffer for him and with him than to live without him.

Here is the

Battle Ground

of the ages. The devil contended for the body of Moses, Jude, 9th verse. Jesus Christ battled for the souls and bodies of men. Perhaps no other verse is a better epitome of His earthly life than Acts 10: 38,—“How God annointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.” He (man) is capable of great joy and

intense sorrow; of happiness and woe; of reward and punishment.

In no other finite being is there such a blending of possibilities and powers. He may be exalted to heaven or cast down to hell; developed in God's likeness, or degraded in sin. Here it is the battle rages between

Dual Natures—

the "old man" which is "earthly" and the "new man" which is from heaven, Ephes. 4: 22, 23, 24; 1 Cor. 15: 45-49. He (man) is the medium between the natural and spiritual, between good and evil, between earth and heaven, between God and the devil. All forces

Converge

here. This is the pivotal point of the universe. Here all issues arise, and are to be determined. The battle of

All worlds

is over man. God spilt His blood for him, gave His life for him, Acts 20: 28.

Who shall have him, who shall have him?—"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and His Father, to Him be glory, and dominion for ever and ever. Amen," Rev. 1: 6, 7. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha. The Lord cometh," 1 Cor. 16: 22.

The trophies of this warfare will be the spoils taken from the devil.

Man is

Sold under Sin, Rom. 7: 14,

and must have a purchaser. He sold Himself for nought, Is. 52: 3, and is delivered voluntarily by

Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. 7: 25. Jesus Christ descended into the deep that He might bring man above, Rom. 10: 7; John 3: 13; Ephes. 4: 8, 9, 10; 2 Cor. 8: 9. He descended to man's level that He might lift him to His height. He sounded the depth of human misery, Heb. 5: 8, 9. It may not always be morally true, "to the victor belongs the spoils," but it is eminently true to Jesus belongs man, Rom. 14: 7, 8, 9; 1 Cor. 3: 21; 6: 19, 20; 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19, 20. He asserts His ownership in and protection over the purchased of His own blood, John 10: 11-15; Ps. 105: 14, 15; Rom. 8: 31.

He Himself is the representative of and the head of a new race, Col. 1: 18; Acts 26: 23; 1 Cor. 15: 20, 23; Rom. 8: 29; Col. 1: 15. He has instituted a new order of things and created a

New

order of beings. He has made man anew, 2 Cor. 5: 17; Gal. 6: 15; Ephes. 4: 24; Col. 3: 10; 1 Cor. 3: 1; 1 Pet. 2: 2; Rev. 21: 5, and borned Him from above, John 3: 3, 6; 1 Pet. 1: 23. He has constituted the household of faith—the family of God, Gal. 6: 10; Ephes. 2: 19; Rom. 8: 14-17; Gal. 4: 4-7. The relation here is that of son to God—"Our Father," and brother to Jesus, "our elder Brother." This kinship, perhaps, is one of the astounding mysteries, "which the angels desire to look into," 1 Pet. 1: 12.

Christ's Exaltation of Man.

These relations, son of God, and brother to Jesus, place man in the most exalted position of all of God's creatures, 1 Cor. 2: 9-12; 13: 12; 1 John 3: 1, 2. It is not said of any other creature but man—"we shall be like Him." There is nothing to which to aspire beyond this. This invests man with the greatest present dignity and the uttermost future

glory. There is not any goodness, greatness, loveliness, or lovableness, or any thing that one can desire that is not comprehended in this—"we shall be like Him."

That is faulty theology—"I want to be an angel." "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness," Ps. 17: 15.

There is nothing in fact or fancy, prose or poetry, history or fiction, art or nature; earth or heaven, associated with man as a characteristic, faculty, or attribute, that does not find its completion and perfection here.

Jesus Christ is the bread and water of man's life—the very elements of his existence, Luke 22: 19, 20; John 6: 48-58; 1 Cor. 11: 23-26. As man would

Literally Starve

without food—bread and water—or their equivalents, so he is in his natural state, spiritually dead, and must remain so forever unless his soul feeds upon Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour. It is plainly taught that Christ is as indispensable to the soul of man as food is to his body. The sustenance of his spiritual powers is by partaking of Christ in his soul as the unfailing supply of his life, as he partakes of food daily for the supplying of his bodily powers.

The fact is, here as elsewhere, the spiritual has the

Pre-eminence

over the temporal—the soul-life, over the physical, Deut. 8: 3, 4; 29: 5; 34: 7; Josh. 14: 11; Neh. 9: 21; Ps. 105: 37; Ex. 34: 28; Deut. 9: 9; 18; 1 Kings, 19: 8; Is. 40: 28-31; Matt. 4: 2, 3, 4. Perhaps, what there is in divine healing is found here. Disease and death are coupled with sin, Rom. 5: 12. Sin is the parent and these are the offspring. The healing of diseases may be instantaneous, as in the ministry of Jesus; or grad-

ual, by the removing from time to time the cause of disease—sin.

Whether the healing of disease is instantaneous or gradual may depend very largely upon one's

Appropriation of Christ

as his healer. To the two blind men He said, "According to your faith be it unto you," Matt. 9: 29. They were immediately healed. To others, He required their going to the priests, obeying the form prescribed by the law, Matt. 8: 4; Luke 17: 14. In the latter case, Jesus demands compliance with existing law. The violation, on our part, of some natural or moral law may be the cause of our being diseased. In such a case God may first require of us conformity to the physical and spiritual laws that govern our being. In this way the obstacle is removed out of the way of one's healing. God condescends to show us (diagnose and prescribe) what are the difficulties in the way of our having good health. It may be we are indulging in the use of some article used as a food, for example, hog meat or coffee, that is positively injurious to our bodies, or that we are victims of some hurtful and pernicious habit, as the using of tobacco, drinking intoxicants, that stands in the way of our bodily comfort and welfare, and between us and God—our Healer.

Anything that

Keeps

God out of our hearts and from exerting His influence and power over our lives is damaging to our bodies.

Any one who does not, for any reason, get the proper amount of the right kind of food, prepared in the proper way, and at the proper time, suffers physically for the lack of the needed nutriment to

supply the demands of his very being—his life-forces. We can readily see how any being, as man, over whom the spiritual has the

Pre-eminence

instead of the bodily, will languish, if the presence of God is hindered or interfered with in his inner or soul-life.

Those who are depending upon God for the life that now is and for that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4: 8, esteem His presence and favor more essential than, their daily food, Job 23: 12; Ps. 42: 1-3; 137: 5, 6. That His presence should effect them is most natural. They were originally made in His image. They have been born anew and re-instated in His favor and kingdom. They are His children.

“In His presence there is fulness of joy; at His right hand there are pleasures forevermore,” Ps. 16: 11. The withdrawing of His face troubles them, Ps. 44: 24; 88: 14.

The power of God in the soul reacts on the body,—bouys it up, animates and revivifies it, 2 Sam. 22: 30; Ps. 18: 29; Is. 35: 6; 1 Cor. 15: 10. The power of endurance and vigor of God’s people are due to grace and are not the results of physical endowment.

Man in his normal state is moved by God. It is God that actuates and controls His movements, 2 Cor. 5: 14; Matt. 14: 22; Mark 6: 45. Perhaps what we call super-natural strength in man is only his natural strength when in right relations to God, Matt. 10: 20; Luke 21: 15; Acts 6: 10; Ephes. 6: 10; 2 Tim. 1: 7; Heb. 11: 34. Impotency of body or mind is not a characteristic of religion, Matt. 10: 16; James 1: 5. The change in the men, whom the Lord called to be His apostles. their writings and achievements—is a full

vindication of it. They were of obscure birth, most of them of poor parentage, the larger portion, if not all of them, illiterate in the classical and literary meaning of the term, yet they attained to degrees of wisdom and heights of knowledge hitherto unknown to men, and they stood without peers among the greatest of that generation, and stand to day unrivalled in the annals of the Christian Church.

Their breadth of mind, depth of heart, physical endurance, are all

Traceable

to the gospel of Jesus Christ. They had been with Jesus and learned of him, Acts 4: 13. He had inducted them into His kingdom, and unfolded to them His plans, and given them the elementary lessons, as they were able to receive them, John, 16: 12, of the nature and extent of His kingdom. They had been taken into fellowship and partnership by the Lord Jesus, and become part and parcel of the work that He came to do, John, 13: 8; 14: 12; 15: 15. Jesus Christ founded a kingdom upon and out of them. They wrought mightily to the glory of God. The human instruments, like the little walking stick in the hand of Moses, Ex. 4: 2, became mighty factors in God's hands for the work of righteousness and the confounding of the gainsayers and ungodly.

"As thy days so shall thy strength be," Deut. 33: 25—was fulfilled in their lives. They could say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me," Gal. 2: 20. They could truthfully say, "For to me to live is Christ," Phil. 1: 21.

Theirs was a surrendered life to Him who had bought them. They had lost their lives for Christ's sake and in Him they found them,—“nevertheless I live,” Gal. 2: 20; Luke 9: 24. The

Scope

of their lives henceforth is in Him, Ps. 87: 7; Gal. 6: 14. (This was most evidently Paul's view of life, Phil. 1: 22.) “He is Lord of all,” Acts 10: 36. To Him they owe all things. He reigns over them triumphantly without a rival. His is an undisputed reign of unbounded and overflowing love over loyal and obedient subjects, devoted brothers, and faithful children, Matt. 12: 50; John 18: 36; Gal. 3: 26; Ephes. 5: 24; Heb. 2: 11, 12, 13; Rev. 7: 3. These and other relationships man sustains to God through Christ, Rom. 8: 17; Gal. 4: 7; Rev. 5: 10.

He is also their healer, Ex. 15: 26; Ps. 6: 2; 103: 3; Jer. 17: 14; Matt. 8: 17. As we have previously seen that disease is the offspring of sin so we now see that healing is

Interwoven

with redemption. Healing is embraced in redemption. Sin is the cause of every moral and physical imperfection—for every deformity in the world. Redemption is the cure. It is the axe, Matt. 3: 10, divinely laid at the root of the tree of evil with which to cut it down, and it also shall be uprooted and totally destroyed and the remembrance of it be forgotten forever. And this will be done, in part, by teaching man the

Law

of his being. His suffering now is often largely due to his ignorance of himself. Religion teaches him what he is and how to live, Heb. 2: 6, 7, 8; 1 Pet. 3: 10,

11, 12. It shows him his excesses and points out to him his necessities. It teaches him how to avoid over-indulgences, to cultivate abstemious habits, and to refrain from that which is harmful to soul or body. It develops a surveillance over the entire person, guarding him from indiscretions and recovering him from former vices. Its work, at first, is to change man—to correct and train him in the Christian life—in the life of God.

Any life into which God comes and dwells has

Two Parts—

from natural birth to regeneration, covering part the first; from regeneration to all eternity, covering part the second. Man is born unsaved, and the impenitent and unbelieving die unsaved and so remain—unsaved forever. Of course, we are not speaking of those who die in infancy and before reaching accountability, or of those who are born idiots, and, as a matter of course, die idiots.

The sin-germ—the tendency to sin—is in man at the time of his conception, and there a latent power on the day of his birth. If not resisted it develops with the child. Regeneration has to do with this—to overcome it and destroy it. “Ye must be born, again,” “from above,” and “anew,” finds its logical and theological basis here. Theoretically the old life ends here and the new life begins. There are some remains of the old nature, as some of the enemies of God and the Israelites were left in Canaan, after the occupancy of it according to God’s promise, Josh. 23: 13, but it has, in regeneration, received its death-blow—and it—the natural—has become subject to the spiritual. Though it may resist for sometime the spiritual’s

Supremacy,

yet all of its efforts in the end will be ineffectual. Though it should smite to the ground, as Cain did Abel, Gen. 4: 8, the life of faith in the soul, yet it will rise again and call down the vengeance of God upon its assailant. It may be suppressed by temptation, subjected to fiery trial, and undergo all sorts of tests and discipline, but it is an indestructible and unconquerable life from God in the soul, independent of environments and vicissitudes.

That this is a part of God's plan in the economy of grace is plainly seen in the New Testament metaphors, where the Christian's life is spoken of as

A Battle—a Warfare,

1 Tim. 1: 18, not a play-ground—a battle-field, 1 Tim. 6: 12; 2 Tim. 4: 7, not a dress-parade—a campaign, an active, operative struggle—a positive fight, Num. 21: 14; 1 Sam. 25: 28. A Christian's life is not intended for the parlor but the workshop, not

Ornamental,

as vessels of gold and silver, 1 Tim. 2: 20, but useful as vessels of clay and wood. His sphere in life may be compared to the bee-hive. Solomon directs the sluggard to the ant, Prov. 6: 6, and Paul's advice in regard to the lazy man might be considered by him as being extremely harsh, 2 Thess. 3: 10. He certainly places him on

A Self-Supporting Basis

or dooms him to death by starvation. God's purpose is not to keep us in baby-hood but to develop in us a stalwart manhood. An ideal Christian does not need a cradle or a nursing bottle. You do not have to sing to him "a lul-la-by." He is not dependent upon the aesthetical in music, nor the artistical in building for

his enjoyment of and interest in his master's work. He is taught to endure hardness as a good soldier, and that even Christ pleased not himself, Rom. 15: 3. He is taught that

Fruit

is more important than flowers, and that a tree is worthless and doomed that beareth nothing but leaves, Mark 11: 13, 14. He is at home and at ease in "home-spun" as much so as when wearing broad-cloth, kid gloves, and patent leather shoes. His is a life

Superior

to outward surroundings and circumstances, towering above all of them, finding its chief excellence in being and not in appearance. His is not merely a life of professing but of possessing. It is watered by hidden springs and fed on invisible forces. It is the

Unseen

that moves and sways him. He is upheld and sustained by the eternal. He sees Him that is invisible, Heb. 11: 27. Thus he rests in God, and God is to him "at hand and not afar off," Jer. 23: 23. In Him he lives, moves, and has his being, Acts 17: 28. Religion is to him the glorious experience it was to Enoch, who walked with God, and was not, because God took him, Gen. 5: 24; Heb. 11: 5. God is ever blessing one, soul and body, who is so fully in His embrace, Ps. 3: 5; 4: 8. He realizes fully God's personality and enjoys His companionship. He does not worship a

Vague

indefinable and incomprehensible being that cannot be approached and understood, but the "living God," Deut. 5: 26; Josh. 3: 10, in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ his Saviour.

Death and the Resurrection.

Here we face the great fact that Jesus Christ has destroyed death, its power, "and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," 2 Tim. 1: 10. He delivered "them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage, Heb. 2: 15. Perhaps there is not a greater chapter on the sublimest of themes, in the whole Bible, than, 1 Cor. 15. It discusses pardon, through the sacrificial death of Christ for man, His resurrection, and in Him, and in His—our resurrection. It shows how Christ in our stead—for our sakes—entered into death's domain, and grappled with it and overcame it—arose from the dead and opened His people's graves. Death has no more dominion over them. It is a conquered enemy, whose malign influences have been overcome, its prisoners freed, and its empire abolished.

In the finished work of Christ, in His perfected kingdom, in His and His people's final home it is already announced, "There shall be no more death," Rev. 21: 4. He has already

Resurrected

them from a spiritual death, and He is pledged to them as their representative, that in Him they shall also have a physical resurrection. His message to them is, "Because I live, ye shall live also," John 14: 19; 2 Tim. 2: 11; Rom. 6: 8. The voice of Him, who had been in the grave and laid there in death, comes to us.—"I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore," Rev. 1: 18. He holds the key to the nether world and will open it at His will. Here the gloom, and the shades, and the darkness of all ages, and of all people, and of all nations and countries, are gathered. When He shall have

unlocked it and penetrated its depth—pierced its deepest caverns and remotest parts with His all-seeing eye, and filled it with the thunders of His voice, death and hell shall give up their dead, and

Light

from heaven flood the universe. The fulfilment of this, and of all that is in the life and destiny of man are in Christ and Him crucified, Christ and the resurrection, and Christ ascended to the right hand of God, 1 Cor. 2: 2; Acts 3: 15; 4: 33; 10: 40, 41; 25: 19; 26: 23; Heb. 1: 3; Rev. 3: 21; Acts 7: 56. Christ begins, continues, and completes the Christian's life. Temporal, physical, spiritual,

Eternal

blessings come to the saint—saved through Christ. Christ in grace, Christ in justification—pardon, Christ in regeneration, Christ in adoption, Christ in healing, Christ in the resurrection, Christ in man's glorification! Christ! Christ!! Christ!!! In nature, in providence, in glory,

Everywhere,

to the saved of all ages, of all countries, and all nations!

We have seen the position that man occupies in creation, providence, and redemption, from God's point of view, and here we see the position that Christ occupies as the representative of man and second Adam of the race. God in Christ makes everything centre in man. Man is the object in creation, providence and redemption, 1 Cor. 5: 19.

Christ is everything to man—the medium of approach to God, the pivotal point upon which turns all of his hopes, joys, and prospects of both worlds, 1 Tim. 2: 5; Heb. 9: 15; 12: 24; Gal. 3: 19, 20. We here

see the relation of Christ to God and man in Christ, and the relation of Christ to man. Christ

Unites

the two. Here humanity and divinity meet, and God through Christ approaches man.

The Unchangeable Gospel.

Here comes the absolute and unchangeable gospel—the gospel of Jesus Christ to men, Mark, 1: 1. It is the gospel that men and angels are forbidden to alter, Gal. 1: 8, 9. It is just as God would have it. His warnings threaten and His anathemas are hurled against those who have the temerity to add to or take from it! Rev. 22: 18, 19. It is the height of audacity in finite man to change the Word, and dictate,—at least attempt it—to God. Uzzah lost his life by trying to steady the ark of God, 2 Sam. 6: 6, 7. God has solemnly forbidden the laying of human hands upon His plans at the peril of one's own personal safety and future security. He who thinks he knows better than God endangers his own soul. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread." We must approach God and His word with reverence and godly fear, Matt. 6: 9; Heb. 12: 28. The hearty acceptance of and full assent of man to God—"He is Lord of all," Acts, 10: 36)—are necessary in his salvation. To be saved—one must become as a little child, Matt. 18: 3,—accept God unconditionally. The danger of the church to day is in its self-sufficiency. The saved are filled with humility. They are aware of their poverty of spirit, Matt. 5: 3. Theirs is the kingdom of heaven. These are weighty words. To them

Belong

the kingdom of heaven. God has given it to them. This is the only class to whom it is given.

They are willing to accept it, John, 1: 12; Luke, 7: 30 (God imposes the terms). They have had heart-struggles after purity, and to them have been granted the preparation of heart necessary to clarify their spiritual vision. They see God, Matt. 5: 6, 8. They dare not offer nor desire to take any substitute for God or His gospel. Another gospel has no hearing among them. There is but one gospel, Ephes. 4: 4-6. It is for all time—for all people. For it, they contend, Jude, verse 3. They combat every innovation. To them there is

No

“Congress of Religions,” there is but one religion, 1 Cor. 8: 4, 6. There may be ten thousand counterfeits. There can be no compromise. They claim all—possess all—or nothing. No half-way stop or middle ground. Out and out—all over—altogether one thing or the other—true or false, real or fictitious, 1 Pet. 1: 16. Altogether persuaded to be a Christian, Acts, 26: 29. “A thing can not be and be.” It is or it is not, Heb. 11: 6.

It Is

to the believer—and that settles it. There is no room with him for debate or proviso. Jesus Christ is all He said He was, or He is nothing,—and His gospel is all He represented it to be, or it is imaginary, delusive, unreal. Nothing can be plainer than this.

If it is true it is always new, Heb. 13: 8. It demands the

Whole Heart

or absolute rejection. It commends itself to every man’s conscience, 2 Cor. 4: 2. The religion of Jesus is the

Absolute

religion and the Bible is the absolute book. That is the way it stands and reads from beginning to ending. No book or religion could claim more. Jesus Christ claimed everything and His followers claimed the same for Him. It would be impossible to imagine or picture more absolute authority, Matt. 28: 18.

The question is one of

Belief or Unbelief,

Which settles the whole question so far as it is relevant to the individual. A man's horizon here is determined by his faith—or the lack of it. It stretches indefinitely or contracts correspondingly as he believes or disbelieves. God is, in some sense, to him what he makes Him. It may be more proper to say that the man who has great faith in God has first been wrought on by God.

Faith in the Gospel.

The faith which he has in Christ is the response of the life in his heart—created there by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit opened the way—was the pioneer—led the man to the acceptance of God. O woman, great is thy faith! Matt. 15: 28. O woman great is thy God—the Holy Spirit, thy teacher!

The great characters produced in the world have been produced by the gospel. Great faith must have a great God. Great faith without a great God is impotent, 1 Kings, 18: 26, 27, 28.

Human culture, intellectuality, higher education, fine buildings, operatic singing, eloquent sermons, will not take the place of God among His people. His presence is indispensable, Ex. 33: 15, 16; John, 15: 5. To the extent externals and formalities take the place of God among His people so far do they suffer

spiritually. The withdrawing of God from the churches is due to

Human

substitutions. God is a jealous God and will not give His glory to another, Ex. 34: 14; Is. 42: 8.

The return of the church to Christ is the world's hope and her salvation, 2 Chron. 15: 2; Deut. 4: 29.

Perhaps, here is the greatest lesson that

Prayer

has to teach—man's dependence. Prayer is the voice of His dependence—the acknowledgement of his helplessness. Man needs and is unable to supply his need. The source of his supply is above and beyond his reach. It must be brought to him—given. He is unable to buy it, in fact, God's blessings are not for sale, Is. 55: 1; Acts, 8: 20. He must pray—"ask," Matt. 7: 7; Luke, 11: 9. Praying is asking. It may be more but it is this, a person upon his knees is a person in need—need of some kind. We do not read of the angels praying. We read of their praising, Luke 2: 13. If man should cease to need he would cease to pray. He may pray without the immediate sense of his need,—he may praise in prayer, when there is no direct sense of God's blessing, yet coupled with it directly or remotely, is the sense of the divine favor—giving. Man's life is barren without the divine blessing—empty unless God fills it. God touches man's life everywhere by giving, Rom. 8: 32; 2 Cor. 8: 9. Man is exhorted to pray and should always be praying, 1 Thess. 5: 17. No other creature is so needy as man—hence his constant cry to God,—“Instant in prayer,” Rom. 12: 12. He must pray, whether he will or not—he will (involuntarily) pray. He may pray when it is too late, when God will not hear,—

but pray he will—pray he must. It is the law of his being. He cannot but pray. Esau sought his father's blessing when it was not obtainable, Heb. 12: 17, and even wicked men pray in the time of great danger, *e. g.*, wicked sailors in the time of a great storm at sea, yet we are not to infer that their prayers are always acceptable and heard. There is more required on man's part than the mere praying. It is not all in his hands. God has His time and way. He should be heard and heeded. He speaks of the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man that availeth much, James 5: 16.

We see that a man will pray, but he must be taught

How

to pray. No man prays effectively who has not been taught how. John taught his disciples, Jesus His, Luke 11: 1-13, and the Holy Spirit still teaches all who truly know how to pray, Rom. 8: 26; Ephes. 6: 18; Jude verse 20. The Scriptures give much space to it, and Christ devoted whole nights to it. It cannot be learned from

A Prayer-book

and be recited like poetry. It is born in the deepest human experience where God meets man and wrestles with him as He did with Jacob of old, Gen. 32: 24. In the heart of him who truly prays, prayer is the voice of God. God speaking to him, within him, through him. Prayer is the language of God in the soul. It familiarizes a man with heaven as it is communication between man and the God of heaven. A man who has prayed indeed and in truth will not be altogether a stranger when he gets to heaven. God cannot be forced by prayer. Prayer brings to man

the knowledge of God's will, Matt. 26: 39; 2 Cor. 12: 8, 9. The suppliant is in accord with God. It could not be otherwise if he believes God to be the Being He is represented to be in the Bible. Prayer is the expression of faith in God. He who really prays believes in God, trusts in him, relies upon him. He accepts God. There is no appeal beyond Him. Whether His answer is yea or nay it is final.

His

No

is as authoritative as His yes. The petitioner is seeking an answer.

What God elects in his case is believed to be for his good and God's glory. The relation here is that of Father and child. While the Father owns the child, the child possesses the love and affection of the Father, Matt. 7: 11. The Father has not only the life of the child in His hands, but his good at heart. It is the child's good that He seeks in imposing upon him the duty of prayer. It is not that God is not ready and willing to bestow, but man is often not in the condition to receive.

Prayer is

Preparatory—

puts the suppliant in the frame of mind to receive. It lays him low—prostrate at the Lord's feet. It shows him that every good and perfect gift cometh down from above, James 1: 17. It keep him at the throne of grace where he obtains mercy and finds grace to help in every time of need, Heb. 4: 16. He learns more and more that the object of God's house is a place in which to pray, 1 Kings 8: 30-53; Matt. 21: 13. He who has been taught and has learned how to pray is in touch with God and in ac-

cord and communication with heaven. There is nothing man can learn of greater value to him—than how to pray—not merely to pray—but how to pray.

O for men who know how to pray—mighty in prayer!

The introduction to and chief characteristic of the Holy Spirit's administration of Christ's work in the affairs of His newly established kingdom and church—is prayer. The ascension of Christ is followed by ascending prayer, Acts 1: 4. The Holy Spirit began His work in a prayer-meeting, Acts 1: 14; 2: 1-4. The church needs to-day

More

prayer-meetings and fewer preaching services. One sermon born in a prayer-meeting is worth thousands produced elsewhere, Acts 2: 14-41.

Right Method of Preaching.

Modern preaching, in some particulars, is at variance with the apostolic practice. In many communions it exalts the minister too far above the congregation. It has assumed functions unknown to Bible-students or in primitive circles. The study of the New Testament here is worthy of attention and is brought to notice. What kind of meetings did the apostles and their helpers hold, and what kind of sermons did they preach? Some of the meetings and sermons are reported and some are not given. Enough are given from which to form an idea of their meetings and preaching, and reach a definite conclusion. The

Elaborate

sermon of to day, written and read, is of a much later day's growth than that of the apostles and the New Testament Scriptures.

Written sermons lack scriptural warrant and precedent.

Some may say that the times have changed and that there should be a corresponding change in the style of preaching. Will elegance in style, purity of diction, and faultlessness in delivery, make up for the loss, to some extent, at least, of the Holy Spirit's power? The gain, evidently, is not

Commensurate

with the loss. Whatever retards or interferes with the spirit's influence is a positive disadvantage and an unmitigated evil. Not that the Scriptures object to preparation for public ministration. They require it, but it is more especially preparation of heart, Acts 6: 4.

Heart Preparation

is ever an essential to preaching the word.

The minister is God's messenger. He announces and proclaims—never declaims—the pleasure of the Lord. He is nearly akin to the prophet of the Old Testament—in fact, prophesying is synonymous with preaching in the New Testament, Acts 2: 17. The prophet received his call, authority, and message from the Lord, and so it is with the preacher. God moves him to preach. And so it is with any successful worker, men, who do God's work acceptably, it matters not whether in pulpit or pew, are moved thereto by God. Stephen was as truly moved by the power of God operating upon him and in him as was Barnabas or Paul, Acts 6: 8.

And yet he was not a preacher in the

Popular

sense of the word. Paul mentions many of his fellow-workers who are not put in the category of

preachers, Phil. 4: 3. It is not necessary to be a preacher, officially, as it is now understood, to be a soul-saver. The humblest of God's people may be endowed with power from on high and be used in this capacity. Souls are constantly being led to God through the weakest of instruments. No wonder at this for He has "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty," 1 Cor. 1: 27. Paul tells us, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us," 2 Cor. 4: 7.

It is clearly seen that the power that saves man is of God and not of us. He may, therefore, magnify the weakest of instruments. It is not the Solomons who have laid the world under the greatest tribute for their efficient service, self-denying lives, and conspicuous godliness. It has been too often otherwise. The

Highest

type of man is not to be sought among the physical, or intellectual, but the spiritual. Solomon dwarfs in the presence of Paul and is greatly the loser by comparison. Sampson's strength and Solomon's wisdom were not safe-guards against the wiles of the devil. It is the poor in spirit, Matt. 5: 3, those who are weak, 2 Cor. 4: 16; 12: 10, yet believers on Christ, who are divinely strong. The strongest man and the wisest man were not successes—were not matches for the subtleties which beset them. It is the spiritual man who is more than a match for all his adversaries, Rom. 8: 37. We are reminded here of a truth of such frequent recurrence in the word of God, "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the *wise* man glory in his wisdom, neither let the *mighty* man glory in his might; let not

the *rich* man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the

Lord

which exercises loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord," Jer. 9: 23, 24.

We readily see why the strong man and wise man are over-matched. They are

Self-Sufficient—

trusting in themselves—relying upon their own resources. They fall an easy prey to the tempter. Not so with the spiritual man—his dependence is upon God. He has learned, perhaps, from sad experience, not to trust in the arm of flesh. His strongest resolutions have been as brittle under pressure as were the cords which bound Sampson. If he made them to keep them, he signally failed to be steadfast in his purpose under temptation. He has seen time and again his self-erected forts demolished.

He has been exposed to the enemy, and driven by him from of his places of hiding. There came to him, it may be, suddenly, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," Ps. 46: 1. "The Lord is my shepherd," Ps. 23: 1. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty," Ps. 91: 1. Jesus has gathered him, as a hen doth her brood under her wings, Matt. 23: 37. He is his dwelling-place, Ps. 90: 1. As the man-slayer flees to the city of refuge for protection, so he has fled to Jesus as his only resort, Heb. 6: 18. Christ is to him a tower of strength, Ps. 63: 3; Prov. 18: 10.

He can preach Christ for he knows Christ. He is fitted by grace and providence for his office. He is furnished by personal experience in the things of God, the knowledge of salvation, and is eminently qualified to teach it to others. He has the ability given him to impart instructions to others. "Apt to teach" aptly describes him, 1 Tim. 3: 2. The knowledge to be imparted is spiritual knowledge, 2 Cor. 2: 14. It is not a fine physique or physical culture—not his attainments as a foot-ball and base ball player that prepares him for the ministry, but Christ dwelling within him. "Know thou the God of thy fathers"—is the charge to deliver to him. We may add, he is not necessarily an astronomer, astrologer, geologist, mineralogist, or botanist because he is a minister of the word. He may not have the intellectual culture and scope and the scientific and classical attainments required for a college or university degree, yet he may be wise unto salvation, and able to teach others also, 2 Tim. 3: 15; Titus 1: 9. The examination of the preacher is different from that of the scholar. An important question in his examination is, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed (Acts, 19: 2)? This is the essential qualification of delivering God's message to the people. This is not necessarily a part of a college or university curriculum. The preacher, as we have said, like Old Testament prophets, must—if God-appointed—receive his message from the Lord. He is the Lord's messenger. It is as true to-day as ever. "Behold I send my messenger," Mal. 3: 1. The preacher must have a message if he wants to be heard, and it must be an authoritative one. A message of power, Acts 1: 8; 1 Cor. 4: 20. His, then strictly speaking, is more

of a spiritual examination. We have seen that in the days of the giants, that their physical power was unequal to the demands made upon them in the contest between good and evil—God and the devil, Gen. 6: 6. Their great strength was unable to deliver them from the reign of ungodliness. It may have been

A Gigantic Race

and age, but unrighteousness was in the ascendancy and wickedness possessed almost universal dominion. And so during the intellectual reign of King Solomon. Morally, his was a reign of decadence. It had a glorious sun-rise, but it set amid gloom and darkness, 1 Kings 3: 5-14; 11: 1-13. Perhaps, we see in part why physical and intellectual qualifications and attainments fail to prepare the preacher for his life-work. We have seen that he is God's messenger and that he must know how to pray, and that any person who does not know how to pray, cannot know how to preach. He must be on speaking terms with God, his lips must be touched with a live coal, Is. 6: 6, 7, from off His altar. There must be an intimate and vital relationship between God and the preacher, if the message is to come from God through the preacher, and be a living message upon his lips from God to men. Oh for such preaching! The preacher says, "I know whom I have believed," 2 Tim. 1: 12. The word is a hammer to break the rock in pieces, Jer. 23: 29. Balm to the broken-hearted, Jer. 8: 22; liberty to the captive, the "year of Jubilee," Luke, 4: 18, 19. What

A Privilege

to preach when in possession of such a message! It is truly glad tidings that he bears to the people,

Rom. 10: 15. He speaks God's words, expresses His thoughts and enters into His plans and work for man. What a glorious reality to have the mind and life of God illuminating and throbbing in one's heart, Psal. 2: 5. What liberty! What a pleasure to preach Christ! Such a ministry as this cannot be superseded nor supplemented by an educated one. Not that an educated ministry may not be as already described, but education as a human accomplishment, is not a prime factor required in the Word of God as an essential qualification of the ministry. Nothing is said about it, therefore no great stress can be placed upon it. It is true the preacher is a teacher, not of geometry or trigonometry or chemistry, but of the Word of God. His text-books are Providence, Grace, the Bible-lessons drawn from the lives of men as touched by God in His providential dealing with them by His Grace as shown in the Holy Scriptures, Rom. 15: 4; 1 Cor. 10: 11. Here the preacher must be familiar, conversant, versatile—indeed a teacher. Here he must experience, know, and enforce upon his hearers the deep things of God, 1 Cor. 2: 10. He must speak as did his Saviour, with authority and not as the scribes, Matt. 7: 29. It may be the lack of attention here that has given rise to the numerous lay-preachers and to the large army of evangelists, in many instances the latter class including those who are deficient in moral qualities, especially reverence. It must be, however, expected, that there will be some deleterious effects, if the regular and recognized ministry depart in any particular from its characteristics as a divine vocation. If there is any substitution of the human for the divine wisdom, the effects of it will be felt on the

churches and the world, and the sceptre will begin to depart from Judah and the candlestick to be removed from its place, Rev. 2: 5. And not only that, but men will follow the pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud, Ex. 13; 21, and the ministry loose its hold on the generality of men. We here and now invite the ministry, if it has departed in any particular, to return to the well defined notes that distinguish it in the word of God. Such a return must be a blessing to any preacher and congregation, the cause of Christ thereby greatly the gainer. It is the duty of the ministry to the congregation, if they have departed in any wise from Christ, to return fully to him. They are the leaders and shape largely the belief and doctrinal tendencies of their hearers. It follows as effect follows cause, and night day, that they are greatly responsible for the religious state of the church and of the influence of the gospel upon the world. It is to them that all appeals for amendment of life, integrity of character, surrender to God, devotedness of soul, consecration of life, loyalty to Christ, fidelity to His word, must first be made. They that bear the vessels of the Lord must be holy, possessing a single eye to God's Glory, oneness of purpose, Is. 52: 11; Matt. 6: 22; 1 Cor. 10: 31. A Christ-like ministry is needed in every age, every clime, every day, and every hour. Let every minister examine himself in the light of this, God's truth, see what is required of him, and strive to attain it. Let there be heart-searchings and soul-strivings after God, that he may apprehend Him by whom he is apprehended, Phil. 3: 12. O, the height of the ideal! But let the ministry not despair, for he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, Heb. 2: 18; Is. 53: 3. He took

our natures, Heb. 3: 16. To be like Him may lead the ministry into the

Valley

of His humiliation, into the depths of his sorrow—until their souls become as His did exceedingly sorrowful even unto death, Phil. 2: 7, 8; Heb. 5: 8; Matt. 26: 38. Phil. 3: 10; 2 Tim. 2: 12. Col. 1: 24. He humbled Himself to become a Saviour before He was exalted, Acts, 5: 31. He overcame before He sat down at the right hand of God, Rev. 3: 21. The servant is not greater than his Lord, Matt. 10: 24, 25; John, 13: 16; 15: 20.

Let the ministry expect the effects that followed Christ's ministry to follow theirs. He said that they would, in the reference text given, John, 15: 20. If the ministry is largely responsible for the present status of religious life and the general state of religion among men, it

Behooves

it to bestir itself and be strong. "Quit you like men, be strong," is the divine commandment, 1 Cor. 16: 13. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might," Ephes. 6: 10. Moses charged Joshua and David, Solomon—"be strong and of good courage Deut 31: 7; 1 Kings, 2: 2, and Jesus solemnly enjoined upon His disciples—"Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," Matt. 10: 28. A man-fearing, an age-serving ministry is incompatible with the gospel and unworthy of their Lord. Those who voice the sentiment of His gospel and exemplify His Spirit are fitly described by Paul in speaking of himself, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry,

which I have received of the Lord Jesus; to testify the gospel of the grace of God," Acts 20: 24. Such a ministry on the threshold of an eternity of bliss may say, "The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," I am going home to God and my final reward at His own right hand, 2 Tim. 4: 6, 7, 8. Such a ministry is

Victorious

in time and triumphant in glory, an honor to God, and a benediction to man. Any man should esteem it a privilege to belong to such a ministry, 1 Tim. 1: 12. No higher favor nor greater compliment can be bestowed by God upon man. To be taken into His confidence, share in His labor, and partake of His joy in the salvation of the unsaved, is indeed a distinction for which any one should be thankful.

It is highly appropriate for such a ministry as this to pronounce the apostolic benediction (2 Cor. 13: 14), for it is an apostolic ministry. It may say, Follow me as I follow Christ (1 Cor. 11: 2), and "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour, Ephes. 5: 12."

The Congregation or Laity.

But there are requirements of the congregation—duties devolving upon them as well as the ministry. They are exhorted to take heed how they hear and what they hear, Mark 4: 24; Matt. 7: 15. The condition of the hearer has a great deal to do with the success or failure of the word as preached to him, Matt. 13: 18-23. It is prophesied that the time will come when the hearers will not endure sound doctrine but

will depart from the faith once for all delivered unto the saints, 2 Tim. 4: 3; Jude, 1: 3. The seven churches of Asia are embraced in that time when they would not endure sound doctrine. It may be true of a

Time-Serving

ministry seeking emoluments, praise, and popularity, "like people, like priest", Hosea, 4: 9.

As we have seen that the ministry exerts a great influence upon the congregation, yet we must not forget that there is a counter influence exerted by the congregation upon the ministry, Gal. 2: 11-16. The congregation should strive to exert

A Wholesome

influence over the ministry. If there is any lack of entire consecration on the part of the ministry, the influence of the congregation may be more potent than that of the ministry, and if not wholesome, it does not take a prophet to tell the result. There are congregations and almost entire communions who do not object to, or, at least, prohibit any form of worldly amusements. My pastor does not object to my doing this or that, may be, in many instances, very significant. Had he objected in all probability he would not have been in that communion, and therefore, not his or her pastor. The license granted, perhaps, is the secret of both the minister being in the pulpit and the member in the communion. The proper spirit for both minister and member is that exhibited by Moses when requested by Joshua to prohibit Eldad and Medad from prophesying, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His spirit upon them," Num. 11: 29. It should not be how far we can live from God and yet get to heaven, but how near we can live to Him. Perhaps,

the exclamation of Moses will be realized. It was in part fulfilled on Pentecost as foretold by Joel, Joel 2: 28-32; Acts 2: 17, 18. Peter's conception of the church embraced this, 1 Pet. 2: 9. Laxity in pulpit and pew—on the part of ministry and laity—is to make all discipline against wrong doing impossible.

The Evils of Denominationalism.

Laxity on the part of one communion and strictness on the part of another makes discipline against an offender ineffectual, as he can (as we have known it to be the case), if excluded from membership in one communion make application for membership in another, and often be received. Here is one of the evils of denominationalism. If one attempts to correct its membership and obey the scriptures by pruning, John 15: 2, and discipline, 2 Thess. 3: 6, another will, in many instances, accept the one the other rejects and render all moral law and authority the church should exert over its members null and void. If one pulls down what another builds up they

Neutralize

each other. A house divided against itself cannot stand, Matt. 12: 25. Here denominationalism is divided against itself. And not only so as we have already said, but if a person should get miffed with another member of the same church to which he belongs, or dissatisfied with his church for personal reasons of a minor nature, that is, as already indicated, dislike for another member or members, or preacher, he may withdraw and at once apply and be received into another communion. It is not a matter of doctrine, faith, practice, but of personal feeling or preference without reference to

The Will of God

as revealed in His word and to man by the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament times, it could be said, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit," 1 Cor. 12: 13. The bond of union cementing the apostolic churches together is oneness of doctrine and practice. We cannot conceive of these churches planted by the apostles varying in doctrine and practice. Such a diversity

As

adult and infant baptism, sprinkling, pouring, and immersion, dancing, gladiatorial amphitheatre-going members, in one church, and adult baptism, immersion, and those opposed to such worldly practices in another, would have been impossible in apostolic churches. One set of rules for one church and another set for another is

Incompatible

with omniscience—with divine authority and superintendency. It is true some might try to get a clue because the gentiles were not commanded to be circumcised (Acts 15) but the truth is circumcision had been annulled—and was not to be continued by the believing Jew. In New Testament theology circumcision is a dead letter from the entrance of Jesus upon His public ministry. It is true it continued to be practiced until Christian theology had dominated Judaism, but the coming of Jesus ended circumcision. It has no place in the new dispensation: It need not be sought for, as it cannot be found. What is the sum of the whole matter? There is

Needed

a body of believers with God in them, authoritatively

operating upon the world, that is, Christ operating upon the world through them. My desire is, my prayer is, the leading of the Holy Spirit is, that there may be such a body, men upon whom God can rely, upon whom He can depend. May God

Raise

up a body dominated by the Holy Spirit of whom Christ is the Head, dating their claims on the remotest antiquity and latest composition of the Scriptures, as old and young as the Bible itself, basing their authority on the teaching of the Bible, as wide and as narrow as it is; clearly and distinctly and unmistakably Bible Christians—men and women believers—after God's own heart.

The Bible.

Being as old and young as the Bible itself, leads us to trace the relation between believers of to-day and the word of God—the Bible. Paul states the relation of the Bible to Christians in two passages of Scripture, Rom. 15: 4; 1 Cor. 10: 11. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." "Now, all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Psa. 44: 1; and Judges 6: 13. "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old." "And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all His miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Mid-

ianites." We may put along side of these quotations, 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17; "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This quotation brings out the object of the Bible. The direct object of the Bible is, clearly, to bring us to God. It tells us how to get to Him. In itself it does not save us, it tells us how we may be saved. It does not possess the power apart from God to save men. Its mission is to lead man to God. It is not intended to be put upon the centre table as a sacred relic or superstitiously worshipped, but devoutly studied as a guide to God. There it leaves man alone with God. The teaching of the Bible, the examples of the Bible, the whole Bible, are to encourage men to come to God. It shows what men have done who came to God. It tells us what kind of men they were, James, 5: 17, and how God took them and used them. The foundation principles and doctrines of the Bible are based upon and deeply rooted in the unchanging nature of God and in the need of man. Man needs God to-day as much as he ever did. Jesus Christ is said to be the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, Heb. 13, 8. There is no change, there cannot be any change in man's nature that will relieve him of his dependence upon God. It is just as important for God to reveal Himself to man to-day, and for man to know God as it ever was. There must be personal contact and the communication of God Himself to the people of this generation as truly and really as to the people of any past generation. The having of the Bible cannot save us. It is simply God's text-book containing the rud-

iments and the elementary instructions concerning Himself in His relation to man. He is still

The

teacher. The Jews had committed to them the oracles of God (Rom. 3: 2), and yet they were rejected of God and scattered abroad, and so it may be with us—perish with an open Bible before us. The depending upon the letter of Scripture and not the Spirit is death to any individual or people. The calling of ourselves a Christian nation, when it is only nominally so—in name—is not worthy to us the breath that it takes to utter it. It is still time (and always will be) that “righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people,” Prov. 14: 34. “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,” Ps. 33: 12. We see then, it is not the possession of the Bible that saves us, but the God of the Bible. The Lord’s portion is His people, Deut. 32: 9; Rom. 14: 7-12. His people’s portion is Himself, Ps. 16: 5; 73: 26; John 20: 28. This is a glorious truth considered either way or both ways. For God to give His people the Bible and not Himself would be unavailing. The Father gave His Son, John, 3: 16, the Son gave Himself, Gal. 2: 20, and has given through Himself from the Father the Holy Spirit, John 14: 56; Acts 2: 33. There could be no greater giving of God to man than this. The Son reveals the Father, John 1: 18, and the Holy Spirit the Son, John 16: 13, 14, 15. There is not anything in heaven and earth that God has not given, Rom. 8: 32. Himself embraces all things, 1 Cor. 3: 21, 22, 23.

Listen to Jesus, “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father,” John 14: 9. The Holy Spirit was visible at the baptism of Jesus and Pentecost, Matt. 3: 16,

and John writes of Jesus, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life (for the life was manifested and we have seen it, and bear witness and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us That which we have seen and have heard declare we unto you, that ye may also have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ,"¹ John 1: 1, 2, 3. And the Son tabernacled among men for the space of over thirty-three years, with a public ministry extending over three years, Acts 1: 21, 22, in which he wrought miracles through the power of the Holy Spirit, Matt, 12: 28, and revealed the Father to mankind, Matt. 11: 27. He taught men to pray, Matt. 6: 9; Luke 11: 7, and to worship "Our Father which is in heaven", John 4: 24. He lifted the veil more fully than it had ever been before from the future and unseen world and brought the kingdom of God to man's door, Mark 1: 15. He showed the relation of man to the present and future life and to this and the next world and his relation and close proximity to both as it had never been seen and understood before. Even His disciples, when He first came and began to teach and unfold to them Himself, His nature, work, and mission, were capable of knowing Him or His doctrine only very imperfectly. They saw His meaning but very dimly. Their conception of him was set in much vagueness. The query upon many lips was, "Who is this Son of man?" John 12: 34. To some of the disciples He said after His resurrection, "O fool and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets

have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," Luke 24: 25, 26, 27. The specific object of the Bible then—is to reveal God in Christ to man, 2 Cor. 5:19. While the Bible is professedly incomplete, John 20:30, 31; 21: 25, yet on this point it is complete. "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through His name." This is the keynote and keystone to the entire Bible. Its object is to establish this truth—that Christ the Son of God and the Son of man came into the world. This was the greatest of all events and the one object of the Bible is to confirm it. It is true that the whole Bible is taken up in preparing the world for the Lord's coming and His coming is the inspiration of all its pages and the music of all ages. No greater statement ever fell from human lips than that made by the Apostle John, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life," 1 John 5: 20. Take Christ out of the Bible and there will not be any Bible left. Christ, in one sense, is the Bible—its theme—its fulfilment, its completion. The Bible is His biography, in law, in types, in shadows, in prophecy, in manifestation, in personality, in His representative, the Holy Spirit. After His ascension is given the acts of the

Holy Spirit

in the Acts of the apostles and the epistles. The

acts of the apostles and the epistles are the acts of His representative, the Holy Spirit. The record as given is fragmentary and partial (with unimportant parts of it missing, Num. 21: 14; 1 Kings 4: 32; 1 Chron. 29: 29; 2 Chron. 9: 29; Col. 4: 16; 1 Cor. 5: 9; Ma t. 2: 23; 27: 9), yet all that is necessary remains to show (and even more) that the Holy Spirit is here guiding and teaching, and administering the affairs of God's Kingdom and church in the world. This is all that it is necessary for the Bible to do, for we are not to rely upon it but the Holy Spirit to which it points and of which it speaks. When the church shall have fully comprehended the mission of the Holy Spirit it will need no other guide, and the Bible will only be a help and this only as it is illuminated by Himself to His own comprehension. It is the present, personal, living, and infinite God upon whom we are to depend and upon whom we are to rely. It may be that the faith of the present church is

Too Much

in the Bible instead of the God of the Bible. Not that we would detract one iota from the Bible but exalt the God of the Bible. Not that we would hush the voice of the bible whose voice was heard for the last time nearly 1900 years ago, but emphasize the ministry of the Holy Spirit whose voice should be heard in the church to-day and, through her, in the world.

Doubtless we have mis-interpreted scripture and misunderstood the real meaning of the Bible. I have been accustomed to hear, for example, from my childhood and the Bible given as the authority,—that the time of our Saviour's return to earth cannot be known. That this is the Scriptural teaching is extremely doubtful, in fact, that it is not is conclusive

—as will be seen. The fact is the Bible is very much like the cloud that led the children of Isreal, to them it gave light, to the Egyptians darkness, Ex. 14: 20. Now, let us state what we mean by saying the time or age in which the Saviour shall return may be known. We mean, it may be revealed to those prepared for it, made ready to receive it. We do not mean to say that any man shall know

Specifically

the hour, day, week, or year, but in some sense the period or age of His coming. Here comes the proof of it. Simeon did not know the time of the Lord's coming the first time—His birth, but what says the inspired penman, "It was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ," Luke 2: 26. It is written, "For ye yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, and in almost the same breath is spoken, "But ye brethern are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you as a thief." "Ye are all the children of light and the children of day". 1 Thess. 5: 4, 6; Acts 1: 7, 8, accords with John, 16: 12, 13. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak;

And He Will Show You Things to Come."

It is one thing to reason and by logical processes and deductions discover truths and another to have them revealed to you. The coming of Jesus is not a logical but revealed truth. No unaided human mind can predict the day in which He will come. It remains yet to be shown to the church the time of His coming. And it is not the Son (Matt. 24: 26) but the Holy Spirit (John 14: 16, 26; 15: 26) that makes His coming known. These Scriptures are

Too

plain to admit if comment. The Father shows the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit represents the Son. One does not infringe upon the office-work of the other. In the Scripture (John 16: 13) already quoted, it is said the Holy Spirit will guide into all truth, not speaking of Himself, what He shall hear that shall He speak, and show things to come. Four things mentioned here. Guide into all truth The coming of Jesus is included in the "all truth." Not speaking of Himself but the Saviour, and showing things in connection with Him, which are to come. Does not this coincide with the words of Jesus to the apostles—"Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" "It is not for you to know the times or seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you," etc. Acts 1: 6, 7, 8. It was

Not For Them

to know. He did not say that no one would know at any future age, rather the contrary. At the proper time, to the proper persons, the Holy Spirit would hear from the Father the things pertaining to Jesus

and shew those things to them. Is not this the teaching of these Scriptures? The Holy Spirit is the teacher of the apostles and of their successors—the church in all

Succeeding

generations. This is the true teaching—the only definition of the word of God.

The Great Work of the Church.

It may be proper here to introduce the unfinished work of the church of God. That is the one thing of the uppermost importance to the people of God. Jesus said to the Father, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," John, 17: 4. The work now to be done is

Committed

to the Holy Spirit to be accomplished through Christ's body—His church. Christ declared on the cross, John 19: 30, that His work (on earth) was finished. He performed no miracles before the public after His resurrection. All that He did was to convince His followers of His identity—His resurrection. He made no converts, no missionary tours. His earthly ministry was finished. But the

Great

work of the world's evangelization had just begun. The commission, in fact, was not given until He was ready to ascend, Matt. 28: 16-20. It is from the throne that He is to witness the preaching of the gospel to "all nations." Who is to do the work? The Holy Spirit through the church. The work to be done demands the forces and resources of the infinite and invisible God. No human mind could plan it, no human hand could execute it, "vicar of Christ" need not be sought in

human form—for he cannot be found.

The Office Work of the Holy Spirit.

We readily see then why the bible is only a text-book containing the rudiments of religion and that the great problems of religion are to be worked out by God the Holy Spirit Himself. As Jesus only

Inaugurated

His work and left it here in the hands of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is to be looked to and relied upon to carry it to successful completion. As the church was left by her founder in an infantile state and before it closed doors and closed hearts, the gigantic undertaking of planting and establishing it in all lands must remain in the hands of God. So Jesus left it in the hands of the Holy Spirit. And of Him its success is to become its crowning glory, and to Jesus the Holy Spirit brings the glory of His death in the fruit of mediatorship on the throne of His Father. So Jesus said, "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." John 16: 14. He opens to us the riches of the Saviour, and, as of old, sets before us open doors, Acts 14: 27. He is letting us know to whom belongs the wealth of China, and has unbolted or is unbolting the doors of Japan. And so the wealth and honor and diadems of all nations are to deck His crown. "The Lord is King in Zion, He is the God of all the earth." Is. 51: 7.

The Uses of the Bible.

A text-book is put into the student's hands upon mathematics. He must first study the arithmetic or be taught it and after he has been taught and thoroughly learned it he may discard the book which was intended as a help to acquire the principles, rules, and maxims of the science. There will always be

need of the text-book because there will always be beginners and learners. We conclude the thought in hand by applying it to the Bible. The Bible will be needed for beginners and learners unless they receive the truth from the lips of others and then it will have its place as containing the deeds, commandments, and providences of God, and the saying and doings of Jesus, &c., but to confine ourselves to the letter of the Bible, forever discussing its teachings and doctrines without apprehending its one great truth that is to bring us to God, is to misunderstand its real mission and fail to appropriate its one essential benefit and blessing to man. Jesus Himself came for this, John 14: 6. "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Jesus said to the people who were perishing about him, "They have Moses and the prophets," Luke 16: 29, yet they did not hear them, Luke 16: 31. He wept over them, Luke 19: 41, and as He predicted, John 8: 24, they finally perished in their sins. If the word of God—the Scriptures—could have saved a nation, the Jews would not have perished in their sins. They had the letter, the text—the copy of the Old Testament Scriptures, but that in itself did not suffice to save them. We still need the living message from the living God, proclaimed from the lips of living men to the living, and that message received and fully accepted. I believe still in the verbal proclamation of God's word, the truth coming from God and announced from human lips. The fountain from which it comes will never run dry. The Scriptures that we quote to show that God will never speak to men through man again do not prove it, in fact have no reference to it. For example, when we give Rev.

22. 18. 19, to prove that the canon of Scripture is completed we simply misappropriate Scripture, for it has no reference whatever to that. It is not a warning to keep one from seeking to hear the voice of God and from becoming a vehicle of His message to men. It prohibits, however, interference with the things written in that specific book. We remember also, that the word of the Lord abideth forever, 1 Peter 1: 25, His word stands—the word as already spoken, unalterable, but it is not said anywhere that God will never speak to men again. He may never add another chapter to the Bible, but He will move the world through men. Whatever He does will be in harmony with what He has already done. There will never be

Two

conflicting Bibles and religions emanating from Himself. He cannot deny Himself, neither can He contradict Himself.

Again, it is said by some that the day of miracles is past, yet there is no Scriptural authority for the statement. It is true we do not know of any in the Scriptural sense being performed, yet the absence of miracles may argue a lack of faith more strongly than the withdrawal of miraculous power. It is not necessary for us to hedge in and build walls, for example, as to the canon of Scriptures and miracles, where God has not built them, and when He has kept silent. Our fortifications may be erected at the wrong place and obstruct God's purpose instead of defending His truth; man's duty is plainly in watching and waiting upon the Lord, and living by faith in Him, Hab. 2: 1-4; Jer 10: 23; Mic. 6: 8; Prov. 3: 5, 6, and walking humbly with Him.

Perhaps one of the mistakes made is taking things

for granted said and taught by others, without subjecting them to the crucial test of facts as they are instead of as they are said to be. Frequently there is a wide difference between what things are said to be and what they are. One's duty is to get at the facts. That may require the revision, and often the rejection of much existing theology. The enemies of Christ said He had a devil, John 7: 20. That is the way they saw him. Did they study Him and see Him as He was? They knew no more of His real character than if He had not been present before them, John 1: 10, yet they had the Scriptures that foretold His coming, John 5: 46, and with them, they were totally ignorant of the Being who stood before them, even to His disciples He must begin at Moses and expound to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself, Luke 24: 27. Home-spun and home-made religion was far

Too

common among the Jews. They had a Saviour which was to come and a religion, but both, unhappily, were largely of their own manufacture. They had built up a system—a code of their own—upon the word of God and that became their standard. Every thing must be judged, and stand or fall, by that. The creations of their own brains, the fanciful interpretations and traditions of the elders, made void the commandments of God, Matt. 15: 6. May not many to day, seriously and wisely

Question

the ground of their faith and practice? Can they give a reason for the hope within them, 1 Pet. 3:15? Is it built solely upon the word of God or mainly upon the interpretation of that word by them. Do we

remember that we re personally responsible to God for what we believe and why we believe it? We read "So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God," Rom..14: 12. We are judged as individuals,we are responsible as individuals—individuals we stand or fall.

It is possible to-day to have a religion, to be religious, and yet be far from being a Bible Christian and believing and professing and practicing Bible Christianity. This being true, and no one who has studied the subject will

Dare

deny it, we can understand why it is said the day of miracles, and many other things, are passed and gone, for with many of those who say it, apostolic, primitive Bible religion is

Past

and gone. It is true what they have been taught and believe is taken from systems built up upon the Bible

But not Out of the Bible.

That is, much has been added and in other instances, human opinions substituted for the teaching of the word of God. The result is what men have believed and taught has in the course of time been believed and accepted by others, and made a part of their religion. The time has come for the rejection of mere human belief and a return to following the Lord. God is maturing His plans and making ripe a people to carry them out. There will be a people dominated by God—made ready by the Holy Spirit who will execute His will. "If these" (who have been appointed) "hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out," Luke 19: 40. Why? "For I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children

unto Abraham," Matt. 3: 9. "Is there anything too hard for the Lord?" Jer. 32: 17, 27. Verily, no, let us think of His double amens, of His oath, swearing by Himself, Heb. 6: 13,14, by His own eternity, Num. 14: 21, that His glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the seas. It is then clearly improper to restrict the Lord as to what He is going to do, or put barriers in the way of one's faith, by teaching that God is not going to do what in all probability He may do. In other words, when the Lord had remained silent, at least it is better for man not to speak, for whatever he may say under the circumstances, will, at best, be a mere conjecture. We know that God is going to do a great deal that has not yet been done, but as to

How

He is going to do it is with Him. It is not for us to dictate but willingly and gladly to submit to the Lord's way and to His plans. We have one of the Lord's double amens in John, 14: 12. That is a prophecy of what is to be done through His people. In the accomplishment of the "greater works" through His people if He shall see fit to work miracles who shall say Him nay? Who shall dictate to him? Is. 40: 13 Jer. 23: 18; 1 Cor. 2: 16.

After all, who need be surprised or wonder that many suppose the day of miracles past and gone forever? Is not this the day in which the church is engaged in festivals, yard parties, oyster suppers, &c., &c., to help meet its financial obligations? Is not the outward—buildings, music, &c.,—overshadowing the spiritual? When will she awake to the supreme importance of religion? Who would have the temerity to run his farm, meet his obligations in the mer-

cantile business, by holding festivals, yard parties, oyster suppers? Would one be considered doing business on business principles? What about the Lord's work when we resort to these expedients? Is it not evident, in view of these facts, that religion is not the chief concern of mortals here below? If it is,

They are not Making it so.

Does the Lord need our money so badly that one must resort to these questionable means to supply His treasury? In fact, is He getting

Our

money? No, not when it is got from these sources. He who drove the money-changers from His temple (Matt. 21: 12) cannot be pleased with this money. If He is the God of whom we read (Ps. 50: 10; Hag. 2: 9) it is not for His but our good that He requires us to give. This being true, one can readily see how resorting to these means mentioned to replemish the Lord's treasury, prostitutes the Bible idea of giving, and destroys all the good that He intends for it to produce in us! Away with these substitutes for God's word and rule for giving! Return to the Bible and study there the subject of giving. Let it convey to our minds God's purpose in commanding us to give, and then we will never have another yard party or festival to raise money. Who can say us nay to this assertion? No one will have the courage to utter a word of protest against it. The truth of it is only too apparent to all who are willing to accept it and be governed by it. If we understand the Lord He is trying to develop

Our

faith in Himself making himself the center of our affections and the recipient of our gifts, Matt. 6: 21; 25:

45. And yet He declares Himself to be the giver of every good and perfect gift, James 1: 17. What can we say then? With David, "all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee", 1 Chron, 29: 14. A return of all or a part of that which He has given us is a visible expression of our faith in Him. If we lay our all at His feet it is

Proof Positive

of our trust in Him. No one can give as did the widow, of whom our Savior made mention, Mark 12: 42, 43, 44), without faith in and reliance upon God. Perhaps there were children depending upon her but that was no obstacle in the way of the faith that had seen God. None could stop the upward glance of that power that impelled her. It was faith. Its every movement is toward God, it honors God. It is not afraid to trust Him and leave the result with Him. It knows Him and delights to please Him. It is a blessed fruit of Himself—of God the Holy Spirit, Gal 5: 22, and not the product of nature's barren soil. It knows that God who fed His people upon manna in the wilderness (Deut. 8: 3; 15-18), who sent ravens to feed His prophet Elijah (1 Kings 17: 46) and who through him declared to the widow of Zarephath, "The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth" (1 Kings 17: 14). We need to-day, most of all,

Pioneer

faith—that believes whether it sees or not. That dares to trust God—not relying upon any feeling, but entirely upon God Himself. Believing in His naked word in Himself—God. This faith asks for no other evidence than God Himself. That is not the strong-

est faith that must see signs and wonders before it believes, John 4: 48-50; 1 Cor. 14: 22. The highest expression of faith asks for no signs—stands alone—without props—and walks without crutches. Its achievements are purely of faith—faith-victories. They are wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit. The men who bring them to pass are moved mightily by the Spirit, Judges 6: 34; 3: 10; 11: 29; 15: 14. They are God's chosen instruments, empowered by Him and moved by Him to service. The spirit of God is upon them, working in them, and fitting them for service, Phil. 2: 13. To His servants thus equipped and harnessed for service, He says, "when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee," Is. 43: 2. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint," Is. 40: 31. "Neither shall the heat nor sun smite them," Is. 49: 10. Why? Because it is declared that man doth not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God, Deut: 8: 3. We read of the angel feeding Elijah and of his going in the strength of that meat for forty days, 1 Kings 19: 5-8. It was declared that the journey was too great for him. God strengthened him. It was in His power he went. It is in the

Might

of the Lord that all victories are to be achieved. So it was in the Bible days, so it is to be in our days. Let us say with Jeremiah,

"The Great, The Mighty

God, the Lord of hosts is His name. Great in counsel, and mighty in work and doing," Jer. 38: 18, 19. Isaiah, when he saw the Lord sitting upon His throne, after being cleansed from his iniquity, exclaimed, "Here am I; send me," Is. 6: 1-8. The greatness of God over-whelmed him. His purity humbled him. The live coal enthused him. The voice of God aroused him. He immediately volunteered for divine service. The vision of God to Paul started him upon that intensely active career, Acts, chapters, 9, 22, 26. Even Joseph was called the dreamer, Gen. 37: 19. His dreams came true. They were

God-Given.

Is not this a true characteristic of the Spirit's administration? "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams," Acts 2: 17. Visions and dreams! The New Testament saints had them. They were of frequent occurrence. They figured largely in the lives of some of the apostles. They are especially mentioned in connection with Peter and Paul, and who can forget John's on the Isle of Patmos? Is it not what we need to-day—the vision of God? a great deal is said about this being a

Material

age—the vision of God would relieve us of that and remove its effects. To the extent we see God, we assimilate His character and are made into His likeness. The (His) birth-mark is upon us. We are known, for our citizenship is in heaven, Phil. 3: 20 (R. V.). "This man was born there." And of Zion it shall be said, this and that man was born in her,"

Ps. 87: 4-6. It is soon known from whence one hails. If our citizenship is in heaven it is not unlikely or unnatural that we should have visions of heaven. To have glimpses or faith-views of the country in which we live is most natural and to be expected.

Let us stop and reflect on how often God has

Proclaimed

Himself the Lord, "I am the Lord your God" (see Lev. chapters 18, 19, and Is. chapters 45, 46). The repetition ought to

Burn

the truth into one's heart. It is intended to do it. It is held up before us. "Thou God seest me," Gen. 16: 13, should be converted into, I see God. What a privilege! "The God of our fathers has chosen thee that thou shouldst know His will,

And shouldst see that Just One,

and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth," Acts 22: 14. "Blessed are the pure in heart,

For they shall see God,"

Matt. 5: 8. What a misfortune to have

Eyes and See not,

ears and hear not, Is. 6: 9. What a glorious prophecy—"The eyes of the blind shall be opened" (Luke 4: 18). Lord, "open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thine law," Ps. 119: 18. Blind and deaf—a terrible condition, a lamentable affliction! Balaam between two walls—a narrow pass, confronted by an angel with flaming sword, drawn, ready to execute the Lord's will upon him—blind! Num. 22: 21-32. Lord, withhold not mine eyes from thee—from thy providences! Let me see! Elisha's prayer for his servant (2 Kings 6: 17) is a commendable one. It is not in a natural but spiritual

sense in which we want to see Him. The Jews (as we have already seen) saw Christ with their natural eyes, yet they did not know Him. They saw Him and did not see Him—an unenviable paradox! Matt. 13: 14. To “see Him as He is” (1 John 3: 2) is an inestimable blessing. To be beguiled as our first parent Eve was (2 Cor. 11: 3; 2 Tim. 2: 14) is to be the victim of untold evil to one’s self and posterity. “Not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor. 2: 11) is a glorious attainment of spiritual wisdom. It enables its possessor to unmask the transformed Satan (2 Cor. 11: 14) to see his real character and purpose. Who is it that desires such wisdom (?) let him ask for it. O for the conquering faith of Job (Job 19: 25, 26, 27) that overcame all difficulties and assured itself confidently of seeing God! Whether I die or not

I shall see him.

This is the boon of humanity. The greasiest curse will be being driven from God.

“Depart from Me,”

Matt. 25: 41. God’s presence is everything. It turned the Red Sea into dry land, the fiery furnace into “a haven of rest,” and the lions’ den into a peaceful abode, and made the jail at Philippi resound with praises to the risen Lord, Acts 16: 25. It quieted the angry sea until there was a great calm, Ex. 14: 21. Dan. 3: 25; 6: 22; Mark 4: 39. Let me fall into the hands of God, 2 Sam. 24: 14. The words, “Depart from me”—fall like sledge-hammer blows upon the soul, and beat out every vestige of the divine life, and echo its final doom. They lock the iron gates that mark the separation between God and the lost forever. Driven out, shut in a terrible doom.

Paul says, “Wherefore comfort one another with

these words,"—"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:

And so shall we ever be with the Lord,"

1 Thess. 4: 17, 18.

The Effect of Giving.

It is natural that giving should lead to God's gift, John 3: 16. In fact, God introduces Himself to us in giving. He gave man life, Gen. 2: 7. He prepared a world for him in which to dwell, and gave him dominion over all which He made in it, Gen. 1: 28; Ps. 8: 6; Heb. 2: 7, 8. He gave Adam Eve (Gen. 2: 18) and from that day to this has never ceased His giving to the human family. He has declared, "Give, and it shall be given unto you;" &c., Luke 6: 38. "Freely ye have received, freely give," Matt. 10: 8. "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, &c., 2 Cor. 9: 6. In the midst of giving Paul cries out, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift," 2 Cor. 9: 15. In Romans (8: 32) it is declared, "He that spared not His own Son," &c. The early disciples gave their all. Who need wonder then, that giving leads to God the Giver, and that in giving we see God? This

Self-Abandonment

in giving is like God and naturally leads one to Him. If one would see God let him cultivate systematically the habit of giving. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store *as God has prospered him,*" 1 Cor. 16: 2. What the world would call

Reckless

giving would help the conservatism of many so-called Christians of the present day. The spending of more

money for tobacco than many professing Christians are putting into the treasury of the Lord will rise in the judgment as a witness against them. Paying more for tobacco than the gospel! Who would have that go to judgment before him and witness against him? Shall we

Love

tobacco more than God and give more for it than the salvation of souls? Serious thought! momentous question! Let us "Awake to righteousness, and sin not," 1 Cor. 15: 34. These statements are intended as suggestions—to stir us up to think. One charge the Lord brought against His ancient people—"My people doth not consider," Is. 1: 3. It may be brought against the most of us.

Do not forget the Lord's maxim (axiom)—"The tree is known by its fruit," Matt. 7: 16-20; 12: 33. It is an infallible test. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," Matt. 6: 21. These are not a jungle of Scriptures thrown together at will (random) but the orderly presentation of a great truth. They bring out the fact that those who see God give spontaneously. Zaccheus represents this class, "Behold Lord, the half of my goods, I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold," Luke 19: 8. The case in hand is a fulfilment of Prov. 19: 17. The Lord not only repays him again but declares, "This day is salvation come to this house," Luke 19: 9. Giving places the giver in the proper attitude for receiving. The giving of the Holy Spirit to men was the cause of their emptying their all at the apostles feet at the church's disposal. The giving of the Holy Spirit on God's part, and the receiving of Him on man's part

will be followed, as in the olden times, by spontaneous giving. If God first gives and man receives, there will not be an empty church treasury. "I will run in the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart," Ps. 119: 32. The new wine will burst the old bottles, Matt. 9: 17, and the box of spikenard be broken on the master's feet, Mark 14: 3. The enlargement of heart will enlarge the collection, Ex. 35: 21; 25: 2. The modern methods of taking collections are dissimilar to apostolic ones. There is no need of laboring with spirit-filled and led men in order to get them to give, but rather the opposite—restrain them from giving, 2 Cor. 8: 1-4; Ex. 36: 5, 6, 7; Phil. 4: 14-19. Such a collection as this would be an object-lesson to modern congregations. It would be to them nothing short of a miracle. Does not this show the distance between the average Christian of to-day and those of pentecost! Why the difference? Do we

Lack

the pentecostal type of religion? are we retrograding? Have we retrograded? It is time to call a halt! "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you [God's gift], except ye be reprobates?" 2 Cor. 13: 5.

One's conduct is the index to his character—his real self. "By their fruits ye shall know them," Matt. 7: 20. This

Clinging

to worldly things and goods is a sign of decayed faith and departed spirituality. We need a revival of looking, "Not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which

are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal," 2 Cor. 4: 18. The greatness of Moses was due to his sight of the invisible. "He endured, as seeing Him who is invisible", Heb. 11:27, to the mortal eye, but present to the eye of faith. Stephen said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God, Acts 7: 56. The heavenly mindedness—the true greatness of man depends upon his seeing God. This is so in giving. If one sees God in giving, the gift is blest, and the giver helped, otherwise it is a farce—a meaningless rite—an empty bubble. Some preachers then "taking a collection" are

More suitable

for a circus than the sanctuary. To maneuver and manipulate on the part of a preacher, a congregation in taking a collection, is unbecoming in the messenger of the Lord Jesus Christ and unworthy of the gospel. It is out of keeping with the character of his Lord and out of harmony with the spirit of His word. To get money from a congregation—like one milking a spiteful cow who must first chain her head and tie her feet, before undertaking to milk her, is more fitting for the reputation of a politician than a preacher! It matters not how worthy the object or pressing the need, money should not be solicited and procured for it otherwise than God's word—or the spirit of it—doth allow. For example, missions and the importance of them cannot be exaggerated—should be supported only in harmony with the spirit of the gospel. All

Missionary

activity should be conducted strictly along evangelical lines. No digression whatever should be permitted from the general tenor and principles of the gos-

pel. World-wide evangelization cannot be accomplished except by compliance with God's plan. These plans are given and were unfolded in the days of Christ and His apostles. They are contained in the following Scriptures as applied to the church of to-day, Luke 10: 2; Acts 13: 2, 3, 4. The order seems to be first, prayer for laborers to the "Lord of the harvest." Second, the prayer heard, the laborers called, appointed and sent, by the Holy Ghost, the Lord's representative. If this order is preserved by the Church, we believe the money will be forthcoming that may be needed to bear the expenses of the missionaries. The Church waiting upon God until He sends the laborers should also wait for Him to give the money to defray their expenses. The command of the master is "Go" (Matt. 28: 19), but His other command, "Tarry" (Luke 24:49) is as equally imperative. Both considered together make the divine order, preparatory to one's being called and sent forth into God's vineyard, imperative "prayer," and "sent forth by the Holy Ghost." Let this order be observed and everything else will follow as night day in the physical world. Let us study the

First Age

of the church as an evangelizing institution. How did God's plan work? What did those men—for whom the church prayed and the Holy Spirit sent,—accomplish? Did they succeed? To read the fragmentary account of their labors is simply marvelous. We know very little of what many of them did and yet the record, as we have it, is filled with astonishing results accomplished through their labors. A full record of their labors would be almost incred-

lous! It would read like a romance of the intensest fiction. "Truth is stranger than fiction."

For these men God was responsible. Prayer had been offered for workmen, God heard it and sent the men. They were

His

laborers and He was responsible for their support and success, 1 Cor. 9: 7. He had involved Himself in their call to the work, John 15: 16. It could not be otherwise but that He was with them. His own, carrying out His own commission. What is the sequel of this? That if the church—the Lord's body—wants to carry out the Lord's command, for example, in the evangelization of China, let her pray for laborers to evangelize China, and pray until God sends the workmen. These laborers—God-called and sent—will have every assurance of success. Divinely called, divinely sent, divinely qualified—what

Elements

of success can be lacking? The equipment is perfect and the outcome sure. To these workers there can be no defeat, no failure.

In death they are victorious! They may be martyrs to the truth—but the truth lives—has in itself the element of perpetuity, the germ of immortality. Jesus Christ Himself and many of His disciples were martyrs to the truth, but that for which they died—

The Truth,

is living on and winning its votaries in every clime. God Himself is the God of truth, Deut. 32: 4; Ps. 31: 5: Truth is one of His attributes and is perennial.

It may be that the church will have to wait and wrestle mightily in prayer for these laborers to be

sent but who will say that, that is not the thing for her to do? Who can deny our unfitness for service if our undertaking it prematurely, Num. 14: 40-45. Even in the Old Testament the Spirit of God came on men for service, Judges 3: 10. 6: 34; 11: 29; 15: 14. An equipped and qualified army will do more in a day than an ignorant and cowardly one in a lifetime. Of God's chosen people, "One shall chase a thousand and two put ten thousand to flight," Deut. 32: 30. One of God's men is a host in Himself, 1 Sam. 14: 6-45; Judges 7: 4, 7; 2 Chron. 14: 11.

God marshals His forces to-day, not

Against

men but sin. The destruction of sin is the ultimate aim of the kingdom of God, 1 John 3: 8. If men shall lose their lives or souls it is owing to their union with wickedness, and refusing to be divorced from it. The Saviour explicitly says, "For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them," Luke 9: 56; John 12: 47. The

Mission

of His people—the church—is soul-saving. "Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins," James 5: 20. "Let him know"—speak it out! a barren ministry is a Christless ministry. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples," John 15: 8. A church or preacher without fruit need to question her or his orthodoxy. Whatever

Fails

in its mission is in itself a failure.

It is at this point one is to *urge* upon the ministry apostolic succession. This is the succession that

counts in the Scriptural table of genealogy, Matt. ch. 1 and Luke 3: 23—38. It is here we should trace our descent back to our Lord and His apostles. Are we in good and regular standing here? If so we need not fear the missing historical links. There is a direct connection between us and the living God. The proof of this is the salvation of souls.

These

are our credentials. "Ye are our epistles written in our hearts, known and read of all men." Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistles of Christ

Ministered

by us, written not with ink, but the spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart," 2 Cor. 3: 2, 3. The thought is summed up in, "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth," 2 Cor. 10: 18. If we have

God's

endorsation, that goes despite of everything that opposes, and whatever else we may have without it amounts to nothing. His endorsation is in the "living epistles" in the incarnated Bible written up to date in the hearts and upon the lives of men. The new Bible, latest edition, revised, corrected, and published to the world—the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and upon the lives of men—is the preacher's highest recommendation of being sent of God to be a fisherman of men, Matt. 4: 19. This is the Bible of the Holy Spirit's writing. Every preacher should have an individual copy of it, a testimonial of his life-work, presented to him by God the Holy Spirit. Such Bibles as these will confound the "higher crit-

ics." as the testimony of the man, who was born blind and given his sight by Jesus confounded the Pharisees. See the account of it in John ch. 9. This is the dink of testimony needed. These

Dry-as-Dust-Treatises—

on the evidences of Christianity amount to a very little and convince very few if any. The presence of living witnesses is evidence within itself undeniable and irrefutable, Acts 4: 14. Our Lord Himself referred the people to His works as His credentials from the skies, John 5: 37; 10: 25, 38; 8: 54, and the favors in which he was held by His Father in Heaven. It was convincing to all who were open to conviction. "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him," John 3: 2. "Among the chief rulers also many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:" "For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God, John 12: 42, 43. What is said here is

The Key

to what has been said elsewhere in this book upon the Bible.

Let not the pulpit continue to discourse simply upon the text of the Bible, but catch its enlarged vision and prophetic spirit and enter heartily into the unfinished work of the church of the divine and exalted Saviour. It is by thus doing that the great missionary work of the church is to be launched and embarked on a successful voyage. Let the motto of the church henceforth be—deeds not words. Let her bring her Lord's work to pass. Hear what He says to her, "Ask me of things to come concerning my

sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me," Is. 45: 11. And read that frequently repeated, "*Fear not*, I will help thee," Is. 40: 13.

World Wide

evangelization has been God's purpose from the beginning. It is found all through the Bible. The Old Testament is full of it, Gen. 22: 18; Num. 14: 21; Is. 55: 5; 60: 5; Ps. 2: 8; 72: 11; 86: 9; Jer. 4: 2; 10: 7; Zeck. 2: 11; 8: 22; Mal. 3: 12; etc.

The future of the church is full of promise. God is pledged to work in her behalf. We hear again, His "*Fear not*," in the New Testament, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," Luke 12: 32. He as the old adage goes, has not left a stone unturned. Glorious success must attend His peoples' labors. The statement is made, (1 Cor. 15: 25), "For he

Must

reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." He Himself is under a necessity. Not to reign until His kingdom is fully established would be to *fail* in His mission. That would give His enemies occasion to revile and reproach Him, Num. 14: 16; Josh. 7: 8, 9; Lukè 14: 28—35. The law that controls Him is inexorable. It is of His own appointing, John 10: 17, 18. It is a self-surrendered life given to fulfill a self-imposed mission. While it is true the Father gave (John 3: 16) the Son, it is also true, "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time," 1 Tim. 2: 6; Gal. 2: 20. It seems to us the inspiration of this truth ought to make the church shout hosannas from every hill-top.

Satan himself is a conquered foe, as we have previously seen, and death's dominion is abolished. The

church should march on to victory—*speedy* victory. The two exhortations given by Isaiah seem to be especially appropriate here: “Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old.” “Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab? Art thou not it that hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; and hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over.” Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.” Is. 51: 9, 10, 11. Again, “Awake, awake, put on thy strength O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments O Jerusalem, the holy City: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the hands of thy neck, O Captive daughter of Zion. For thus saith the Lord, ye have sold yourselves for naught; and ye shall be redeemed without money. For thus saith the Lord God, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there, and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought, they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day is blasphemed. Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day that I am that doth speak; behold, it is I. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that sayeth unto Zion, thy

God

reigneth! Thy watchman shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted, He hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Is. 52: 1-10. The church at this time has come to her

Red Sea.

She should recognize in God her deliverer, and call mightily upon Him for a passage through the deep. As God moves let her move. Then she shall pass over dry shod and come forth with singing and shouts of hosannas and hallelujahs of praise unto her God. O that the church may

Rise

en masse and call upon her God, and Jacob-like (Gen. 32: 26) not let him go until He has made her the joy of the whole earth: Ps. 48: 2; Lam. 2: 15. The church thus aroused and awakened would be the fulfilling of Ezekiel's prophecy found in the 37 chapter. The present state of the church is fitly described in that chapter. She is spiritually inactive. The activity seen in operation is not, strictly speaking, spiritual. The

Great

cry is for millions of money to endow institutions of learning. The trend, evidently, is in the wrong direction. Not that we undervalue education, but protest against its being placed foremost. A great revival of religion would secure the money and be in accord

with God's order. The churches are trying to raise the money first and then work up a revival. They want the revival to follow the giving, whereas in God's order, he puts the revival first and the giving follows the revival.

As we have said then, the great activity of the church to-day, strictly speaking, is not spiritual. The church wants something to *shake* her up and *wake* her up spiritually. She needs something like that exhortation in Ephesians, said to be a fragment of one of the early Christian hymns, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," Ephes. 5: 14. Such a song as this sung through all Christendom and heeded would result in a mighty revival in the home lands and a mighty impetus to the truth abroad. Why not sing such a song, heed such a song, and preach such a song, until all the nations of the earth shall be chanting its melody and rejoicing in the light and life of Christ? Who will

Strike

the tune? It may be a solo at first but others will join in the chorus, and after awhile a mighty volume of music will fill the earth. The angels sung (Luke 2: 13, 14) His praise at first but let us say with the Psalmist, "Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my rod," Ps. 42: 11. Despite the combined forces of earth and hell we shall sing, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen." Rev. 1: 5, 6. Glorious anthem, let it fill earth and ascend to the skies! Let earth vie with

heaven to do the master's will. Let us remember however that appeal to God, its importance, "Arm of the Lord awake," etc. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," Ps. 110: 3. "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion," Ps. 110: 2. "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God," Ps. 62: 11. He heard it from God Himself that power belongs unto Him. The church will be as still as Lazarus in his tomb unless she hears the voice of the Master calling loudly, "come forth," John 11: 43. What is the

Programme,

then, that we would outline for the 20th century thank-offering? Not, primarily, the raising of millions of dollars, but a return to the Lord's order of doing His work. We would put on the programme,

First,

prayers to the Lord of the harvest for laborers, Second, waiting on him until the prayers is heard and the laborers sent. Third, the evangelization of the world carrying out the Lord's command, Luke 10: 2; 24: 49; Acts 13: 4; Matt. 28: 19, 20. The last follows the other two. We are trying to evangelize the world without prayer, that is, without prayer in God's way. We are trying too much to do God's work in our own way. The church is sending out more men from her colleges and universities than from her prayer-meetings and preaching services. Too often their first commission to "Go," is from the church, whereas it should be from God, John 15: 16. God should first choose the man before the church has anything to do with sending him. His authority at

First Hand

should be from God and not a body of men. Upon

whom must the man sent rely for his message—God or the church? If upon God, evidently God should *send* him.

Sometime since the question arose in our mind, to what extent shall the minister, called of God and sent by Him to preach, rely upon him for the text from which to preach? Our answer to the question is wholly in the affirmative. And not only for the text but for the entire sermon when based upon a text. There may be times when God gives the message without a text. And not only is it proper for the preacher to rely upon the Lord for the text—and the message—but also the congregation to whom to deliver it. In this way he can preach to small as well as large congregations. He is not discouraged by the presence of a few (Matt. 18: 20), nor over-awed or elated by the presence of many. He sees God's hand in it which ever way it may be and he proceeds to do God's will regardless of whatever that may be. He can preach, and that without notes, wherever he finds souls without hope and without God in the world, Ephes. 2: 12. He is not confined to the pulpit or rostrum from which to make appeals to men. He can preach Christ and Him crucified, 1 Cor. 2: 2, from a goods-box as well as in the finest cathedral in the land. And this he can do despite the state of his audience—whether illiterate or cultured—Christ is held up to them—the universal man—the Saviour of all men who believe upon His name. Is. 45: 22; John 12: 32; Rom. 10: 12; Ephes. 3: 15; Gal. 3: 28; 1 Cor. 12: 13, &c. In this sense, He belongs to no race or age but belongs to all races and ages—to all men of all times and all places. This is the main-spring of all missionary movement. The first recorded sermon of

Jesus, by Luke, is drawn from the missionary labors of two of His prophets—Elijah and Elisha, Luke 4: 25, 26, 27. When the Jews refused to accept (Luke 4: 24) the prophets whom the Lord had sent unto them He shows His purpose to save all them that believe, by sending His prophets to persons of other nations. To Paul He said, "I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles," Acts 22: 21. There is nothing in race

Itself

to keep God with it. The dispersion of the Jews is proof of it. We will all learn as did Peter, sooner or latter, that God is no respecter of persons, Acts 10: 34. Unless those who are called Christians live up to their privileges and responsibilities it is not improbable that those who are heathen at present may be sending in the future the gospel to the once so-called Christian lands. Fancy an African or Chinaman a missionary to England or America! Some of the most enlightened and Christianized lands of Bible times are mission fields to-day. Rev. 1: 11.

Missionary Ground.

This territory is now Missionary ground. There is a note of warning in the old adage, "History repeats itself." Hear Paul to the Jews:—"It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles," Acts 13: 46. There are several lessons for us to learn here—the preaching the gospel to all men does not necessarily

Mean

the salvation of all men. The wilful rejection of the Gospel when it has been faithfully presented may demand that the ambassadors of the Lord go to another

place and people. Swift retribution may follow the rejection of the gospel. It did in the case of the Jews we know of their sufferings and of the destruction of their city—Jerusalem. That individual's and nation's probation may

End

when they little think it and least expect it. That individuals and nations get on a dead-center where they cannot be moved—pass over the dead-line and are doomed. We read of those people of whom it is said, "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness," &c., Rom. 1: 24, 26. When God

Gives

a man or nation up their cases are hopeless. "When they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them; and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. 5: 3. That such has been the case with multiplied individuals and nations both sacred and profane history only too abundantly testify. Jesus told the Jews, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins," John 8: 24. Again, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am thither ye cannot come," John 7: 34. The perpetuity of nations depends upon their acceptance of Jesus Christ.

The clash between capital and labor may find reconciliation here. All sociological questions become explicable and transparent around the person of Christ. He is the great commoner, leveler, the remover of obstacles and the unifier of the race. We can readily see why the question of the age is the question of missions—of the Christ. One has said, "No missions, no Christ". No missions, no church, no equality and justice among men, no righting of the wrongs and the establishment of equity in the earth.

The divine fiat—the unalterable decision of Diety is,
 “And this gospel of the kingdom

Shall

be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come,” Matt. 24: 14.
 And the gospel

Must

first be published among all nations,” Mark 13: 10. The nations need it and God has determined to give them the gospel. There will be *no* judgment until the gospel has been preached the world over. We may pray and look for the coming of the Saviour but it will not take place until the world has been evangelized. It we want Him to come we

Must

preach the gospel—preach to all men, preach it in season and out of season (2 Tim. 4: 2), preach it whether men will hear or forbear (Ezek. 2: 5), believe or disbelieve it, accept or reject it. The command is, preach it. The thing for the minister and the church to do is, to see that they preach it. They are under obligations to Christ to preach it. They are responsible not for the result, but for the preaching of it. The church should be true to her duty and carry out as speedily as possible her Lord’s commission. Let her rally around Matt. 28: 19, until the name of Jesus shall have been spoken to every heart and in every home throughout the universe.

Let every one catch the inspiration of Charles Wesley’s hymn, “O for a thousand tongues to sing, my great redeemer’s praise.” A feeling like this would give us a world evangelized on

Short

notice. Of Jesus His disciples remembered that it

was written, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," John 2: 17. Consuming zeal for God's cause and quenchless desire for the salvation of souls would give the missionary movement such an impetus that it would go forward with rapid strides, and the next one or two decades would witness manifest and marvellous changes that would surprise the most sanguine and dumb-found the unbelieving and skeptical in missionary work. Before such a tide of enthusiasm as this, difficulties would disappear and wonderful achievements follow. The keynote would be, "O Lord, revive thy work," Hab 3: 2, and the watchword Onward! "the uttermost parts of the earth," Acts 1:8.

May the Lord give us a revival that will encircle the globe! It must start somewhere, Let it start in my heart here and now. What can I do to promote it, so it may become world-wide? Am I doing anything that would hinder it, or leaving undone anything that would promote it?

These are serious questions for man's consideration. On God's part we read "Faithful is He that calleth you who also will do it," 1 Thess. 5: 24. "My presence shall go with you," Ex. 33: 14. "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," Matt. 28: 20. Let us turn these driving wheels of divine promises into the full assurance of faith and revolve with lightning speed in our

Appointed

orbit of the world's evangelization! O to revolve around Christ as the planets around the sun! To feel the force of His attraction, John 12; 32. To move with the rapidity of His dying love! To lay down our lives if need be for one another, 1 John 3: 17. To spend and be spent for men's souls, 2 Cor. 12: 15. To

know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, (Ephes. 3: 19), and to be constrained thereby, 2 Cor. 5: 14, and strengthened in Him, Phil. 4: 13. The revival of interest in the

Soul's Salvation

is the need of the hour. "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins [He saith to the sick of palsy], I say unto thee, arise, and take thy bed, and go thy way into thine house," Mark 2: 10, 11. Perhaps it would have been easier for Jesus to heal the man's body than to forgive his sins. It would not have required but a word to heal the material body, but it required sacrifice—reparation—to forgive sin. It may be that the church will have to learn to-day that simply relieving peoples' outward distresses without any cost or sacrifice to themselves will not do—is not all that God requires at their hand. We must get at the meaning of human need and put ourselves in touch with it before we can lead humanity to the Christ. The great need of humanity is within, Matt. 15: 18, 19. The healing is to be from within outward—first the soul and then the body. This is God's order and command, Matt. 6: 33. If a man is truly brought to Jesus and saved, that in itself will be a great blessing to him temporally and physically. That is God's way—that the soul-life shall dominate the temporal and physical life. The body is the

Servant

of the soul—not master, 1 Cor. 9: 27. The thing to magnify is the soul-life, Matt. 10: 28; 16: 26; Luke 9: 25. We should try to get a just estimate of the value of a soul. What did our Master think of it? We know in part by His teaching, Matt. 12: 12; Luke 15:

4 32. By His death, John 10: 15. By His resurrection and intercession, Acts 2: 31-33; 5: 30, 31; 1 John 2: 1. Primarily the work of soul-saving is His own and only work, John 1: 12; Matt. 1: 21. Sin is the

Only

thing that makes men unhappy. Destroy that and you have destroyed the cause of all the misery in the world, 1 John 3: 8. Sin destroys the soul. Christ destroys sin.

We might inquire, in the next place, what did those whom Christ had saved think of the value of souls? Hear what the great apostle to the gentiles has to say about his countrymen:—"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved," Rom. 10: 1. "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," Rom. 9: 3. None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God," Acts 20: 24. "In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times I received forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that

are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine affirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus, the governor under Aretas the king, kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands," 2 Cor. 11: 23-33. What a record! What love for his countrymen! and remember he was the

Apostle to the Gentiles

—not Jews.

And what estimate does truly regenerate souls of this age, as well as that of the apostles, place upon the souls of the unsaved? Has Christian experience changed? Does religion prompt us to-day to try to save the lost? Are we ready to obey the command:—"Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion upon thee," Mark 5: 19.? We will remember the promptings of our own heart when we were saved, how the first impulses of our new life were to rescue the lost.

We believe in addition to the desire to save souls given in conversion, that there is a

Receiving

of the Holy Spirit for service. God gives Him and man receives Him definitely and intelligently (knowingly) as preparation for service. We have already emphasized the importance of tarrying until endued with power from on high. We might mention here

that the apostles were Christians when the Holy Spirit came upon them. He did not come on them to save them but fit them for service. So in regard to the Samaritans mentioned in Acts 8: 12. In 17th verse, we are told that these believers received the Holy Ghost. It is a clear case that the Holy Spirit did not come upon these apostolic Christians for salvation, but service. It is also equally clear, that if they

Needed

the Holy Spirit to come upon them definitely for service that will do. There is no getting away from this conclusion. If anything, they had the advantage of us as many of them had been eye witnesses of His majesty, 2 Pet. 1: 16. I do not believe it is stating the case too strongly to say: We need more than this if such a thing is possible, the baptism of the Holy Spirit for service. Who is it that has not felt his weakness, his dependence when engaged in the Lord's work? Who has not felt his limitations when he could not go any further—nor do anything? Who has not cried out, "who is sufficient for these things?" 2 Cor. 2: 16. Hear again the apostle, "Our sufficiency is of God," 2 Cor. 3: 5. Now can we say this unless we have received the Holy Spirit for service?

We have seen that the apostles had this special preparation for service. We unhesitatingly say, men must have the baptism of the Holy Spirit to-day for service or be very poorly prepared to do their Lord's work. It is not

Optional

with Christians as to whether they receive the Holy Spirit for service or not. They are commanded to receive Him, John 20: 22. They should not rest satis-

fied until they know of a truth that they have received Him. We are saved to serve. Whatever prepares us for service *must* be heartily *sought* and certainly found. The Holy Spirit has been so manifestly promised as the needed qualification for service in God's word, and so manifestly received by those to whom He was promised in Bible times, that there should not be a shadow of doubt in the mind of any as to His availability to us and our times. What is the conclusion of the whole matter? The Holy Spirit comes on the unsaved man in conviction and regeneration for salvation, and upon the regenerate man for service, and that it is the Christian's bounden duty to seek for the Holy Spirit until he has found Him.

The relation of faith to the

Bestowal

of the Holy Spirit should be considered. A word or two in reference to faith will be in place here. There are degrees in faith, so we read of great faith and little faith, and of Abraham being strong in faith, and of the gift of faith, Matt. 8: 10, 26; 14: 31; Rom. 4: 20; 1 Cor. 12: 9. In some instances persons were blessed according to their faith, Matt. 8: 13; 9: 29. In other instances it is said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole," Matt. 9: 22; 15: 28. We also have justifying faith, Rom. 5: 1, and a long list of those who "by faith," Heb., chapter 11, wrought wonders. And, then, we have, "the prayer of faith shall save the sick," James 5: 15. So we find faith related to man from any point you may consider him. Faith is that faculty of the soul by which it

Sees

God and relies upon Him, John 12: 38; Heb. 11: 6. To

the believers God is revealed. Faith makes God accessible. To the believer only is He accessible. To the unbeliever He is unapproachable and inaccessible. Unbelief shuts God out and hinders His gracious designs. Mark tells us, "and He could there do no mighty work, save He laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them," Mark 6: 5. Why? Because of their unbelief. Listen, "He marvelled because of their unbelief," Mark 6: 6. Hear what He said on another occasion, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth," Mark 9: 23. There is *no* barrier in the way of faith. It sees and wields omnipotence. The omnipotence of faith is in the omnipotence of God. Hear our Saviour instructing His disciples:—"Have faith in God," Mark 11: 22. The potency of it depends upon its being in God. If it is misplaced, it disappoints, 1 King 18: 26-29. Now, the relation of faith to the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, leads us to reverse the subject, the relation of the Holy Spirit to faith. Faith is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, Gal. 5: 22. We read of "prophecy according to the proportion of faith," Rom. 12: 6, and "according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith," Rom. 12: 3, coupled with these is Ephes. 2: 8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." What is? Faith is—"the gift of God." It is evident from the statement made in Rom. 12: 3, "according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" that men should be

Governed

by their God-given ability. Some men try to do too much—undertake more than they can accomplish. Perhaps, some undertake to do that for which they

have no God-given capacity and in the end fail, or resort to means to accomplish their ends that bring reproach upon the cause they seek to promote. The thing for every man to do is to find out God's will as to the work He would have him do, and then in His strength do it. The faith in us that leads us to receive the Holy Spirit is produced in us by the Holy Spirit Himself. "When Jesus saw their faith," Mark 2: 5, "the same heard Paul speak: who steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked," Acts 14: 9, 10: "For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," Rom. 10: 16, 17. The Holy Spirit *uses* the word of God as the instrument through which He produces faith in man in God. That is, the word is the usual medium through which He communicates Himself to man. He blesses the word—its teachings, its doctrines. He makes believers

Bible Christians

—not antiquated ones, fossilized, but living ones up-to-date. We believe in Bible Christians, but up-to-date ones.

It is vastly important for us to understand the often-mentioned subject, faith, its relation to the Holy Spirit and the relation of the believer to it. Just how far we are responsible for our

Lack

of faith, littleness of faith, or greatness of faith is no small matter. It doth appear that faith is an

Attribute

of man's renewed nature. It does not belong to the natural man. "No man can say that Jesus is the

Lord but by the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. 12: 3. What is faith then but the effect of God in us, the echo of His voice, the response of the soul to God the Holy Spirit? To what extent the Holy Spirit is the gift of God independent of man himself may not be debatable, as God and man in Christ are closely and vitally related. It is well for us to remember however that He may be grieved, Ephes. 4: 30, and that an apostolic exhortation is, "quench not the Spirit," 1 Thess. 5: 19. Again, we read, "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God," Rom. 10: 17. "Take heed how ye hear." Luke 8: 18. Man's responsibility comes in here. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip," Heb. 2: 1. In the next verse he tells why we should pay attention, "For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will," Heb. 2: 2, 3, 4. In Heb. 1: 1, 2, we are told, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners,

Spake

in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days *spoken* unto us by His son." "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy," Hab. 3: 2. This is the effect God's word

should have upon us, the impression and change it should produce in us. Hear the Psalmist; "The mighty God, even the Lord hath *spoken*, and called the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined," Ps. 50: 1, 2. "If I had not come and *spoken* unto them they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated me and my Father," John 15: 22, 23, 24. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my *words*, hath one that judgeth him; the *word* that I have *spoken* the same shall judge him in the last day," John 12: 48. God's word "abideth forever," 1 Pet. 1: 25. "And this is the *word*, which by the gospel is preached unto you," and for which you are responsible, and is

Called

"The word of faith, Rom," 10: 8; Gal. 3: 2, 5.

We have already said, Faith is the faculty of the soul by which it sees God—the eye of the soul. And again we said, it is an attribute of man's renewed nature—the fruit of the Holy Spirit, for God Himself is called, "The author and finisher of our Faith," Heb. 12: 2. And the Bible speaks of the faith of God, Rom. 3: 3, so it is seen that God is the God of faith. This is the only way by which we can understand Heb. 11: 1. "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen," (R. V.). "Now faith is the subsistence of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "Now faith is the subsistence of things hoped for, the demonstration of things not seen." "Now faith is of

(things) hoped for (the) assurance of things not seen (the) conviction" (Greek-English Interlinear). It is evident that such faith as this is wrought in man by the power of God and is a *preliminary* of the Holy Spirit's baptism and abiding presence and indwelling.

So we read, "For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith,"¹ John 5: 4. Who is the author of this faith-victory? "But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, "¹ Cor. 15: 57. The faith comes through Christ—the victory is that which is won for us by Christ. He gives us the victory. He fought the battle and it is a God-won and God-given victory. He triumphed over His enemies, led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men, Ephes. 4: 8. One of the things given to man is faith, Rom. 12: 36; 1 Cor. 12: 9. In this connection see the Lord's teaching on the subject of faith. "And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe what he saith shall come to pass, he shall have it. Therefore I say unto you, all things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believed that ye have received them, and ye shall have them," Mark 11: 22; 23; 24(R. V.)

We have noticed elsewhere that true prayer is the voice of the Holy Spirit in man, Rom. 8:26; Ephes. 6: 18; Jude 20th verse. And here it is the person

Born

of God, that gets the faith-victory over the world. It would be impossible, then, to study the relation of

faith to the bestowal of the Holy Spirit without studying the relation of the Holy Spirit to faith. We do not believe the inspired penman made any mistake in the order when speaking of Barnabas. We are told of him, "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord," Acts 11: 24. It is true it is said of Stephen, "A man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," Acts, 6: 5, yet we read that they were to choose men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," Acts 6: 3, and no doubt but that they did as commanded. The Holy Spirit has the

Precedence

over faith as the tree over the fruit. As a matter of course, the tree must come before the fruit in the natural world, and so also the Holy Spirit before faith in the spiritual world. There is a sense, however, in which the baptism or enduement of the Holy Spirit is by faith. The Holy Spirit is promised. The promise *must* be believed and the Holy Spirit accepted. We have studied the relation of God's word to the Holy Spirit. His word must be believed and implicitly obeyed. God cannot lie, Heb. 6: 18. To doubt Him is to dishonor Him. We must come before Him in this spirit—the spirit of faith. "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believe, and therefore have I spoken; we also believed, and therefore speak; knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you," 2 Cor. 4: 13, 14.

It is not unimportant to notice in this connection the *class* of persons upon whom the Holy Spirit is bestowed. He is given to those who *do* the will of God.

None other need apply to God for Him, Acts 8: 18-22. Jesus said, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? Luke 2: 48. Here is the index into the life of Jesus. Read at His baptism, "And praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven," and what did it say? "Thou art my beloved Son; *in thee I am well pleased,*" Luke 3: 21, 22. So when He teaches His disciples to pray one clause of the prayer is, "Thy dingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," Matt. 6: 10. When the disciples urge Him to eat, He says, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of," John 4: 32. Seeing that He was misunderstood by them, He said "My meat is to *do the will of Him that sent me,* and to finish His work," John, 4: 34. And who will ever forget His

Memorable

prayer, prayed three times over, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, *Thy will be done,*" Matt. 26: 42. His life is summed up in a quotation taken from a Psalm, "Lo, I come to *do thy will* O God," Heb. 10: 9. And what is true of the life of Jesus in this regard is true of His people. "And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, *whom God hath given to them that obey Him,*" Acts 5: 32. It is only those who do the will of God that shall be saved. "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father in heaven," Matt. 7: 21. The

Whole -

duty of life is based upon doing the will of God. There is no failure in doing God's will. The man

alone who fails to do God's will is the only man that is a failure.

The man who is the greatest success in the eyes of the world may be the greatest failure in the sight of God. The preacher who makes the greatest display from a worldly point of view, may be the poorest of gospel preachers of the kingdom of heaven. The exhortation is, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen," 1 Pet. 4: 11. The preacher here is the mouth-piece of God. His ministry is conditioned on his God-given ability. The object of his message and ministry is to glorify God through His Son Jesus Christ our Saviour, to whom (not the minister) be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen. So Paul, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us," 2 Cor. 4: 7. The true minister of every age can say, "For to me to live is Christ," Phil. 1: 21. Paul said, "What mean ye to weep and break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, he ceased, saying, *The will of the Lord be done,*" Acts 20: 13, 14. The reason doubtless why so many Christians are powerless is that they are not doing the will of God and therefore have not the Holy Spirit. We hear Jesus telling the Jews and through them telling us, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself," John 7: 17. Here our knowing depends up-

on our doing. It is reasonable to suppose that God will not reveal Himself to the

Wilfully

disobedient. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, Ps. 25: 14.

In carrying out the great commission God's presence is promised, Matt. 28: 19, 20. It is

Conditioned

on our doing God's will—observing the divine order—the things commanded. We have previously seen that prayer for the laborers, and the prayer heard, and the laborers sent, is God's order. We also noted that this order was observed in the apostolic churches. If we hope to receive the Holy Spirit may it not be important for us to obey God in this matter? At least, it may be helpful to have our attention called to it so we can pray over it and think about it. Let prayer be *offered and the will of God be done*.

Let it be remembered that Christ is our great example and that He exemplified in His life the spirit of final obedience to the will of God—His and our Father, and that the intercession which He makes for us now is according to the will of God, Rom. 8: 27. Be it remembered that God is not afraid to trust those who obey—*do His will*. To them He *commits* the completion of His unfinished work in the earth. They have access to Him and command of His resources. To them all heaven is contributor and they the benefactors and the distributors of heaven's fullness.

The doing of the will of God is a

Practical

thing. Peter, who was self-reliant and prone to take things in his own hands, learned to do the will of

God. In his first epistle, under afflicting and trying circumstances, he exhorts his brethren to the doing of the will of God. Hear him, "For it is better, *if the will of God be so*, that ye suffer for well doing than for evil doing," 1 Pet. 3: 17. And he tells us, "Forasmuch then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh arm yourselves likewise with the same mind, For he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his 'time in the flesh to the lusts of men but to *the will of God*," 1 Pet. 4: 1, 2. Finally, "Wherefore let them that suffer *according to the will of God* commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator," 1 Pet. 4: 19. He had been told by what kind of death he would glorify God (John 21: 19), and with the martyr's sufferings before him, he

Keys

his whole life to this one note and makes it his theme, "*doing the will of God*." It is no marvel that such an one has power—has God. There is no one else for him to have but God. God is the *doer* of all that he does, and his life the exponent of the mind of the Holy Spirit.

As the salvation of the sinner is dependent upon the office-work of the Holy Spirit, it may be profitable to study the will of God concerning the sinner. Let the apostle Peter speak to us again, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promises as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, *not willing that any should perish* but that all should come to repentance," 2 Pet. 3: 9. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3: 16. Could language

be stronger than this expressing God's attitude toward the sinner? "Say unto them, As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezek. 33; 11. Here is God's will—"no

Pleasure

in the death of the wicked," and His question, "why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Here are two wills—God's to save the sinner—the sinner's not to be saved by Him.

It is plainly evident that the man who has the mind of the Holy Spirit wants to see sinners saved. It is manifestly visible in every book and on almost every page of the Bible—God's interest, in solicitude and desire to save the sinner. The saved can only approximate the mind of God in this matter—and they do that as they are helped, influenced, and led by the Holy Spirit. And it is as clear as noonday that he who is indifferent to the salvation of the unsaved does not possess the Holy Spirit. If there is any apathy or indifference on our part in regard to the salvation of souls, it should give us the deepest concern. It should lead to prayerful and serious reflection on our part and judgment against ourselves for any neglect, and speedy reformation. The apostle tells us, "For if we judge ourselves we should not be judged, 2 Cor. 11: 31. We should endeavor to use every help within our reach to develop interest in the unsaved and rely upon God's grace to remove all internal and external hindrances. It is said in the book of Isaiah, I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of

Ophir," Is. 13: 12. I do not know but what the Saviour had His mind's eye on this passage of Scripture, when he said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?," Matt. 16: 26.

Weighty

words that should be prayerfully pondered! May it not be worth our while to try to get at the just value of a human life—a real thing—a living soul? Man is a living thing—a being possessed of deathless attributes. "Dust thou art, to dust thou returnest, was not spoken of the soul."

Money has no intrinsic value. The value it possesses is that with which we have invested it. Not so with man. The value he possesses is that with which God has invested him. Here is his genealogy: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostril the breath of life [lives;] *and man became a living soul,*" Gen. 2: 7; Ps. 8: 5. Ah, what far-reaching words—"A living soul," created immortal. But his eternal life was conditioned on his obedience, the visible pledge of it being the "tree of life," Gen. 3: 24. Man was warned of eating the fruit of the tree of death—"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die [dying thou shalt die]," Gen. 3: 17. The story of man's disobedience and fall are too well known to need repetition here. Suffice it to say, sin entered into the world and death by sin, Rom. 5: 12. We survey the world wrecked and ruined in the transgression of our first parents in Eden, "but thanks be unto God," in Christ Jesus we

See

it rescued and redeemed on Calvary. Man's first representative started life in Paradise—a garden, and ended in exile—banishment; his second representative started it in a manger and ended on a cross and was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven—the possessor and giver of endless life, Heb. 7: 16. The great theme of the gospel, which is the good news or glad tidings of man's salvation,—is eternal life in Christ Jesus for the penitent, believing, sinner. “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life,” 1 John 5: 11, 12. Of so great weight, then, is man's salvation, that Jesus Christ come from the skies to *lift* him out of the depth of sin and degradation, the consequence of his disobedience, and fit him for and give him a place in God's indestructible and eternal kingdom. If this is God's estimate of and concern for man—his salvation and eternal redemption (Heb. 9: 12), what an

Incentive

to us—His people—to work and pray for man's conversion! He places tremendous emphasis upon him and expresses undeniably His disposition concerning him and His will to save him. If so, how ardent and earnest our prayer should be for ourselves and others! How our souls should *break* out, “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to

To do his Will,

working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for

ever and ever, Amen." Heb. 13: 20, 21. What a wish, what a prayer! No greater blessing can come to man than to realize the nearness of the ever present God and to know that he is doing His will, there is nothing beyond this for man. James tells us we should say, "If the Lord *will*, we shall live, and do this or that," James 4: 15. In Ephes. 6: 6, 7, 8, we read, "But as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart," with good-will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men. "Knowing that whatsoever good thing any may doeth, the same he shall receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." What better work can any one do, than to convert the sinner from the error of his way? James 5: 20. It is upon record, the page of inspiration, "And they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever," Dan. 12: 3. Glory to God! Let us ask ourselves the question, will there be any stars in my crown? It would be a great calamity for a man going from this earth, with its

Billion and a half of Souls,

to receive in the next world, where the faithful meet to part no more, a starless crown! What will be our experience fellow-traveler, in this matter? Let us lay bare the Bible truth and comprehend its teaching in reference to the future. We have great encouragement in God's "Fear nots," Is. 40: 10, 13, 14. Be of good courage, be strong, Deut. 31: 6, 7; Ephes. 6: 10, in His "lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," Matt. 28: 20. These ought to startle and thrill us, and nerve and move us, and make us confident and invincible! Such an array of the master's assurances should make us indubitable and uncon-

querable, and our lives veritable light-houses and bulwarks of divine truth and power. The fact is the faith of such

Ones

should be all-powerful and indestructible. They should reach men—they themselves being moved by God. The power that moves them should stir others. Why, oh why this lethargy this apathy of soul, if we are in touch with God and in accord with His will? Perhaps we are ready to say with Gideon, "O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? And where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord has forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites," Judges 6: 13. Ah, Gideon, not so. Hear the Lord! "But Zion said, the Lord has forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yes, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me," Is. 49: 14, 15, 16. Such language as this ought to dispel all of our gloom and vanquish all our doubt. We

Must

believe that God is with us. We should break out in praise and in anthems of hallelujahs. We should move with a firm, but rapid and joyful tread, and make the earth ring with the songs of our gladness. There is no time for moping or bewailing, but pressing demand for immediate action and hearty thanksgiving, Phil. 4: 6. We fancy we can hear the rolling and surging of that great and mighty volume of song

of praises and hallelujahs, sounding out from the throne and kingdom of God: "And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready," Rev. 19: 5, 6, 7. My voice shall be heard in helping to

Swell

that glorious song until it shall resound through earth's darkest parts and remotest places. Let the cry go forth from every redeemed soul to earth's millions of lost ones, in that fragment of an ancient hymn preserved to us, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give the light," Ephes. 5: 14. And as God's people shall prophesy, may breath come into their dry bones and may they stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army, Ezek. 37: 10, May God grant His people this as promised in His Son!

Our Need of a Revival,

Oh for a revival! "Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee"? Ps. 85: 6. "O Lord, I have heard thy speech and I was afraid. O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known in wrath; remember mercy," Hab. 3: 2. It seems that this was written for these times and the present necessity. Was there ever a time when we needed a revival more than now? And what we need is a revival from God—a revival of His work. We have had

Too Many

of the spurious kind—human, mere imitations. What we need (and I trust what we want) is a revival from God, of His power and presence of Himself to man, His grace bringing salvation, Titus 2: 11. We want a revival—or rather need it, characterized by Bible evidences, the converts having brought forth Bible fruits, and received Bible proofs of their forgiveness, acceptance, and adoption into God's family, that would give them the right start upon the road to glory and great advantage over those who joined the church because the minister insisted they would be alright if they did so, or because their sweethearts were members, or their parents desired it, or had them baptized or christened in infancy, or from any other unscriptural and unworthy cause. Their membership then should be based upon their acceptance of Christ and

Regeneration

by the Holy Spirit and the enrollment of their names upon the Lamb's book of life, Phil. 4: 3; Rev. 20: 12; 21: 27. Why join the church from any other cause or under any other circumstance, when none shall enter into heaven except those whose names are in the book of life? Let the Lord's, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," sound out here, John 3: 3, 5. There must be no trifling or mistaken one's necessity, his

Inperative

need, and God's absolute requirement here. The trumpet must not give an uncertain sound here, for if it does, who will prepare himself for heaven? 1 Cor. 14: 8. The

New

birth is essential to one's entering heaven. Its im-

portance cannot be overstated and its urgency overestimated. It is one of the emphatic, outspoken, uncompromising doctrines declared to men by their Lord. It will admit of no altering, or patching, or explaining away, but stands as a naked; bold truth to be taken simply as it is coming directly from the one and only Lawgiver, "who is able to save and destroy," James 4: 12, and who does both according to established and fixed doctrines and principles and not arbitrarily but in accord with the laws of the gospel—the plan of salvation.

No revival is genuine or Christian's work complete that does not insist upon this—the new birth, and make it a test of one's entrance into the kingdom of God and eternal life here and into Heaven hereafter. We are not writing about mountain top experiences, as those of Moses upon Sinai, and Christ upon the mount of transfiguration, but the experience common to man. The gospel commands men everywhere to repent, Acts 17: 30, to believe, Mark 1: 15, with the promise that they shall be saved, Acts 16: 31—born again of the Holy Spirit. The new birth is secured to mankind through Christ Jesus, "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus: who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time," 1 Tim. 2: 5, 6. This is the gospel we are called to preach and are ordained to teach, 1 Tim. 2: 7. We must not mistake our mission and alter the theme of our preaching. Paul tells us, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief," 1 Tim. 1: 15. It must be remembered here that there are two commands, which are symonymous terms with doing the

will of God, enjoined upon us; the words of Jesus, "Follow me," and, "Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. 4: 19; 28: 20. No soul can be saved without accepting Christ as Lord and rendering obedience to His commands. This statement refers to the people to whom Christ is known and to whom His words are published.

The question is asked, is baptism

Essential

to salvation? We answer obedience is, and when it is possible for one to obey and he does not, he forfeits his right to salvation. We should not forget those memorable words to King Samuel:—"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams," 1 Sam. 15: 22. Saul's disobedience cost him his crown and his life; so those in churches who disobey God and disregard His words may expect to pay the penalty attached to disobedience and finally see them (churches) come to wreck and ruin, and those who have sought refuge in them left without a church home. God is speaking to his people who are in such institutions, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord," 2 Cor. 6: 17.

We

confidently believe that we who are God's people shall ultimately come to know and understand His will and obey His voice. Why? "For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure," Phil. 2; 13; Heb. 13: 5. Listen to Paul's prayer for the Colossians. "For this cause we also, since we heard it [Col. 1: 4]; do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of

His Will

in all wisdom and spiritual understanding," Col. 1: 9. An example: "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep," Acts 13: 36. Thus we sum up in Scriptural language, the operation of the divine will upon human wills to which they are subject. It is a blessed thing to know that the son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, 1 John 5: 20. Paul said, "In the church I had rather speak

Five Words

with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue," 1 Cor. 14: 19. Then comes his exhortation; "Brethren, be not children in understanding, howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men," 1 Cor. 14: 20. What a request Paul makes of God for Timothy! "The Lord give the understanding in

All Things,"

2 Tim. 2: 7.

There is another phase of the personality of God brought out in man's salvation—*His Faithfulness*. Isaiah said long before gospel days and privileges; "Thy counsels of old are faithfulness and truth," Is. 25: 1. We have had our attention called to the will of God—not that of a despot but a loving, kind, and impartial Father, who pities his children infinitely more than the best of earthly fathers, and wills for them as the *summum bonum* of their very being—their salvation, Ps. 103: 13; Matt, 7: 11; Luke 11: 13, and in connection with it, their salvation reveals to all them that accept Him—His faithfulness.

In that remarkable Ps. 119: 89, 90, we read,

“Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.” Thy *faithfulness* is unto all generations; thou hast established the earth and it abideth.” Let us listen to that startling and quick-step exhortation coming with force and energy from the lips of the inspired speaker, “having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God;” “Let 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 faith without wavering (*for He is faithful that promised*); and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching,” Heb. 10: 19-25. These words ought to make one’s blood boil with fervent zeal and confirm him more and more in his steadfastness to God and devotion to duty and loyalty to His truth. They swell and throb with the divine life, the “new and living way” of approach to God through the Son, and rests fixedly upon His Faithfulness to man, who has sought refuge in Him. There is, then, the conscious power of the invisible One—the mainspring of the inward life,—expressed here by “the full assurance of faith.” It reminds us of the closing words of 1 Cor. 15: 18: “Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” Reader, heed these inspired

words and you will be inspired. Religious activity here is based upon the certainty of the future life in the all-conquering power of God, who giveth us the victory through the Saviour unto an endless life, 1 Cor. 15: 57. But to get at the point at issue, man's salvation does not depend primarily upon his—but God's faithfulness. Paul in writing to the Thessalonian Christians has this to say, "Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it," 1 Thess. 5: 24. God had called them. What He

Undertakes

He executes—what He begins, He finishes. This is brought out in his second epistle to the same persons, "But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil," 2 Thess. 3: 3. In line and keeping with this is his instruction to the Corinthians in regard to temptation, to which all men in common are subjected, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: *but God is faithful*, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it," 1 Cor. 10: 13. Who can help but think of the petition in the disciple's prayer—in *our* prayer—taught them, and us through them by our Lord, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one," Matt. 6: 13.

One who was saved had this to say about his salvation, "This is a *faithful* saying, and worthy of *all* acception, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save* sinners, of whom I am chief," 1 Tim. 1: 15. What an appropriate appellation by which to designate and know Him! "And I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was

called *Faithful* and *True*, and in righteousness he doth judge, and make war," Rev. 19: 11. His name is called "faithful and true," and His words are faithful and true," Rev. 21: 5. This is the true God, and eternal life," 1 John 5: 20. "He abideth faithful: He cannot deny himself," 2 Tim. 2: 13. Such statements of God's character—of Himself—His truthfulness and faithfulness, *cannot* but help stimulate one's faith and quicken his zeal as he contemplates these glorious attributes of his Saviour—God. What a statement—He cannot lie! Titus 1: 2, Heb. 6: 18.

To him who believes the Bible, faith is a *natural* product—he cannot help but believe God. The qualified acceptance of the Bible, regardless of profession, is skepticism as to the nature, government, and providence of God. It is the modification and limitation of God Himself! Oh, how we should fear to change the Bible, its invitations, conditions, promises, &c.! It has promised grace, salvation, eternal, life temporal things, food, raiment, &c., to the believer. God Himself is involved in all these promises and to doubt is to deny God and make him a liar, 1 John 5: 10, and we have seen that His moral character prohibits this as shown in His word. What is to *save* us from the impeachment of God's veracity? The simple belief of the truth. "Sanctify them through thy truth; *thy word is truth*," John 17: 17. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall *know* the truth, and the *truth* shall make you free." The Bible is the word of God—the word of God is what He has said—His words. God is truth—what He has said—the Bible—is truth. Thus we understand Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, "But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay.

For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen unto the glory of God by us," 2 Cor. 1: 18-20. The word of God whether spoken or written is

Unchangeable

—amen in the Holy Ghost." That God cannot change His mind or alter His purpose concerning those that compose His kingdom is a source of power and the cause of profound thanksgiving. He cannot break His word, or annul His covenant, or disregard His promise to His children. He is compelled to keep, defend, protect, and sustain them. To fail on *His* part would be for Him to cease to be God. Peter has found out his place of safety at last: "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time," 1 Per. 1: 5. "The Lord is my shepherd," Ps. 23: 1. "He that keepeth thee, will not slumber nor sleep! Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore," Ps. 121: 3-8. See the whole of Ps. ch. 46, and Rom. 8: 28-39.

A sinner saved by grace, Ephes. 2: 8,—“Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin,” Rom. 4: 8,—may climb,—yea, caught up by the Spirit—(Acts 8: 39; Ezek. 8: 3), upon this divinely built Pyramid, and calmly seated upon its capstone, sing

the long metre doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," and hum at his leisure, to his heart's content, "How firm a foundation ye saints of the Lord is laid for your faith in His excellent word. What more can He say than to you He hath said, you who unto Jesus for refuge hath fled." My salvation is in the all-powerful hands of my Saviour "and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day," 2 Tim. 1: 12. He is faithful and has pledged himself to keep me so I say again, "And the Lord *shall* deliver me from every evil work, and will *preserve* me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen," 2 Tim. 4: 18.

How earth's hills and vales should *ring* with pæans of praise from the redeemed and its high-ways be crowded with triumphant arches of the saved of the Lord! Wake up earth, and praise thy God, adore, worship, and bow in thanksgiving at thy Lord's feet! "Here I'll raise my Ebenezer, hither by thy help I'm come." "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us," 1 Sam. 7: 12. And thus shall it be—stones of help erected—all along our earthly pilgrimage, until we are inside the gates of the celestial city.

God's Way.

May we not say to every one who may see these pages, how our prayers should supplicate a throne of grace, how they should ascend the hill of the Lord, breathing the petition, "*Shew me now thy way,*" Ex. 33: 13. God has a way. It is the right way. It is the way for man—every man. To miss it is to miss God. It is the only way to God. There are many other ways, but they do not lead to God. There is man's way—my way—the world's way, and the dev-

il's way. *God's way* traverses earth and runs parallel with every human life. Our lives may diverge from it but it is intended to run directly with them. They are *never* intended to cross. It is intended they should get into it and stay in it.

The distresses of life are caused by men getting out of God's way. Israel wandered for forty years in the wilderness. God's way was directly into Canaan. The evangelization of the world is delayed through the tardiness of the church. She does not believe and fails to act, or else arrogates to herself authority she does not possess, and operates along lines of her own choosing. By her

Independence

she has divorced herself from her Lord—her lawful husband, and violated the vows taken in the marriage contract. So far as she has substituted her ways—human ways—for God's ways, she has become an adulteress, a prostitute. Her success is in her obedience. If she has departed from the Lord let her return. May she

Heed

the exhortation given by the prophet Isaiah: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God for he will abundantly pardon."

Why?

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts," Is. 55: 6-9. Our salvation is in returning

to the Lord's way—"The *King's* high-way of holiness." "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked *way* in me, and *lead* me in the *way* everlasting," Ps. 139: 23, 24.

Love.

I know of no more fitting conclusion to what has been written than to call attention to the Bible's teaching as to love. It is

God's Ultimatum

to the world. There came to us a new lesson from the beloved disciple on love; "That he who loveth God love his brother also," 1 John 4: 21. That is a searching statement made in the 20th verse of this 4th chapter. "If a man say, I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" He tells us the reason of this, "For love is of God," verse 7. "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love," verse 8. It is *startling* to read his argument. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also love one another," 1 John 4: 9-11. Paul in his epistle to the Thessalonians says, "But as touching brotherly love ye need not, that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another," 1 Thess. 4: 9. This is taught everywhere in the New Testament. Here is a sample of it in the epistle that we are now studying: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid

down His life for us: and *we ought* to lay down our lives for the brethren," 1 John 3: 16.

It is taught in man's regeneration. It is one of the first impulses of a renewed heart, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," 1 John 3: 14. Then we see plainly in God's word, and in the regenerate this lesson taught us by him—"love as brethren", 1 Pet. 3: 8. That the attention of professing Christians must be called to this is a sad sign of spiritual deterioration, of not learning in God's school, of not knowing the lesson that He teaches. When men

Cease

to learn of God they become the easy victims of envy, jealousy, selfishness, malice, narrowness and hatred, the slave of sin, and the tool of the devil. Jesus says "Learn of me", Matt. 11: 29. We ask the question, taught what? We need not await the answer if we are permitted to ask and receive a reply to the following question, By whom taught? That decides it. We partake of the character of our teacher as we receive and practice his teachings. "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness", Rom. 6: 16. The man who is taught of God loves his brother. The love that God enjoins would reconcile man to man and remove even the possibility of estrangement. It is all He requires of man for Himself and for his fellow-man. "Love is the fulfilling of the Law," Rom. 13: 10. It is

God's Finality.

There is nothing that He requires beyond it or in addition to it, "Love is of God," John 4: 7. "Love is

the fulfilling of the law," Rom. 13: 10. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," Rom. 10: 4. "God is love," John 4: 16, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him, seems to cover the syllogism given above on the great subjects of law and love both finding their expression and completion in Christ. God's love to man in man, "Shed abroad by the Holy Ghost," Rom. 5: 5, in his heart, is everything to man. O, the wonder that we do not believe it, receive it, preach it, proclaim it, far and near so all may hear, see and know it! Let us live in and abide in love, 1 Cor. ch. 13. How love rings out here in clarion notes and shows itself to be the "greatest thing in the world." How it will advocate and hasten Christian unity—why? because it "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," 1 Cor. 13: 6, 7. "Love

Never

fails," verse 8; other expedients have failed to unite christians, but love never! What it undertakes it accomplishes. Let us try it! God commends it—the Bible recommends it. Hear John again, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren", 1 John 3: 16. Such love as this—stronger than life—unites us. No difficulty in finding ground for a common basis of union with persons whom we love more than we love our own lives. Those who hold the truth in love have no occasion for fear in such a union! Here comes in the apostle's dictum, "By love serving one another," Gal. 5: 13.

Love delights in service for those upon whom it is centered.

We ask the question, have Christians of to day heeded, Heb. 13: 1, "Let brotherly love continue"? Has such love as that taught by Jesus and His apostles come down through the centuries to us unabated, undimmed, unmixed with human feeling, aggrandizement, and selfishness? Have we separated from and discriminated between our professions—callings—our church-systems, and God Himself and man himself, and love them for what they are outside of professions—callings—and church-systems and the emolument of positions therein? Have God and men always come first, or have they, though it may be unconsciously been associated with our sect and church-system? Have we risen above sectarian enterprises and organizations and occupied ourselves with the greatest and the greater—God and man, to whom all institutions and organizations should be subordinate and for whom all instrumentalities should be employed? All the strife and collision of the past have been caused by the disregard of the exhortation, "Let brotherly love continue." Sectarianism is

Selfishness,

the exaltation of self. When the death blow to self shall have been struck, before its echo shall have been lost in the distance, the coalition of God's people will have taken place. God will return from the backgroun, to which our human systems have relegated Him, to be head over His own happy and united church. We do not hesitate to say, had the love of Christ, and the first Christians, as seen, been kept pure, warm, and inviolable by all succeeding professors of religion that there never would have been the di sin-

tegration which in the past took place and the numerous denominations of to-day—spread all over the land. To write thus—to Bible students and scholars—may appear not any more than the statement of trite and common-place sayings. Let this be our defence, not their obscurity, for if that were so, people would be more excusable for their non-observance, but their neglect, shall we say wilful neglect and stolid indifference, for what is so plainly revealed must be the more binding. Let no one turn away from these sayings on account of their *self-evident* nature—their being truisms—until he has resolved to put them into practice. When we obey them then the necessity of writing about them may cease to exist, but not until then can we write *finis* and cease to herald abroad God's own revealed truth and will.

God's teaching on love, then, is that even life itself is sub servient to it—God gave His Son—we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren and if we really love—God's definition of it is that it expresses itself in action—"Feed my lambs—Feed my sheep;" John 11: 15, 16, and James 2: 16, etc.

May we not look at the negative side of this subject for a moment. God never taught any one to hate another. Anger, hatred, malice, jealousy, etc., are learned outside of God's school and curriculum. The Bible goes so far as to say, "Speak not evil one of another, brethren," James 4: 11, and did we not read in that marvellous chapter of 1 Cor. love "Thinketh no evil," 1 Cor. 13: 5.

O my soul, bow before this supreme passion, feeling, substance, principle, life, love. No grace, gift, possession, earthly or heavenly, human or divine, will compensate for the lack of it or take the place of it.

We must have it, it matters not what else and how much else we may have, or at last be "Weighed in the balances" and be found wanting, Dan. 5: 27. Without it man will be found lighter than vanity. How we should covet earnestly the best gift, the most excellent way, 1 Cor. 12: 31—love! It is coveting the essence, the absorbing attribute of Deity. It is a craving of His disposition, a desire after His likeness—God-likeness. It is seeking that which makes one in being, character and conduct, thought and action, conform most to God. The one that loves most is most like God, nearest to God, knows most of God, understands God best and shows the most of Him to others. Perhaps this is why Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," John 14: 9.

The more one enters into His nature the more he knows of Him—and love is the foundation of His nature. God is what love is. Love is not an earthly thing. It is

Heaven-Born—

the first fruit of the Holy Spirit produced in the human heart, Gal. 5: 22. God could not dwell in a life—take up His abode in a heart, without creating and planting within it this gracious product. This fruit grows where the Holy Spirit dwells. Like begets like.—"We shall be like Him", 1 John 3: 2. "As He is"—a God of love in the world-helping, saving men—"so are we in this world," 1 John 4: 17 Our mission is, and our natures should be, similar to His. We are in the world in His place—and need His Spirit—love—to beseech men in His stead to be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5: 20.

Should it not be consoling to man to know that love discharges all of his debts to God and to his

brother man? The one who loves God to the fullest extent of his capacity and his neighbor as himself, is under no obligation to any one—neither God nor man. The freest man in God's universe is the one who loves Him supremely and his neighbor devoutly. He is not required to remember a thousand and one things and do a thousand and one things in order to please God and do his duty to mankind, for it is all comprehended in the one word of four letters—L-O-V-E.

Men have recited prayers, learned creeds, gone to confessions, done penance, taken long pilgrimages, practiced asceticism, shut themselves up in cells, etc. etc. *ad idfinitum* and did not, perhaps, after all, realize the object of their pursuit, when love would have covered it all, and saved them from wretched disappointments and their lives from miserable failures. And after all, it must be written, "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness." Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law," Rom. 9: 31; 32. After all of one's striving and sacrificing, unless he attains love, he is "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal"—empty—and nothing but noise, as the figures indicate, 1 Cor. 13: 1.

It would be a sad thing to realize in the end that one's profession had been mere cant and all of his pretensions mere words, words, words. There is power in the gospel, but that power is in love, "speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ," Ephes. 4: 15. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation," Rom. 1: 16, but its

Power

is in God's love. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," Ephes. 2: 4, 5. Hear this, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think, according to the *power* that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Ephes. 3: 17-21.

We confess to having looked for some vague indefinite power, perhaps, other than that of love, but we came to our senses—there is no other power outside of love compelling or prompting God. The power that is working in us, is the love of God. He exerts no other influence apart from it, all of His other attributes being balanced and counter-balanced by it. He reproveth and smites in love, Heb. 12: 6. His very nature prohibiting any independent action apart from it. "The kindness and love of God," Titus 3: 4. "God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," Rom. 5: 8, This is the sphere in which God lives, feels, thinks, wills, moves, acts.

Man may be sure of one thing, it matters not what may betide him, that God is acting from love. It is what he wants man to act from toward Him and one another. He acts from it, John 3: 16; Rom. 8: 32.

and wants man to act from it—showing that there is no

Ulterior

motive beyond it in heaven or in earth for the creator or creature. God and man seem to stop and rest here. God himself seems to tell us in John 3: 16, and Rom. 8: 32, beyond it there is nothing that He Himself can do. O the

Sweep

of that love—“breadth,” “length,” “depth,” “height,” Ephes. 3: 18, It reached the bottom and top, the length and breadth, the center and circumference of God’s own heart! It reached the end—death itself, John 13: 1, and the abode of the spirit in prison, 1 Pet. 3: 19. It takes in all.

Ah, my brethren, we are deficient here—this is our weak point! O that we could hear the Saviour talking to us now, “As the Father hath loved me so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.” “This is my commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you”, John 15: 9, 12. What love, and all for us! It is as great as God Himself. Nothing more that He can do beyond it. The magnitude of His gift cannot be exceeded even by Himself. The fact is, He gave Himself, Ephes. 5: 25; Gal. 2: 20; 1 Tim. 2: 6. „And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory,” 1 Tim. 3: 16.

The only God man has seen was “manifested in the flesh.” The test of our love for Him is our love for His people—His brethren, Matt. 28: 10; our brethren. The mystery of God’s love is deep as

eternity, but as practical and tangible as man himself. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," Matt. 25: 40, 45.

God has

Founded

a kingdom—not out of granite, earthly splendor, riches, or glory, but out of men—humanity, Matt. 16: 18; John 20: 22, 23; Ephes. 2: 20; 1 Pet. 2: 4-10; Rev. 7: 13-17; etc. Those who are dreaming of a far off visionary existence, of rest, happiness, and glory with imaginary beings and surroundings, had better awake to a sense of their relation and obligation to their brother, man. The heaven which God is building, and to which we are tending, is not wrought out of fine tapestry, delicate material, golden embroidery, but the common-place—if you will have it so—material—humanity. Not that the angels, and we know not what else and who else, will not be there, and the glory of God over-arch and over-shadow all, but to us that man will be there—Jesus, brother to our race, is to us, heaven, after all. Let man then dazzle and flash and blaze and shine, a thousand fold more than all earth besides—he who was made "a shaving less than God"! Ps. 8: 5. It was the lack of love and disregard for another's rights, at the very dawn of the history of fallen man, the hatred that sprang up and found congenial soil for growth and development in the bosom of the first-born son of Adam's race, that struck Abel his death blow—and is responsible for all the knocks, cuffs, and death-dealing blows, and hand to hand racial, national, tribal, civil and international death—grappling, life-destroying, soul-staining, struggles, through which the whole

family of mankind has passed ! “Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.” For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that ye love one another.” Not as Cain, who was of the wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him ? Because his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous,” 1 John 3: 10, 11, 12. Cain was cursed, driven out from the presence of God, fugitive fleeing from justice, a vagabond, and branded a murderer, Gen. 4: 9-15, in the earth among men.

Ah, my brethren, have we

Wholly

escaped the charge and sin of murder ? “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him,” John 3: 15. “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of judgment; but I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire. Therefore if thou bringest thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother has ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way : first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift,” Matt. 5: 21-24. Again; “Ye have heard it has been said, ‘Thou shall love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy.’ But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute you; that ye may be children of your Father

which is in heaven; for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even publicans the same? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," Matt. 5: 43-48. Who is my neighbor? Luke 10: 29. The question is answered in Luke 10: 30-37. There is in these Scriptures a

Crushing

syllogism aimed against that Satanic monster and human octopus, anger and hate; every man is our neighbor (brother), to be angry with him and hate him is to be at heart a murderer; no murderer hath eternal life—is in danger of hell fire! Then before offering our gifts to God, how necessary to be reconciled to our brother; yea, even more, to love our enemies. How can we do it? God loves His enemies, gives the sunshine and sends the rain upon them. If we only love those who love us and help those who help us, we are not any nearer God's nature than the heathen, and our profession is a vain one, and we in no way approximate the character of Him whom we acknowledge as Lord, and profess to proclaim before the world, and whose disposition we are supposed to try to imitate and reproduce before men. The command to us in this very particular is, "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," Matt. 5: 48.

Let the parting word that shall be said, be this, God's love for us, and our love for him, and for one another, as revealed and taught in the Bible, will

solve at once and forever every difficulty in the way and perplexity as to how God's people are to come together and Christian unity be perfected.

There is no other than this

Royal Way,

James 2: 8, proclaimed, over which His misguided and divided subjects shall come to the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, Ephes. 4: 3, united in one body of fellow-servants, and fellow-soldiers of brother-men, to

Serve

the King and one another, and unitedly (Gal. 3: 28)—one in Christ—fight the battles of our Common Lord. In to such a

Church,

O God, bring us—lead us—is the prayer of your fellow-servant, fellow-soldier and brother-man. Amen.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

FAITH.

Faith does not inquire how a thing shall be done. It is enough for Faith that God has promised to do it. The "how" is with God, the "must" with faith. Faith says it must be done, and God says how it shall be done. Faith collects the promises, and God provides for the fulfilling of them. If faith knew how God was going to do it, it would cease to be faith by becoming sight. We have an example of the pure article of faith in Abraham. We read what Paul has to say about it in Rom. chapter, 4. "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." Rom. 4: 20, 21. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence he also received him in a figure," Heb. 11: 17, 18, 19. Gloriously active, living, operative faith! "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works; and by works was

faith made perfect," James 2: 22. The highest expression and exercise of faith does not depend upon external and visible manifestations, as in the case of Gideon with the fleece of wool, Judges 6: 36-40, but upon the bare, naked word and promise of God as in the case of Abraham, Rom. 4: 16-21. In the one instance a sign was given, in the simple, the unqualified and unaccompanied, with tangible evidences, word of God, Heb. 11: 8, 17, 18, 19. In the one instance, the one must see in order to fully believe; in the other instance, the one fully believes in order to see, and entirely reverses the conditions. It stands out as plainly as A B C as to which is the stronger and higher exercise of faith in God. How the words of our Lord come here and appeal to our hearts! "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," John 20: 29. Well may Peter write, "Whom having not seen, ye love: in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory receiving the end of your faith even the salvation of your souls," 1 Pet. 1: 8, 9. What believing heart can refrain from saying, "amen Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth?" Rev. 19: 4, 6. Faith and works are, like the Siamese twins, inseparable. The two go hand in hand, faith, however, always being in the lead, taking the hand of work. While they are twin brothers or sisters, yet faith has always come to birth first and is independent of work, notwithstanding, work to be acceptable, must always be dependent upon faith, and where you see the one you will see the other. Faith is the pioneer who discovers the wealth, the resources of God as bequeathed to the Christian, and work its

hand-maiden through which it utilizes it. It may be said of faith as it is of God Himself, "mighty in work."

REVELATION.

Further than God reveals Himself to us and leads us we cannot go. We cannot go beyond and get beyond the revelation of God. We are shut up and shut in to that. We are compelled to wait the will of the Lord. And those who are prepared and ready to do it will not have to wait in vain—need not be afraid that God will not find them. He found Joseph in an Egyptian prison, Moses exiled in Midian, Gideon threshing wheat, and David watching over his father's sheep. God will not forget, overlook, or pass by those who are fitted for His work. Let it be remembered that God uses picked men. He does the choosing and ordaining. If He passes us by without selecting us to fill a place in His service it is because we lack the necessary qualifications. And, then again, we must not become impatient. We must learn to wait on the Lord. Our waiting will not be in vain, however we must not forget it requires patience and abiding the Lord's time in fulfilling his promises. "Let us not be weary in well-doing," is the exhortation, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not," Gal. 6: 9.

A CALL FOR A UNIVERSAL CONVOCATION TO SEEK THE UNITY OF ALL BELIEVERS.

I suppose it is needless to say to an intelligent reader, when Paul wrote 1 Cor. 3: 3-6, that there was

but one church in doctrine and practice. There were no denominational churches at that time and not until some time later. The object of Paul in writing to the Corinthians is partly to correct the party spirit. His desire is that they maybe perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. His question, Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? demolish all human creeds forever. To Paul, there was but one God and one Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 8: 6, and no more a plurality of churches in the sense of separate and organized denominations than there were with him a plurality of Gods. A plurality of churches is dishoning to God inasmuch as He is not the author of them. An infinite God—a world wide gospel, call for a church commensurate with the undertaking of God in man's evangelization.

We should heed the exhortation, "Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together [not apart] for the faith of the Gospel," Phil. 1: 27. Jesus taught, "A house divided against itself cannot stand," Matt. 12: 25. There should be a gathering to-day of all denominations out of which should be built the one church. The Bible should be taken, as its own interpreter, free from human comment or restriction, as the confession of faith to which all should subscribe.

It is spiritual unity to be sought and advocated. Organic unity will follow as night follows day and summer spring, and as in matrimony, first the union of hearts and then of lives. There cannot be a union of lives unless there first be a union of hearts. There must first be spiritual unity before organic unity is possible. To advocate organic unity where spiritual

unity does not first exist is a farce, and is as incompatible as light and darkness. But the fact remains the unity of believers. The church may be rent and torn by division and there may arise denominations, but they are unwarranted and unauthorized by the Holy Scriptures. We call for the assembling of all believers, come, bring your differences, laying them all at the Lord's feet. Here is the place to settle differences and reconcile disputants. God calls for this union. You cannot afford to refuse to heed it. I prophesy it—and advocate it. Surely Christians, professing to owe all and give all to Jesus, themselves included, can live and act as brethren, be as unitedly one as masons. People go to the same post-office, patronize the same public school, employ the same doctor, and yet will not send their children to same Sabbath School! Go to the same store but not to the same church! Much more united on politics than religion! Strange! Our Savior said, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light," Luke 16: 8. How we see it demonstrated in the combinations and leagues of the wicked! Whiskey leagues, &c. Unity of believers as herein proposed would revolutionize the universe of mankind. That such unity is taught in the Bible is seen not only in its plain and literal teaching but also in all its figures—vine, building, family, &c., indicate unity.

Brother, sister, imply family—are family terms. One quotation as how to treat the members of the same family: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous," 1 Pet. 3: 8. Let all Christians at this day adopt this as their motto and put its teaching in to practice.

REFORMATION.

The reformers, Luther, Melancthon, Wesley, Fletcher, and others, in the beginning of the work that God called them to do, aimed to restore primitive and apostolic religion in the earth. That was their purpose. Their writings and teaching reveal it. In D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation it is clearly shown that God mightily moved Luther, and had he left himself free for God to use him, we should have had a reformation that would have taken us back to Christ and His apostles. Study the narrative and see where the human crept in from time to time, And so in the days of the Wesleys and Fletcher. The writings of John Wesley and John Fletcher show this also very plainly. The radical work of Wesley began as early as his sojourn in Georgia, while there he refused to receive persons from the dissenting churches into membership of Episcopal church without re-baptizing them and insisted that it should be by immersion. See History of the Christian Church, by J. S. C. Abbott, page, 485.

At the first conference of the Methodist clergy, at the Foundry Chapel, in 1744, Mr. Wesley said, "You cannot be admitted to the church of Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, or any others, unless you hold the same opinions with them, and adhere to the same mode of worship. The Methodists alone do not insist upon holding this or that opinion, but they think and let think. Neither do they impose any particular mode of worship; but you may continue to worship in your former manner, be it what it may. Now, I do not know any other religious society, either ancient or modern, wherein such liberty of conscience is now allowed, or has been allowed since the days of the

apostles. Here is our glorying, and it is a glorying peculiar to us, *Ibid*, page, 488.

Mr. Wesley must have departed from this later in life, and we know that those who are called Methodists do not allow such liberty of conscience, "think and let think," and yet retain the member, who thinks differently from them, among them. They have, if possible, more severely systematized the doctrines upon which Methodism is founded, and require full and hearty assent and subscription to them. Certainly Mr. Wesley could not recognize in Methodism of today what we have quoted from him in the beginning of his work as here represented. The truth seems to be that he himself drifted from his early radical teaching or, at least, greatly modified them in the course of his after life: Methodism today is as dogmatic, comparatively, as any other religious denomination. Her distinctive doctrines are held to almost as exclusively, as of those opposing, or not agreeing with her, as any other church that can be found.

Human Figure *versus* Divine Metaphor.

Sometimes we hear the different denominations compared to the different parts of an army. The figure is not well taken as infantry, artillery, cavalry on land, and the fleet on water, are one army under one commander-in-chief. Certainly such oneness as this is not true of denominationalism. They all have distinct heads and *modus operandi*; and human hands are laid on the ark of God. There are harmony and purpose in every movement of an army—artillery at one place, cavalry another, &c., concentrating on one object, while denominations occupy the same hill-top with distinctive organizations. If the figure were correct it would be glorious—the world operated upon

by a brotherhood compact, real, united.

But what about the Bible metaphor? The church a bride—not brides—not as many brides as Brigham Young had wives! Brigham Young with his many wives must beget bastard children.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD ENTERED.

The Lord has opened to us his kingdom. The kingdom is entered in this life. Some have already entered, Heb. 4: 3. The kingdom is here—not to come. Men have got into the realm of God, in the sphere inhabited, presided over, and controlled by God Himself. We have been transported into the bliss of union and communion with Him. When once consciously within the fold, the infinite resources and store-houses of temporal and spiritual blessings of “the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity” are ours.

When one has entered the kingdom of God he is in the realm of angels, who are ministering spirits for those who are heirs of salvation, Heb. 2: 14. And not only that he is compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses who has been translated from the militant to the triumphant church or from earth to heaven. It is well for the Christian to stop and consider who is with him—the company he is keeping. It will have a tendency greatly to strengthen him. Suppose we call the roll of those who are with him. We will find out by so doing who is helping him—who is on the Lord’s side.

If we are on God’s side let us take the Bible and prayerfully consider who is with us—the company we are keeping, and walk worthy of our vocation where-with we are called, Ephes. 4: 1.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST.

To-day I have seen the Church, and lo, it was not a magnificent building with towering spires, and gleaming light through stained windows; not an edifice of imposing grandeur, of skilful workmanship, of embellished wealth, of men and women in broad-cloth and silks and satins, of noble mein and kingly birth; but of humble and lowly persons, here a bowed head and there a contrite spirit, a broken heart and a penitent, believing soul, seeking mercy at the cross of Christ. Far different from our views! the weeping Mary and loving John, the obscure fisherman and the despised tax-collector Luke, the beloved physician, the abandoned woman of society, and the abashed adulteress of Israel. The church in men and women; not in brick and mortar, stone and marble, display and decoration, but in the living epistles known and read of all men. A church composed of human beings, not the church in form and beautiful exterior, of faultless structure, of matchless physique and dignified demeanor; but in the inner man of the heart—a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is a great price.

Be it known that the church is not in elaborate educational systems, ministerial education, dogmatic schools and colleges, of richly dressed and cultured clergy, jeweled adorned and handsomely robed in costly apparel, laity. How is the Church, as it now stands, of the poor and despised Nazarene of an obscure Galliean carpenter! We read that, "God dwelleth not in temples made with hands." He dwells in the hearts of true and sincere believers.

REVIVAL.

A revival meeting need not go on indefinitely. It is the preparation for it that takes time. When we are ready for a revival it may come even before we are aware of it. We read in Isaiah, "Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed she brought forth her children," Is. 66: 8. The crying need to-day on the part of the church is the preparation for a revival. We should not try to have it before we are ready for it, but get ready for it as speedily as possible. When we are ready for a revival it will surely come, and the beauty of it is, it *will stay* after it comes. The revival whose fruit remains is the only one worth seeking after. A revival of this order is the need of the day. Shall we seek one of this kind and pray for it until we receive it? We verily believe that we will. God is leading in this direction, and we confidently look for a genuine and wide-spread revival in this and other lands.

OUR SAVIOUR'S TEACHING.

Jesus taught unequivocally that God the Spirit would speak in the disciples—and the subsequent history of their lives verify the statement. This is a great and notable fact. Was it intended to be perpetuated? To answer the inquiry any way but in the affirmative is to deny the very genius of Christianity.

God the Holy Spirit revealed unto Simeon that he should not see death until "he had seen the Lord's Christ." "And Anna the prophetess, coming in at

that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Here are two persons, whom God had prepared for and revealed to the coming of our Lord, and they both recognize and testify on first sight to His being the Lord's Christ. There are people to-day whom God is preparing and unto whom He is revealing His purpose and making known His will just as truly as He did to the shepherds, Simeon, and to Anna, the prophetess.

INFANT BAPTISM, &c.

On Oct. 14th, 1898, I was called on to "christen" (make Christians) some children. It so happened that the mother of the children had not been christened in babyhood. When the service had been performed and the children duly baptized according to the Discipline, the mother proceeding on the theory that what was good for her children was good for her, requested me also to baptize her. I asked her if she personally accepted Christ as her Saviour, to which she replied in the negative. I informed her that the Discipline gave me no authority to baptize her only on her own profession of faith. Who was consistent, the woman or the Discipline? Did it not appear that there were *two* baptisms taught in the Discipline, one for children and another for adults? Who could possibly harmonize the Discipline with the Bible here?

But another case, the night of that same day there came forward, at church where we had a meeting in progress, a prominent member of the church, requesting me to baptize him. He had been Sunday

School superintendent and Epworth League president, on a former charge where I had served, and having moved into the bounds of the circuit I was then traveling, had connected himself with one of the churches of the charge, and had been elected president of the Epworth League of the church where we were then holding the meeting. Perhaps, you ask, how did this happen? He thought his parents had had him christened when a baby, but in conversation with them found out they had not, so all these years had been in the church an active member unbaptized, yet laboring under the delusion that he had been. How could one be a New Testament Christian and still be unbaptized? Does any one see any similarity between the baptism of this person and the baptism of believers in New Testament times? Could one receive New Testament baptism and not know it? All one needs to do is to bring these facts to bear on one's mind. I will relate another case. En-route to a camp-meeting the summer or fall of 1893, I stopped all night in a strange place with total strangers. On the parents' learning that I was a minister (or so reputed myself to be, for they only had my word and actions for it) they had me on the following morning, before taking my departure, to baptize their baby. All the pay they got for my night's lodging! Other experiences might be given in connection with being sent for to "christen" babies when extremely sick, &c., but the facts already stated show some of the absurdities attached to the groundless practice in Scripture and reason of Infant Baptism!

Do these things strengthen your faith in it? Are you still asked to believe it? What superstitious no-

tions prevail in connection with it! It fosters human vagaries.

TAUGHT THE WILL OF GOD.

The key-note to every life is the will of God concerning it. That one may know the will of God in reference to himself is the greatest of all privileges and blessings. We are not left to ourselves to find out the will of God, for He teaches it to them who are willing to learn it. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself," John 7: 17. The doctrine that Jesus taught embraced the *whole* of a human life—entering its minutest details and largest possibilities. It encompasses the entire man—as related to earth, heaven, God, and eternity. It touches him wherever he touches anything, and wherever anything touches him. A human life could not be more completely over-shadowed, dominated, penetrated, and actuated than it is when covered by the will of God. It is perfect—wanting nothing. No life can ask for more than the will of God be done in it. It is asking for all it is capable of, and of becoming—for all God can do for it and with it. Jesus had no higher standard for himself and cannot have a higher one for us.

It is the only criterion by which a life may be regulated and directed—without it life would be aimless, void, blank. There would be no purpose in one's birth, life, death, or translation. We could not think of a greater anomaly or calamity than life without the will of God. The great apostle to the Gentiles, in speaking of the resurrection and future life, exclaims,

“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable,” 1 Cor. 15: 19. How we break out in the same strain in regard to the will of God! We cannot find language to express or describe our feelings concerning it, such an incoherent, chaotic, unrecognizable being man would be without it! Tempest-tossed, passion-driven, stranded, wrecked, ruined, lost! a true picture of humanity taken apart from the will of God! Never do I want to look upon such a picture. May it not be put upon canvass or found in the picture-galleries of eternity! Such a picture would cast a shadow even upon the walls of the celestial city. There is no place for it in the courts of heaven. It would detract from its glory. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth the will* of my Father which is in heaven,” Matt. 8: 21.

The Lord taught His disciples to say, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,” Matt. 6: 10. He further taught, “It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God,” John 6: 45. The perfection of His teaching is found in His parting discourses to His disciples, “Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth,” John 16: 13. And again, we read in Hebrews, “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: “And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least unto the greatest,” Heb. 8: 10, 11. We are ready to exclaim with Isaiah, “And

all of thy children [members of God's church] shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children," Is. 54: 13. Whence cometh the errors in the churches? not from "the Spirit of truth." God's word must be fulfilled, and error banished from among His children.

POWER.

It is mere child's play to try to save the world without power from on high. We just as well close our churches so long as we *lack* this power, unless we intend to seek for it until we find it.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," James 5: 16. If this is true the resolution of the believer's heart should be, it shall be seen. It is either true or not true. If true, it should be established, and if not, let it fall with the Bible. We should make no compromise nor accept any substitute here, but strive for the answer and *stake* all upon it and receive it. We are not fighting under a "flag of truce," it is victory or death.

In the prayer that prevails with God, as mentioned by James, Elijah prayed that it might not rain, and, then again, that it might rain. Instead of praying that it might not rain, James would have us pray for the conversion of the sinner! Here is his conclusion: "Brethren if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins," James 5: 19, 20. God highly prizes the truth.

MORAL SCIENCE.

The doing of the will of God is the secret of moral philosophy, when it is known that His will is impelled by His love.

The discussions of "an ultimate right," the "doing right because it is right," or "the choice of a good," etc., having absolute value in itself, may tend to confuse the unlearned, whereas the doing of the will of God, which will is the expression of His love—love in action—impelling, constraining, commanding, and restraining, the infinite God, is simple, natural, and very plain. That we should do "good" or do "right" separate from God may be hard for us to comprehend, but that in doing His will we shall both do good and right is very clear. What is needed, is not so much a system of moral philosophy, but rather the truth itself. The truth—the whole truth—is to be preferred to any classification of it. We have it in its entirety in doing the will of God.

DISCIPLINE.

All the moral effects of discipline are lost through denominationalism. One church abnegates what another's does. A person excluded from one denomination is at liberty to join another. There is not any doubt about his being received somewhere. We have known it to be the case where this actually occurred.

How can one church successfully legislate and discipline against card-playing, dancing, theatre going, etc., when another in the same community does not object to its members engaging in these things, or, at least, do not take any notice of those who are

guilty of doing them? Where the churches are divided on worldly practices, what influence can they hope to exert on an ungodly and wicked world? And again, suppose a person, becoming offended in any way with the communion to which he belongs, whether his cause is a just one or not, he may at his own option withdraw from them and unite with another.

The lesson that offenders would learn by the church withdrawing from the disorderly and disobedient is lost in the asylum offered to them in other denominations. To call one's attention to these things is sufficient without note or comment. So long as it is impossible for denominational churches to discipline and exert a moral control over their members, they are tied hand and foot in trying to influence and convince a gain-saying world. "Judgment must begin first at the house of God," 1 Pet. 4: 17.

Again, it is a hinderance to *pastoral visitation*. A minister is duty-bound to visit the sick. He is restricted in the performance of this duty by denominationalism.

We knew two ministers, one of the M. E. Church, the other of the M. E. Church South, who got into quite a quarrel about this very thing. The M. E. South minister became very much enraged with his brother-minister for visiting one of his flock, and attacked him about it. And this is not the only case we know to have occurred.

"GOD KNOWETH," 2 COR. 11: 11.

If we get the concensus of the Bible writers and

pile up their teaching altogether—they plainly tell us *God knows*. To the discouraged and disconsolate this must come as a ray of light penetrating their gloom and darkness.

It is the hour of prayer and we are trying to word our petitions—and feel inadequate to express our desires in word, or, have indefinable and inexpressible longings of soul after God? Says Jesus, “Your Father knoweth what ye have need of, before ye ask Him,” Matt. 6: 3; Rom. 8: 26. Are you in need or burdened with the fear of want, owning nothing, without money and wealthy relatives or friends upon whom you can call, unknown and unsought, with many and grave responsibilities, and great and pressing temporal demands upon you, and you a professing Christian—a child of God? “Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things,” Matt. 6: 32. “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus,” Phil. 4: 19.

Are you confronted with the question, “What shall I do, Lord?” Acts 22: 10, or where is your field of labor, or perplexed as to duty or doctrines, or anything whatsoever, it matters not of what kind or character? “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world” or “known to God are his works from all eternity,” Acts 15: 18. John gives us the finale of the matter in his first Epistle, “God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things,”¹ John 3: 20.

If obstacles are in the way, and those whom we supposed to be friends are opposing foes, it matters not, whoever or whatever impedes our progress or blocks our way, “God knoweth all things”—He knows, His word says, “For the eyes of the Lord are

over the righteous and his eyes open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil", etc., 1 Pet. 3: 12, and who dares dispute it? Hear the never-to-be-forgotten words of the apostle Peter, that comes to us with super-human force, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished", 2 Pet. 2: 9.

How great the relief to turn to the Lord and say "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee," John 21: 17.

And to those who could say this, how real their deliverance! Joseph out of prison, Moses out of a watery grave, Israel out of Egypt, the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, Daniel in the lion's den, Peter out of prison, and *ad infinitum*. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine," John 10: 14. Paul says, nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his" 2 Tim. 2: 19. "He knoweth the way of the righteous" Ps. 1: 6.

We cannot fool God; "But if any man love God, the same known of him", 1 Cor. 8: 3. Paul again: "But now after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God," Gal. 4: 9. He knows us. He knew the street and house in which Saul was stopping and praying, Acts 9: 12. He knew where to find Ananias and He knew where to find Saul, and, He knows where to find you and me. When He needs us He will not overlook us. He found Moses in Midian, and David following his Father's sheep, and Amos gathering sycamore fruit, and Peter and Andrew casting a net into the sea—to whom He said, "Follow me", and Matthew sitting at

the receipt of custom, to whom He also said, "Follow me," etc.

We are ready to exclaim with one of old, "Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite" Ps. 147:5. "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding," Is. 40: 28. "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!" Rom. 11: 33. So both Testaments agree and unite—God knows!

ORGANIZATIONS.

Mere human organizations and enterprises, though purporting to be churches of the "living God," must and will come to nought. Disintegration, decay, and destruction are in and adhere to anything and everything not undertaken in God's name, in accord with His will, and for His glory, Matt. 15: 13. So we find Gamaliel advising the Jews how to deal with the apostles; "And now I say unto you, refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought. But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God," Acts, 5: 38, 39. He cited the cases of Theudas and Judas, who, with their followers came to an ignominious end. The kingdom of God and the churches of Christ, however, are not in any danger, Men may oppose but cannot stay the hand of God any more than they can the lightning or gather up the wind in their fists. They may assault it and bring the battering-rams of human

envy and diabolical hatred against it, but, lo, it stands firm, unshaken and irresistible! "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again; for the eternal years of God are hers." "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever," Dan. 2: 44.

THE PREACHER.

A preacher who cannot "rough" it is not fit for the gospel ministry. Paul in writing to Timothy, his son in the gospel, exhorts him to "Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ", 2 Tim. 2: 3. The life of a soldier in active service is not an easy one. The lack of muscle, sunburn, and hardship may have militated against the highest achievements of the ministry of the present age; however, recent experiences of the missionaries and native Christians of China, during the Boxers' uprising, has brought to light heroic faith and stalwart Christian manhood and womanhood. Jesus said, in speaking of John the Baptist, justifying his ascetic life, and rough exterior, "But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appavelled, and live delicately, are in kings courts," Luke 7: 25. The ministry in manner and appearance have departed from its prototype until it is not recognizable.

We wonder if the minister is in direct apostolic succession as to method (perhaps "tact" would be a better word), who, when the "Amen" to the bene-

diction has scarcely been said, and the echo of it died away, scuds to the door to "shake hands" with the departing congregation! It is not just in keeping with our sense of propriety and the means and methods employed by Jesus and His apostles to win men to salvation. While the "hand-shake" may be perfectly sincere on the part of both, it is not "voluntary" on the part of the congregation.

THE NEED OF THE HOUR—MEN.

If called upon to state the one need of the day, that confronts us on every side, I would say unhesitatingly, emphatically, and in my judgment, with absolute certainty, Spirit-born, Spirit-filled, Spirit-taught, and Spirit-led men. The need of the so-called churches of this age, is not numbers, not money, not worldly standing, but men and women after God's own heart. With persons of this class, though the number may be small, every other problem will solve itself, and every unfriendly force will be overcome, and opposing powers adjusted in accordance with the promises of God.

WELL-DEVELOPED CHARACTER.

We must endeavor to attain a symmetrical character. As long as our character is one-sided, lop-sided, and dwarfed in any vital particular, we to that extent lack fitness and adaptability for the best, most efficient, and highest service, we would otherwise be capable of rendering.

The purpose of God revealed in His word concerning us is, to discipline, train, and develop us in-

to evenly balanced Christians—consistent in all the relations of life both to God and to man

END.

ERRATA.

NOTE: The mistakes that occur in this book from 81th to 144th pages cannot in any wise be attributed to the author, as he did not see the proof from the 81th to 144th pages, and the corrections he made on pages 73, 74, 76, 77, and 79, and some others, were overlooked by the compositors and are to be included with the above-mentioned errors.

—*Author.*

- Page 4, "sincerety" for "sincerity." "That is say" for "that is to say."
- " 7, "fulfill" instead of "fufil," "Cherry" for cheery.
- " 9, "acquanted" for "acquainted."
- " 13, "one's" instead of "one."
- " 15, "a new commandment," etc., small a for capital A, and furthermore there should be a capital letter wherever a direct quotation occurs throughout the entire book.
- " 22, "their" after "by" and before the clause in parentheses.
- " 27, "formed" for "founded." Comma after "fall" instead of period. Period after "fall" instead of comma.
- " 47, omit comma after "than."
- " 53, comma after "home."
- " 67, comma after "men," and "grace" in sentence "His text-books," etc.
- " 69, read, as "did His" instead of "His did," with dash after "His."
- " 73, comma after "gladiatorial."
- " 74, dash after "women."

Page 75, "These quotations bring" instead of "This quotation brings."

- " 76, "worth" instead of "worthy;" "true" instead of "time;" "exalteth" instead of "axalteth." John 14: "26" instead of "56." capital H in He.
- " 77 "Disciples" instead of "desciples." Comma before and after "He said "
- " 79, "unimportant" instead of "nuimportant." "Bible" instead of "bible." Comma after "today."
- " 81, "of" comment instead of "if." Period after "truth" and before "The."
- " 82, "show" instead of "shew."
- " 85, "simply" instead of "simple."
- " 87, "are" instead of "re." "individually" instead of "individuals."
- " 88, "where" instead of "when;" "has" instead of "had;" comma after "least;" "temerity,, instead of "termerity."
- " 92, "occurrence" instead of "occurence."
- " 96, "Giving places the giver," etc., should begin a new paragraph. Comma after "apostles." Apostrophe after "apostles."
- " 99, comma after "is" and before "Go." comma after "(Luke 24: 49)." Comma after "imperative" instead of before.
- 100, comma after "them" instead of period; one sentence instead of two, as the period makes it. In death "they" instead of "there" are victorious.
- " 101, "who can deny our unfitness for service if we undertake it prematurely" instead of "our undertaking it prematurely."

Page 102, "life" instead of "ife."

- " 103, "kind" instead of "dink."
- " 104, "Zech." instead of "Zeck." Comma after "He." Read as follows, "He, as the old adage," etc. "fulfill" instead of "fulfilđ."
- " 105, "sojourn" instead of "sojurn."
- " 108, "We should put on the programme, first, prayer" instead of "prayers," and in the next place "prayer" instead of "prayers." Read, "prayer is heard," etc.
- " 109, "affirmative" instead of "afferivative."
- " 102, "the" instead of "thd."
- " 113, "enthusiasm" instead of "ethusiasm."
- " 115, "His one" instead of "His own." "shipwreck" instead of "wrech."
- " 116, "We well remember" instead of "We will remember." "We need more than they," comma after "they" instead of "We need more than this," etc.
- " 125, "Thy Kingdom" instead of "dingdom."
- " 128, "Finally" instead of "Fnally;" "concerning" instead of "concerniag."
- " 129, "God's interest in, solicitude for, and desire to save the sinner" instead of "God's interest, in solicitude and desire to save the sinner."
- " 131, "to" twice.
- " 132, "man" instead of "may;" "firmament" instead of "firmanent."
- " 134, "thee" instead of "the."
- " 135, "mistaking" one's necessity, etc. instead of "mistaken."
- " 137, "obedience" instead of "obiedience." "King Saul" instead of Samuel."

Page 137, "ultimately" instead of "ultumately."

- " 138, "thee" instead of "the;" "connection" instead of "conneccion."
- " 140, "Faithful" instead of "Eaithful;" "acceptation" instead of "acception."
- " 141, "eternal life" instead of comma after "eternal."
- " "1 Pet." instead of "1 Per;" "out" instead of "ont."
- " 150, "John" instead of "Johh;" "e" turned upside down.
- " 153, "circumference" instead of "circumferance."
- " 157, "fellow" instead of "fallow."
- " 161, "dishonoring" not "dishoning." "Spiritual" not "spiritinal."
- " 162, "assembling," "i" turned upside down. "the" ommitted before "same Sabbath School." "Pitiful" not pitiffiful."
- " 163, insert "the" before "Episcopal Church." "Christian" not "Christion."
- " 164, quotation marks after "us" and before "I did." "Different" not "diflerent." "Distinctive" not "destinctive."
- " 165, "spiritual" not "spiritial." "Has" for "have" in "has been translated."
- " 166, "magnificent" not "magnificent." Comma after "tax-collector" and before "Luke." "a" for "of" in "is a great price." "Despised" not "dispised."
- " 168, "forward" not "froward."
- " 169, "with" not "wi." "Could" not "conld."
- " 174, comma after "Church" and before "South."
- " 176, "is" omitted in "the same known of him."



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123

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