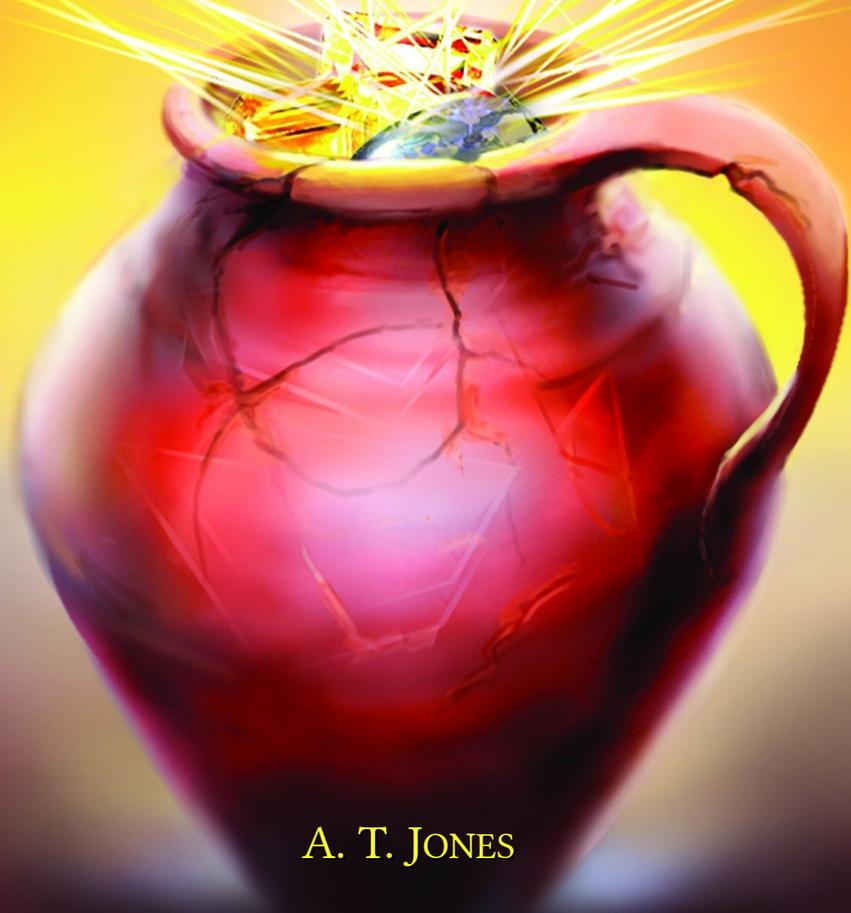


THE CHURCH

COLLECTED PERIODICAL ARTICLES



A. T. JONES

FRAGMENTS – VOLUME 7

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About the “Fragments” Series

THE *Fragments* series is composed of 12 books of articles, gathered from the various Periodicals which A. T. Jones contributed to during his lifetime.

In order to bring some cohesion to these articles, the books are topical: that is, articles are organized according to their topic, and there is a separate book for each topic. So there are books on *Gospel*, *Law and Sabbath*, *Healing and Temperance*, *The Bible*, *Religious Liberty*, *The Holy Spirit*, *The Prophetic Word*, etc.

These volumes range in size from less than 100 pages, to over 1500 pages. In the largest, the *Religious Liberty* articles, I selected only those articles that carried principles or examples that would be applicable for our day. There were many other articles (about 3000 pages or more) that concerned local news and happenings. But to extract just the most essential, I left these out.

In most cases, I have left out articles that already appear in other books. For example, there was a series of articles in the *Present Truth* magazine, titled *Bible Studies on the Christian Life*. These are available as a separate book on our website, so they are not included in the *Fragments* series. Also, we produced a large collection of articles regarding the Papacy and Catholic errors, *The Light Shines in Darkness*. Articles that are in that collection are not included in the *Fragments* series.

Also, some articles crossed over many topics. For example, an article on the Sabbath could fit into the “Law and Sabbath” book, but it might also cover “Religious Liberty”, “The Gospel”, and even “The Prophetic Word.” I did not think it wise to duplicate articles, so I tried to fit these kinds of articles into the book that most matched it’s topic, or where there were a series of articles that it belonged to.

What these books demonstrate is that A. T. Jones produced a lot of precious material, much of which was never organized or reprinted after his death. Jesus taught us to “gather the fragments that none be lost.” *John* 6:12. Since much depends on how we receive and appreciate the light that God gives through His chosen messengers, I felt a burden to put these forgotten treasures into an orderly and easily accessible format.

May the Spirit that gave them, bless you as you read!

*“If human beings would open the windows of the soul heavenward,
in appreciation of the divine gifts,
a flood of healing virtue would pour in.”*

Ellen White, Ministry of Healing, p. 116

About This Volume

THE full and final display of the love and power of God to heal mankind from sin, is to take place through a united and purified church, the “body of Christ,” upon this earth.

Ephesians 5

²⁵ Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it;

²⁶ That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

²⁷ That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Revelation 19

⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife has made herself ready.

⁸ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

The early church was united by the truth of the sacrifice of Christ, in which type and prophecy from the Old Testament had been fulfilled. Once this truth had united them, the power of the “early rain” (Holy Spirit) was given them to bring this message to the world.

Likewise, there is to be a “latter rain” power, preceded by a message of truth, which will unite and equip the church for the final battle against sin and unrighteousness.

Joel 2

²³ Be glad then, you children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He has given you the former rain [margin: “a teacher of righteousness”] moderately [margin: “according to righteousness”], and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

This message “of righteousness” found the beginning of its fulfillment in the special truths presented by A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner. Ellen White testified that it was the “beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth” (*Review and Herald*, November 22, 1892, referring to *Revelation* 18:1-4), that it was to be attended with “the special power of the Holy Spirit,” like “the day of Pentecost.” (*Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 234-235).

Naturally then, part of their message would be concerned with church organization, unity, building, and inter-dependence.

This collection gathers those articles that particularly apply to the spiritual inner working and building up of the church body; how the Holy Spirit is to be given the reigns in forming a church after the divine similitude.

1. Counsel to Elders

Signs of the Times, January 1, 1885
Acts 20:28-38

Acts 20

²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves.

THIS is the first duty that is presented in the Scriptures, for the consideration of those who are placed in authority in the church. And here in his final charge to the elders of the church at Ephesus Paul does not fail to set it before them. You, elders, are the guides.

²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves.

Jesus said:

Matthew 5

¹⁹ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall *do and teach them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Those will not be called great in the kingdom of heaven who teach the commandments but do not do them. It is only those who *do and teach them* that shall be called great there. For it is only those who do them, whose teaching will be of any avail.

It is so likewise with the elders of the churches. They are to be:

1 Peter 5

³ ...ensamples to the flock.

1 Timothy 3

² [They] must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

³ Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

⁴ One that rules his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.

⁶ Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

⁷ Moreover he must have a good report of them that are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

He who will fulfill those scriptures which are given for the special guidance of the elders must take heed unto himself. So Paul again in writing to Timothy says:

1 Timothy 4

¹⁶ Take heed unto yourself and to the doctrine.

One of the qualifications of an elder is that he shall be

1 Timothy 3

² ...apt to teach,

and that he shall hold...

Titus 1

⁹ ...fast the faithful word, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Yet before any of these, comes the duty,

1 Timothy 4

¹⁶ Take heed unto yourself.

Then take heed unto the doctrine;

¹⁶ ...for in doing this you shall both save yourself and them that hear you.

The office of a bishop (elder) is indeed “a good work” (1 *Timothy* 3:1), and he who will fulfill its obligations will thereby be a good man. And to fulfill those obligations he needs to study diligently the chart laid down in *Timothy*, *Titus*, and *1 Peter* 5.

Acts 20

²⁸ Take heed...to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers.

Watching for souls...

Hebrews 13

¹⁷ ...as they that must give account.

1 Peter 5

² ...taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind,

³ ...being ensamples to the flock.

⁴ And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away.

Acts 20

²⁸ ...to feed the church of God, which he has purchased with His own blood.

1 Peter 5

² Feed the flock of God.

Ezekiel 34

² Thus says the Lord God unto the shepherds: Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?

⁴ The diseased have you not strengthened, neither have you healed that which was sick, neither have you bound up that which was broken, neither have you brought again that which was driven away, neither have you sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have you ruled them.

⁵ And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.

⁶ My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill; yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

John 10

² He that enters in by the door [Christ is the door. *John 10:9*] is the shepherd of the sheep.

³ ...and the sheep hear His voice; and He calls His own sheep by name, and leads them out.

⁴ And when He puts forth His own sheep, He goes before

them, and the sheep follow Him; for they know His voice.

Grievous Wolves

Acts 20

²⁹ For I know this that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

From Paul's first letter to Timothy it seems that these grievous wolves were the Judaizing teachers, who made a great merit of long genealogies (*1 Timothy* 1:3-4), and pretended to be apostles. *Revelation* 2:2.

These were the greatest enemies of the church all through the apostolic age, at Ephesus and almost everywhere else, even following Paul from one place to another, stirring up the people against him, and making the brethren evil affected toward him.

And it was only a manifestation of his faithfulness to the church when he gave this warning and charge to the elders; and afterward he left Timothy there specially to guard the church against these evil influences as well as against the other class mentioned.

Acts 20

³⁰ Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.

Hymeneus and Alexander, mentioned in *1 Timothy* 1:20, were of these, and made "shipwreck of faith," and went so far as to "blaspheme," and had to be delivered unto Satan. Hymeneus is again named in *2 Timothy* 2:17, and with him another, Philetus, who had so far erred from the truth as to say that the resurrection was past already; and these were thus trying to "overthrow the faith of some."

Another one, Diotrephes, loved to have the "pre-eminence among them." So much so, in fact, as to refuse to receive John, the beloved disciple, "prating" against him with malicious

words, and not content with that, he would not receive any of the ministering brethren, and still more, forbade others who were willing to entertain them, and if any did receive them he cast them out of the church. *3 John 9, 10.*

He not only would draw away disciples after him, but he was not willing that anybody but himself should have any disciples.

Acts 20

³⁵ I have showed you all things, how that so laboring you ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

It is true. How many believe it?

2. Service of Self

Signs of the Times, March 19, 1885

IN PAUL'S catalog of the sins that are characteristic of the last days, in the church as well as in the world, selfishness stands at the head.

2 Timothy 3

² Men shall be lovers of their own selves.

From this root spring all the branches that the apostle has named; and if we kill the root, the branches will die of themselves.

Our eyes and our endeavors should ever be upon this; because it is so insidious, so deceitful, that many acts, even of our own, which we think are acceptable service to the Lord, are not so in fact, but are service of ourselves—selfishness. We need, therefore, to constantly examine ourselves (*2 Corinthians* 13:5) by the strictest possible tests, that we may discover the real motive of our actions.

There is not an act that we can commit, but what may spring from selfishness, whereas all ought to spring from benevolence; and we need to know as nearly as possible for ourselves, whether we are really serving the Lord or serving ourselves.

Here is one who gets up Sabbath morning, someone asks him:

“Are you going to church today?”

“No, I think I will not go today; there is not going to be any preaching. If there was to be preaching I would go.”

So when the preacher comes round he goes, and probably thinks he is serving the Lord. But he is serving himself; he is actuated by sheer selfishness. Is your wish to glorify God? is it to do your part in encouraging and edifying the church? You

can do it as well on the Sabbath when there is no preaching at your church as when there is. It is your duty to go to the place of meeting on the Sabbath, and if your wish is to serve God, you will never ask yourself whether there is to be preaching or not.

Again, very often when the time comes to go to prayer and social meeting, perhaps we don't feel like going; we think over it awhile and decide to not go, but knowing it is our duty to go and knowing that we are expected to be there, we feel uneasy at home and finally decide to go; not because we want to, not because we are glad to, but to relieve ourselves of uneasiness, and it is selfishness.

Then when we reach the place of meeting it is the same process over again; we don't feel like speaking or praying and so we wait and wait, the meeting is almost over, the time is nearly expired, we have neither prayed nor spoken; we know we ought to do one or the other, we know we are expected to do so, we know we do not and shall not feel easy unless we do; so, to relieve ourselves, we get up and say "I am glad to be here," etc., with a manner and in a tone in which there is no element of gladness, and all simply to relieve ourselves and which is therefore selfishness.

Once more, there are those who will do no missionary work till near the close of the quarter, and there is only a short time till they will have to make a report, and they have done nothing which they can report, so they will take up a few tracts or papers, and rustle round and distribute them somewhere, not with any particular consideration of the precious truth which they are handling, not with any burden for souls for whom Christ died, but primarily, if not solely, to have something to report, to satisfy, and relieve themselves, and which therefore is selfishness.

And so we might, and in fact so we need, to trace to its source every act of our lives, and see for ourselves whether

we are serving God, or serving ourselves. By so doing we shall develop and cultivate benevolence, cheerful well-doing and willing service in the cause of our Master.

The Scripture sets before us the one single motive that must actuate all our service. That motive is, love for Christ. Any other motive, any other inducement, whatever it may be, is too low. We must keep ourselves reigned up to this supreme incentive.

Christ Himself set it before us in His own words. In His twice repeated question to Peter, "Do you love me?" He gives us the supreme rule by which to detect the motive by which we are actuated.

The true intent of this passage (*John 21:15-17*) has been too often lost by passing it by as simply intended to recall to Peter's mind, in a delicate way, his triple denial of the Lord. We do not deny that such impression was conveyed to Peter, but we regard it as equally undeniable that there is in it a deeper meaning than that,—even this, that to Peter, and to all others, before they enter upon any service of the Lord, he asks the searching question twice repeated, "Do you love me?" And when we can answer that question in the affirmative, as did Peter, then, and not till then, are we prepared to do anything in the name of Him...

Revelation 1

⁵ ...who has loved us and has washed us from our sins in His own blood.

Then when Sabbath comes the question will not be:

"Shall I go to church today?"

But it will be:

"Do you love me?"

And all will be decided at once.

When the occasion of the prayer and social meeting comes, there will be no question about whether we shall go, or whether we shall take part when we do go, but “Do you love me?” will decide it all.

In doing missionary work of whatever kind, “Do you love me?” will settle the matter of reporting, long before the end of the quarter.

That all-important question repeated o’er and o’er, and answered o’er and o’er, will rid the heart and mind of all selfishness, and plant, and cause to grow, the beautiful tree of benevolence, bearing abundantly its sweet fruit, joy, gladness, willingness, ready-mindedness, and cheerfulness, in all the service of the Lord, and God will be glorified in His saints.

More love to Thee, O Christ! more love to Thee.¹

¹ E. Prentiss, Hymn: *More Love to Thee, O Christ*, 1856.

3. Jesus Teaching Humility

Signs of the Times, August 5, 1886
John 13:1-27

IN THE lesson for today Jesus taught humility, by an example which He is to be imitated by His followers. Said He,

John 13

¹⁵ I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

Yet as plain as are the words of the Master, not one in a thousand of those who profess to be His disciples, follow the example given by Him. They do not do as He did. In this neglect, or refusal, there is a serious slighting of both the example and the command of the Lord Jesus.

This example was given by Jesus to be followed by doing as He did, and not by doing something else,—“that you should do as I have done to you.” That is what the example means, and if it is not followed in the way that He did it, it is not followed at all.

The common explanation of the fact of the washing of feet is, that, as in those days the people wore sandals, it was the part of the host to wash the feet of his guests. But the Bible itself is the best evidence of the customs of Bible times, and the Bible shows that such an explanation is not the truth. When the angels came to Abraham, he said:

Genesis 18

⁴ Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet.

When two of the same ones went on to Sodom,

Genesis 19

¹ [Lot] rose up to meet them.

² And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and you shall rise up early, and go on your ways.

When Abraham's servant went to the city of Nahor to obtain a wife for his master's son, and came to the house of Bethuel, Laban said:

Genesis 21

³¹ Come in, you blessed of the Lord; wherefore stand you without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.

³² And the man came into the house and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him.

When Joseph's brethren went down to Egypt,

Genesis 43

²⁴ The man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender.

In the days of the Judges, a Levite with his servant and concubine, was journeying from Bethlehem-Judah to the side of Mount Ephraim, and came to Gibeah, and the old man whom he met said:

Judges 19

²⁰ Peace be with you; howsoever, let all your wants be upon me; only lodge not in the street.

²¹ So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses; and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink.

In the song of Solomon it is said:

Song 5

³ I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

When Jesus sat at meat in the house of Simon the Pharisee, He did not say to Simon,

“You did not wash my feet;”

–but He did say,

Luke 7

⁴⁴ You gave me not water for my feet.

While the woman who had many sins had even washed his feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. And the very contrast which Jesus makes in this instance shows that for one person to wash another's feet was entirely out of the usual order. In any case this token of love of the penitent Mary could not be construed as an act of hospitality. See the whole narrative in *Luke 7:36-50*.

The truth is, then, that while in all Bible times there are instances of persons giving to others water with which they washed their own feet, there is not in all the Bible a single instance of one person's washing another's feet, except that of Jesus in this lesson, and of those who followed His example as thus given.

This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that Peter did not know why the Lord should wash their feet; for Jesus said,

John 13

⁷ What I do you know not now.

If such was the common practice in those days, it is most singular that Peter did not know about it. The fact is, there was no such custom, and that the act of Jesus was entirely out of the known order. We believe that Jesus spoke the truth when He said,

⁷ What I do you know not now...

Yet He said,

⁷ ...but you shall know hereafter.

¹² So after He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and was set down again, He said unto them, Know you what I have done to you?

¹³ You call me Master and Lord; and you say well; for so I am.

¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; you also ought to wash one another's feet.

¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

Here, then, is the Lord's own explanation of an act of which they did not know the meaning. And that explanation is,

¹⁴ You also ought to wash one another's feet.

Why? Because,

¹⁵ I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

Not as Mr. Peloubet says in his *Select Notes on the International Lessons*:

He that serves others; he that does the humblest service in order to relieve their wants, or cleanse their souls from sin; he that...seeks out the poor, the sick, the obscure, the unpopular, to be their friend and helper,—he does to them as Christ did to the disciples.

But did not Christ do that to everybody? Had He not been doing all these things before the eyes of His disciples, and had He not been teaching them all these things for three years and a half?

- In the temple, in the presence of a multitude, Jesus, in words spoken directly to His disciples, could exalt the poor widow and her two mites above all the rich of Jerusalem;
- He could go to the house of Zacchaeus the publican, and of Simon the leper, and eat meat there;
- He could lead His disciples away over to the borders of Tyre and Sidon, apparently for the sole purpose of helping the poor woman of Canaan, whose daughter was grievously vexed with a devil;
- He could show His gracious favor to the poor Mary “whose sins were many”;

- He could feed thousands of the hungry, twice, because “He had compassion on them”;
- He could cleanse the lepers, cause the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear,
- He could bring from the dead “the only son of his other, and also a widow,” because “He had compassion on her”;
- He could heal the sick numbering thousands, all day, till He was wearied out, day after day.

All these things, and more He could do year in and year out, and could send forth His disciples themselves to do them all; and yet, according to Mr. Peloubet, after all this, the disciples still lacked an example of Jesus, “serving others,” and of His seeking out “the poor, the sick, the obscure, the unpopular, to be their friend and helper, and to relieve their wants”!

And then when He does give them such an example, lo, He does it by washing their feet!! And,

“He who seeks out the poor, the sick, the obscure, the unpopular, to be their friend and helper,—he does to them as Christ did to His disciples”!

He who does these things does as Christ did *to all*; but to do these things is not to do as Christ did *to His disciples*, nor to follow His example, when He washed their feet. Here are the words of Christ:

1. “I have washed your feet.” *John* 13:14.
2. “I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.” *John* 13:15.
3. “You also ought to wash one another’s feet.” *John* 13:14.

Therefore it is certain that no man follows the example of Christ as He gave it on this occasion, unless he washed the feet of a disciple of Christ. Here are the words of Christ again:

John 13

¹⁴ You also ought to wash one another’s feet.

¹⁵ ...you should do as I have done to you.

¹⁷ If you know these things, happy [blessed] are you if you do them.

Ought is the old English past tense of owe and means:

“under obligation to pay.”

Should is the imperative of shall and means:

“you must, you are bound to.”

“To owe, to be under obligation to do a thing.”

“OUGHT, SHOULD—Both words imply obligation, but ought is the stronger.”

Obligation:

“That which constitutes legal or moral duty.”

Therefore if Christ’s words mean anything at all, they mean that the washing of one another’s feet is a duty which the disciples of Christ owe to one another and to Him. And so long as any of His disciples fail to do this, they fail to do their whole duty as His disciples.

Nor will the performance of some other duty meet the obligation to perform this duty. To visit the sick is a duty. To seek out the poor and the obscure, to be their friend and helper, is a duty, whether they be disciples or not, Christ taught all this all his life as a teacher.

But till that night, the last one before His death, He never taught them nor anybody else, that they should wash anybody’s feet. But there in the last fast fleeting hours of His earthly life, just before dark Gethsemane, in His last tender meeting with His disciples, He gave this example of humility, and said to His beloved disciples,

John 13

¹⁴ You also ought to wash one another’s feet.

¹⁵ ...you should do it.

Reader, if you are a disciples of Christ, and have not done this, why don't you do it? He says,

¹⁷ Blessed are you if you do.

We know that this duty is refused, and its obligation bitterly resented, by many and many of those who profess to be His disciples. But we feel fully assured that if there were anywhere any single expression of Christ such as that,

"You ought to keep holy the first day of the week;"

or,

"You should keep the first day of the week as Sabbath;"

or,

"Happy are you if you keep the first day of the week as the Lord's day;"

—we are perfectly certain that were there any single saying such as any one of these, there could not be found in this world a solitary person who keeps Sunday who would not cite it as of sufficient authority to settle all dispute that might arise on that question.

And *it would be* sufficient authority to settle all dispute that might arise on that question. And it would be sufficient authority for such service too. Then when all three of these expressions:

"You ought to;"

"You should do;"

"Happy are you if you do,"

—are used with direct reference to the washing of feet, why is it that there are among those who profess to be His disciples, any at all who will not do this duty so repeatedly laid upon them?

But no, a thing which neither Christ nor His apostles ever mentioned or showed by any example—the keeping of the first day of the week—is exalted and clung to as though it were the chiefest token of allegiance to Christ; while this duty, having for its obligation His example and His thrice expressed injunction, is neglected, despised, and condemned, by those for whom the rite was instituted.

James 3

¹⁰ Brethren, these things ought not so to be.

We assure you that whenever we find the words of Christ saying “you ought to,” concerning anything, that thing we are going to do. And when His word to His disciples concerning the washing of one another’s feet, is, “You ought to do it,” “You should do it,” and “Happy are you if you do it,” we are going to do it.

But it may be asked is there any further notice of this in the writings of the New Testament? There is. In *1 Timothy* 5:3-16, Paul gives directions concerning the duty of the Church toward widows. And of those who are to be taken into the charge of the Church, he says:

1 Timothy 5

⁹ Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,

¹⁰ Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints’ feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

This shows that the washing of the saints’ feet was practiced in the Church as late as AD 65; that it was one of the things that a disciple of Christ must do to have the favor of the Church; and that it was to continue in the Church; because it was a part of the directions which Timothy was to follow in setting in order the things in the churches; and it was one of the things which he was to...

2 Timothy 2

² ...commit to faithful men who should be able to teach others also.

And it is not according to the will of Christ that this example should be neglected by His followers today.

Luke 6

⁴⁶ Why do you call me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

It also shows that Mr. Peloubet's teaching before quoted is wrong; for they were to be received, if they had lodged strangers, if they had relieved the afflicted, and if they had washed the saints' feet. Relieving the afflicted covers all of Mr. Peloubet's examples; but that is not to wash the saints' feet, nor is it to do, either in letter or in spirit, as Christ did when He washed the disciples' feet.

Why then is it neglected by so many of His professed followers today? The answer is easily given: It is Christ's ordinance of humility, but His professed Church has become too proud to practice it. This is shown in his own words:

John 13

¹⁵ I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

¹⁶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

¹⁷ If you know these things, happy are you if you do them.

The servant has become greater than his lord, and so considers himself free from the example and obligation of his Lord; he that is sent has become greater than He that sent him, and counts himself at liberty to dispense with the ordinance instituted by his Lord.

When the churches were despised and persecuted, they were humble enough to not despise Christ's lesson of humility. But now the Church is courted by the world; now she is...

Revelation 3

¹⁷ ...rich and increased with goods and has need of nothing.

But she needs the humility of Christ. The *International Lesson* for today is entitled “Jesus Teaching Humility.” How many will learn the real lesson which He teaches? how many will practice the lesson which He taught, as He taught it?

John 13

¹⁴ I have washed your feet.

¹⁵ I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

¹⁴ You also ought to wash one another’s feet.

¹⁷ If you know these things, happy [blessed] are you if you do them.

Their Wisdom Is Perished

Signs of the Times, September 9, 1886

Author: E. J. Waggoner²

(Further Comments on the Above Lesson)

THE subject of the International Sunday-school lesson for August 15 was “Jesus Teaching Humility,” the text being *John* 13:1-17. We do not design in this article to consider in detail the subject of foot-washing as a Christian ordinance, for that ground was thoroughly canvassed in the “Notes” in the *Signs* of that week; but we wish to call attention to some of the “expositions” of the text that are given in the various religious journals.

First we pick up the *Christian Union*. It says on verses 12-16:

Feet-washing seems here to be as explicitly commanded as the Lord’s Supper. Yet there is no evidence that it was practiced in apostolic times, nor is in general use in the Christian church today. It is practiced in some Greek convents, by the

² **Editor’s Note:** I have included this short article from E. J. Waggoner as it was a further commentary on the same *International Lesson*. Waggoner and Jones were co-editors of the *Signs of the Times*, for a few years in the late 1880’s.

Pope once a year on Maundy Thursday, and by some minor Baptist sects, chiefly confined to Pennsylvania. This apparent regard of Christ's seemingly explicit command can be defended only on the general ground that no ceremonial is of the essence of Christianity; that what Christ prescribes is not the symbol, but the spirit symbolized.

Then we think it would be well for "the Christian church" to learn the meaning of these words which are found in this connection:

John 13

¹⁶ The servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

If Christ gave it an explicit command (as He did in this instance), and "the church" has taken it upon itself to decide that compliance with that command is not necessary, then certainly the servant has, in his own estimation, got quite a distance above his Lord.

"No ceremonial is of the essence of Christianity."

Very true; but that is no reason for disregarding the ceremony if it is commanded. We should not refuse to follow certain ordinances because those ordinances may be performed in a mechanical matter, but should see to it that we perform them with the spirit.

We all know that love is shown by obedience to the expressed wishes of another. We also know that a child may mechanically or from necessity obey any given command, and that then the obedience indicates no love. That is, love is manifest, not by the mere performance of the act, but by the spirit with which that act is performed. Now recognizing this fact, a boy will say,

"It seems quite plain that my father told me to care for this garden; but since the essence of love and obedience is not in any form, nor in outward acts of obedience, I will pay no

attention to what he said, but will be sure to have a strong feeling of love in my heart.”

The father would quickly decide that such a son was too “progressive.”

It is not true that feet-washing was not practiced in apostolic times, as is shown by *1 Timothy* 5:10. But even if the Saviour’s command had never been obeyed, that would not be the shadow of a reason why we should not obey it.

Next we pick up the *Methodist Recorder*. On verse 14 it has the following:

“The command will rather find its fulfillment in all kinds of mutual condescension and help than any literal observance.”
—Alford.

Oh, yes; that settles the matter. Mr. Alford’s dictum is sufficient. To be sure Christ said,

John 13

¹⁴ You also ought to wash one another’s feet,

But Dean Alford says that He didn’t mean what He said, and so we need not trouble ourselves over the matter any more. This is a sample of the pernicious use of commentaries, and of the perniciousness of nine-tenths of the comments that are written.

When a man gives a scholarly criticism of the meaning of some terms in the original, or when he compares several texts bearing on one point, and shows the necessary conclusion therefrom,—that is legitimate comment; but when he ventures to give his own opinion of a text, unsupported by any authority, it were better for that matter if he had never written a commentary; and people who implicitly trust any commentator who will even once give his own opinion as to the meaning of a text, are willingly walking into darkness.

The *Christian at Work* has a comment very similar to that of

the *Christian Union*. It says:

Finally the application of the entire transaction comes out in the words: "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." This is not to be literally understood; for neither the apostles nor the members of the early church, though acting under the direction of the Spirit, ever actually practiced feet-washing as a religious rite.

To this we would say,

1. That because a public record of the performance of an act is not kept, that is no evidence that the act was not done. The thing having been commanded, we naturally conclude that it was practiced, except when the church was not led by the Spirit; for obedience to known requirement is an evidence of being led by the Spirit.
2. In *1 Timothy 2:10*, feet-washing is mentioned by Paul as a well-known Christian duty, and one entirely distinct from acts of hospitality and relieving the afflicted.
3. Obligation to perform any deed can rest only on an expressed commandment, and not on the action of any other persons. When a thing is commanded, it is our duty to do it, even if everybody else disregards it.

But the *Christian at Work* overthrows its own theory when it says concerning the Saviour's command:

It means that as the Lord found it not inconsistent with the highest dignity and glory to minister in all lowliness unto the weakest, so we must find exaltation and happiness by doing likewise.

Just above it said that feet-washing is not to be practiced, because (as it claims) the apostles and the members of the early church did not do so. Then by the same "reasoning," ministering unto the weak and lowly is not to be done unless "the church" in all ages has done so.

Now the veriest tyro in history knows that the great apostasy began in the very days of the apostles, when there were many in the church who loved to have the pre-eminence, and that for hundreds of years the members of the church, instead of finding exaltation and happiness in serving the weak, found it in building themselves up at the expense of others.

And so according to the popular exposition of *John* 13:1-16, it is now every man's duty to look out for himself, regardless of others. When one begins to "explain away" the Bible, he may as well throw it away.

The *Sabbath Recorder*, however, caps the climax of absurdity in the following extract:

In company with a traveling companion, we reached the house of another friend about noon, after a long journey on foot, under a hot sun, and over a dusty road. We had barely passed the customary greetings, and taken our seats in the best room, when the good woman of the house asked us to take off our boots. Seeing that we hesitated, she repeated her request in a manner which plainly showed that she was not joking. We accordingly took them off, and she took them out of the room. Presently she returned them as neatly blackened as they had been for some time. When she set them down she said, "And thus I have fulfilled my Lord's command to wash the disciples' feet." And who shall say that she had not done so?

Everybody ought to say that she did not. In the first place, even if our Saviour's command had reference only to acts of hospitality, it would not be fulfilled by performing such acts and then calling attention to it. True hospitality, as well as true obedience, is unostentatious.

But the idea of saying that for one person to black another's boots is a fulfillment of our Lord's word, "You also ought to wash one another's feet," is too absurd for serious comment. According to this exposition, the Saviour's words should be read thus:

“If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to black one another’s boots! For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.”

The simple statement of the case refutes it. Besides, the reader will notice that the act of feet-washing is to be reciprocal:

John 13

¹⁴ You also ought to wash one another’s feet.

Now allowing that to wash feet means to black boots, in order to have the command fulfilled in the case under consideration, the editor of the *Recorder* ought to have turned around and blacked the good woman’s shoes.

The very absurdity of such an exposition as the above is, after all, the most serious thing about it; for it is sad to think that men will thus sport with a divine command. It is nothing less than making void the commandments of God.

On the same principle men rest on Sunday, and say that they are thus obeying the Lord’s command to:

Exodus 20

⁸ Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

With as much reason others are sprinkled with a few drops of water, and say that they are obeying the injunction to be baptized. On such a principle of interpretation there is no conceivable act that may not be construed into obedience to some divine command.

It is sad to think that because of such deviations of plain precepts, men are losing their power to comprehend the simplest truth; but so it is. The Lord says:

Isaiah 29

¹³ Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the

precept of men;

¹⁴ Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

When a wise man turns aside from the plain commandments of the Lord, he becomes the most dangerous of counselors.

4. Christ's Prayer for the Church

Signs of the Times, September 9, 1886

Original title: Jesus Interceding

John 17:1-3; 11-21

THIS is Jesus's prayer for His disciples wherever found in all the world to the end of time. He says,

John 17

²⁰ Neither pray I for these [the eleven] alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.

Here in this prayer is expressed the tender love and considerate care which the divine Saviour has for those who believe on Him. Before departing out of the world He left this prayer to be recorded for the consolation and confirmation of His children who are left in the world. When His children are afflicted if they would remember more than they do this prayer of the Saviour for them, there would be more peace and comfort and joy in the Christian course.

Christ once said to Peter,

Luke 22

³¹ Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat;

³² But I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not.

Shall we not believe that in this sifting, in this tossing about, which Peter experienced, he was strengthened by the consciousness that Jesus had prayed for him? Certainly. But Peter is not the only one of Christ's followers whom Satan has desired; he is not the only one who needed to be sifted as wheat; and, far better than this, he is not the only one for whom Jesus has prayed.

Notice, He did not pray for Peter that he might escape the sifting, He prayed that his faith should not fail, while being sifted. Peter needed the sifting, so do we. He needed the faith to endure it, so do we. He had the prayer of the precious

Saviour that his faith might not fail, so have we.

John 17

² That He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

Eternal life is in Christ, and that alone for those who are His.

Romans 6

²³ The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

John 3

¹⁶ God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

³⁶ He that believes on the Son has everlasting life; and he that believes not the Son shall not see life.

John 6

⁵³ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

1 John 5

¹¹ God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

¹² He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of God has not life.

These scriptures show, and indeed the Scripture altogether shows, that there is life only in Christ. Out of him there is no life, for the wages of sin is death.

But Christ died for sinners, and through faith in Him there is forgiveness of sin. Without faith in Him there is no escape from sin, and sin when it is finished brings forth death. And death is death—the second death—and not eternal life in misery. Out of Christ there is no such thing as eternal life, in misery nor anywhere else.

John 17

³ This is life eternal, that they might know You the only true

God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

And when He appears in His glory He takes...

2 Thessalonians 1

⁸ ...vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;

⁹ Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction [not with everlasting misery] from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.

In Christ is life literal and eternal. Out of Christ is death literal and eternal. Choose Christ that you may live.

John 17

¹¹ Holy Father, keep through your own name those whom You have given me.

It is not the Saviour's wish, nor is it the Father's wish that any should fall away.

1 Thessalonians 5

⁹ For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.

And,

Romans 8

³² He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things.

Notice, the word is not,

“How shall He with Him freely give us all,”

but it is,

“How shall He *not*.”

If God so loved us that while we were yet enemies He gave His dear Son to die for us, now, being reconciled and His friends, how shall He not with Him freely give us all needed grace to keep us. Oh, how great is His goodness, and how

great His mercy.

Jude

²⁴ Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

²⁵ To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen.

John 17

¹⁶ They are not of the world.

These are they for whom this prayer is made, and who can claim the comfort and the strength which it promises. For He said that in this prayer He prayed not for the world.

⁹ I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which you have given me.

It is plain therefore that no one can have the world, and the benefits of this prayer at the same time, nor even off and on. We must be Christ's. We must be not of the world.

¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

James 4

⁴ The friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

1 John 2

¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Therefore,

Romans 12

² Be not conformed to this world; but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

John 17

¹⁵ I pray not that You should take them out of the world.

No. They are the light of the world; they are the salt of the earth; they are epistles which Christ writes to the world to tell the world of Him, of His goodness, His holiness, His purity, His righteousness—in short to tell the world that He is Christ, the sent of God, in whom God reconciled the world unto Himself. They are in Christ's stead in the world, for He said,

¹⁸ As You have sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

And when Christ's work is done for the world,—when He ceases to be priest upon His Father's throne, and becomes king upon His own throne; when He lays off the garments of the intercessor, and puts on the “garments of vengeance for clothing;” when the cup of salvation shall be emptied, and the cup of wrath filled; when the mystery of God shall be finished—then He will appear upon the white cloud, and call to the heavens above and to the earth,

Psalms 50

⁵ Gather my saints together unto me;

and

Matthew 24

³¹ ...shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Then and thus He will take them out of the world.

John 17

²¹ That they all may be one.

The unity of His disciples is the strong point of the Saviour's prayer, this wish being expressed no less than five times in it:

¹¹ That they may be one, as we are;

²¹ That they all may be one;...that they also may be one in us;

²² That they may be one, even as we are one;

²³ That they may be made perfect in one.

Surely then the oneness of His disciples is the greatest wish of their Lord. This unity is accomplished and maintained by the Holy Spirit; as He says,

John 17

²³ I in them, and You in me, that they may be made perfect in me.

On this Paul says,

Ephesians 4

¹ I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called,

² With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering forbearing one another in love;

³ Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

⁴ There is one body, and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling;

⁵ One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

⁶ One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Again, he says:

1 Corinthians 1

¹⁰ I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Romans 15

⁵ Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

⁶ That you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 12

¹⁶ Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

Philippians 2

² Fulfill my joy, that you be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 3

⁸ Finally, be all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.

And the object of this unity for which He so earnestly prayed, and upon which, through Paul, He so strongly insists, is,

John 17

²¹ That the world may *believe* that You have sent me,

and

²³ That the world may *know* that You have sent me.

If His disciples everywhere had met, or if they would meet, the wish expressed in this prayer, the world could not deny that God sent His Son into the world. But alas, even in the very days of the apostles, there were those who loved to have the pre-eminence:

3 John

⁹ I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, receives us not.

And from among the churches they themselves established, there should...

Acts 20

³⁰ ...men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.

Jude however exposes the secret of all such things then and

in all ages.

Jude

¹⁹ These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

Absence of the Spirit of Christ, destroys the unity which should characterize the disciples of Christ. For this cause Paul beseeches us to endeavor...

Ephesians 4

³ ...to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace.

And Jude continues,

Jude

²⁰ But you, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

²¹ Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

5. The House of God

Signs of the Times, July 13, 1888

IN ONE of the views which the Scripture gives of the Church of Christ it is called “the house of God.” Said Paul to Timothy:

1 Timothy 3

¹⁴ These things write I unto you, hoping to come unto you shortly;

¹⁵ But if I tarry long, that you may know how you ought to behave yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

And again, in the letter to the *Hebrews*, we read:

Hebrews 3

⁵ And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

⁶ But Christ as a son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Peter also adopts the same figure, and, speaking of the Lord, says:

1 Peter 2

⁴ To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

⁵ You also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house.

Christ is the “living Stone,” and they who believe on Him become “lively” stones because they live by Him who is life; for it is written:

Romans 9

³³ Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious; and he that believes on Him shall not be confounded.

These persons therefore who by believing on the living

Stone become lively, or living, stones, are built up a spiritual house, and this house is the church of the living God. Paul further speaks of it as God's building. Speaking of himself and Apollos as ministers by whom the brethren had believed on Christ, he says:

1 Corinthians 3

⁹ For we are laborers together with God: you are God's husbandry, you are God's building.

That is to say, By their labors in preaching the gospel of Christ, these brethren had been brought to believe on Christ, the living Stone, and, by believing on Him, had become imbued with life from Him, and had thus become in the figure living stones. These then built up that spiritual house, became God's building. Now Paul carries the thought further:

¹⁰ According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds thereon. But let every man take heed how he builds thereupon.

¹¹ For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Christ is the foundation and chief corner-stone, the very foundation of the foundation, and in the letter to the Ephesians, Paul carries the thought yet further and completes this conception of the church as the house or building of God. Of Christ he says:

Ephesians 2

¹⁸ For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

¹⁹ Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

²⁰ And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone;

²¹ In whom all the building fitly framed together grows unto a holy temple in the Lord;

²² In whom you also are built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Here, then, is the Lord's view of the church as the house or building of God: Christ, and the apostles and prophets are the foundation, and the membership at large is the superstructure. But Christ Himself is the chief corner-stone, the foundation of the whole structure, the foundation of the foundation itself, because it is only in Christ that either the apostles or prophets were ever what they were, or that any member is what he is.

Christ is the living Stone, to whom the apostles and prophets and all others must come that they might be made lively stones, fit for the building of God. In Jesus Christ, and upon Jesus Christ, the church of Christ, the church of the living God, is built. And the purpose of this building is...

Ephesians 2

²² ...for a habitation [a dwelling place] of God through the Spirit.

Romans 8

⁹ You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

And said Jesus,

John 14

²³ If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Thus it is, and of these:

2 Corinthians 6

¹⁶ God has said, I will dwell in them; and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

As He says also in another place,

1 Corinthians 3

¹⁶ Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

2 Corinthians 6

¹⁶ For you are the temple of the living God.

When these in whom the Spirit of God dwells are “fitly framed together,” and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and Jesus Christ, they grow unto a holy temple, in the Lord, and are “a habitation of God through the Spirit.” And that is the house of God, the church of the living God.

Peter said, as before quoted,

1 Peter 2

⁴ To whom coming as unto a living stone, you also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house.

Now it is a characteristic of a living stone that it can be polished to such a height that it will reflect the image of the one looking upon it. Thus Christ is the living stone, to whom we come, and upon whom we look, and to whom we come, and upon whom we look, and as we look we see ourselves. And there:

2 Corinthians 3

¹⁸ We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

And thus, being changed into the same image, we also become lively stones, reflecting in turn the image of Christ as He looks upon us.

2 Corinthians 4

⁶ For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Then the church is indeed the light of the world, a city set

on a hill which cannot be hid. It is written of the city of God, the New Jerusalem, that it has twelve foundations...

Revelation 21

¹⁹ ...garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation is jasper ["clear as crystal" – Verse 11]; the second, a sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

²⁰ The fifth, a sardonyx; the sixth, a sardius; the seventh, a chrysolite; the eighth, a beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

All these foundations are surmounted by a wall great and high,

¹⁸ And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

And the glory of God does lighten the city, and the Lamb is the light thereof; and her light is like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

Eye has never seen except in holy vision such a scene of glory and beauty as is here pictured of the city of the living God, and the home of the redeemed.

Now the New Jerusalem is not the church. It is not the house, the building, the habitation, the church, of God, referred to in the texts which we have quoted in this article. But from this description of the glorious city of God, we may gather from this image of the church as a house, a building, and a habitation of God, an idea of what the Lord desires that the glorious church of God shall be.

Christ is a living stone, the chief corner-stone, most precious. He is the first, the chief foundation of the church. Upon Him as part of the foundation also, rest the apostles and prophets, made from Him lively stones. Then upon this foundation are built all the saints, as gold, silver, and precious stones. *1 Corinthians* 3:12.

Then the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ, shining through and reflected from all these, makes the church indeed the light of the world, giving to men the knowledge of the glory of God as He has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ.

Oh, that each one who professes to be a member of the church of Christ were really so! Oh, that everyone who is professedly joined to the church, were really joined to Christ! that each one were indeed a lively stone reflecting the precious image of the dear Redeemer, and thus conveying to them that are in darkness the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as it is manifested in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Then indeed would the world believe that God did send Jesus Christ.

6. The Body of Christ

Signs of the Times, July 27, 1888

UNDER the figure of the church as the body of Christ, Paul in several of his epistles has discussed our relation to Christ and to one another. In *Ephesians* he says of Christ, that:

Ephesians 1

²² [God] has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body.

To the Colossians he says,

Colossians 1

¹⁷ He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the church.

And in verse 24 he says that in His sufferings He was filling up...

²⁴ ...that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church.

Therefore, as the church is the body of Christ, to be a member of the church is to be a member of the body of Christ. And so says the scripture,

1 Corinthians 12

²⁷ Now we are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Ephesians 5

³⁰ For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

When we were baptized, we were baptized into Christ. *Romans* 6:3, and:

Galatians 3

²⁷ As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.

And when we were baptized into Christ we were baptized into His body, which is the church, of which He is the head, and of which we became members by baptism.

1 Corinthians 12

¹² For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.

¹³ 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 been all made to drink into one Spirit.

We are not only members of His body, but in being that, we are at the same time members one of another.

Romans 12

⁵ We, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Ephesians 4

²⁵ Putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; for we are members one of another.

Thus we have set before us in the Scripture the church under the figure of the human body. Of this body Christ is the head; we are the members; and to be members of the body we must necessarily as members one of another. From Christ, the head:

Colossians 2

¹⁹ ...all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increases with the increase of God.

Or, as stated in the letter to the *Ephesians*, from Christ the head...

Ephesians 4

¹⁶ ...the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Now, my brother or sister, before examining the scriptures which set forth our duties and obligations to one another individually in this relationship, we wish to ask a question or two upon the views of the church which is presented in the passages already quoted.

How have you hitherto looked upon the church? What have you thought it to be? What have you supposed that membership of the church means?

- Have you looked upon it much as any other association or organization of men for a common purpose?
- Have you thought it to be a mutual association of persons rather conventional than otherwise?
- Have you looked upon membership of the church as a sort of fast and loose relationship, that was very good so long as everything went exactly to please you, but was to be lightly set aside as soon as matters went not according to your particular wishes or feelings?
- Do you look upon it as a relationship the chief object of which is to look with unkind and critical eye upon the weaknesses, and faults, and failings of the brethren, causing pain to them and leanness and misery to your own soul?

If any such conception as this has been in your mind, we sincerely hope that it may be forever banished, and that, by the scriptures which we have given, you may obtain a higher and more just idea of what the church of God is, and what the relationship to it is, which you assumed when you took upon you the profession of the name of Christ.

We showed in a former article that the church is the house of God. Do you realize that it is so? Do you look upon it as such? Do you realize that by your membership of the church you are a member of the household of God? that you are a part of that spiritual house which is the habitation—the dwelling-place—of God through the Spirit?

Are you one of those lively stones reflecting the image and brightness of the precious Corner-stone, Christ Jesus? Are you, as a lively stone, gazing upon that Living Stone with such an intensity of look that you are being changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord, and that He in turn may see imaged in you, His own precious character of meekness, gentleness, and holiness?

Is it such a view as this that you have of the church of God and of membership of it,—such a view as gives you joy, and peace, and strength, and grace?

We have shown in this article that the church is the body of Christ. Do you realize that it is so? Do you realize that when you cause pain to the church, or to any member of it, you cause pain to Christ? Do you realize that when you bring reproach in any way upon the church, you bring reproach upon Christ? It is so whether you realize it or not. It cannot be otherwise; because He is the head, and it is the head which bears the real consciousness of pain wherever it may be in the body, and,

Ephesians 5

³⁰ We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

Let us see further what is the relationship of the church to Christ, and of ourselves as members thereof. The closest relationship which the human family knows is that of marriage.

Matthew 19

⁴ He which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

⁵ And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh?

⁶ Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh.

Now the Saviour said of Himself,

Romans 7

⁴ He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.

And in *Romans 7:4* it is shown that we become dead to the law that we should be married to Christ; and in *2 Corinthians* Paul says,

2 Corinthians 11

² I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

These texts show plainly that the closest, the dearest, relationship that is known to the human race, is the only one by which the Spirit of God can fittingly represent the relationship between Christ and the church. In view of that now read the following scripture:

Ephesians 5

²² Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and He is the saviour of the body.

²⁴ Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it;

²⁶ That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

²⁷ That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

²⁸ So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loves his wife loves himself.

²⁹ For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church;

³⁰ For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

³¹ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Now why did Paul write this long passage about husbands and wives and Christ and the church? He tells us in the next verse,

³² This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Therefore, it is not written primarily concerning husbands and wives at all. It is written concerning Christ and the church; and the relationship of husband and wife is employed to illustrate the closeness, and the sacredness, of the relationship that exists between Christ and the church. Therefore membership of the church of Christ is akin to the dearest relationship that is known to man.

Oh, that everyone who is professedly a member of the church, would consider this subject well, and live fully up to that blessed consideration!

Next, we shall consider our relationship as members one of another in the church.

7. Members One of Another

Present Truth, August 11, 1892

WE HAVE noticed those scriptures which set forth the church as the body of Christ, and the members of the church as members of the body of Christ, and therefore members one of another, as they by “joints and bonds” are “knit together in love.”

As the members of the church are members of the body of Christ, and also members one of another, how can it be but that there shall be unity in the church. If I am a member of the body of Christ and you are a member of the body of Christ, then if we have any respect for Christ how can it be that we shall have any disrespect for one another? If we love Christ how can we have anything but love for one another?

But more than this, we are also members one of another, and as “no man ever yet hated his own flesh,” how then can it ever be that we should not love one another? This is the very test of our love for Christ:

1 John 4

²⁰ If a man say, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he that loves not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

No man can appreciate the love of Christ while he is cross and spiteful and cruel to his brother, for whom Christ died. Church-members cannot expect to honor Christ while they dishonor one another. In dishonoring one another they do dishonor Christ, because:

Ephesians 5

³⁰ We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

But when each one sees in his brother one for whom the Saviour died, and one who is a member of the body of Christ,

then each one will treat his brother tenderly, lovingly, as the Saviour is tender and loving. When each one sees in his brother a soul so precious as that Christ died for him, he is not going to treat him slightingly, nor needlessly cause him pain.

To cause a brother pain cannot be without causing Christ pain, for we are members of His body, and He is the Head of the body, and it is the head always which is really conscious of any pain in the body. The Scripture would have us realize the closeness, the intricacy, of the relationship between Christ and the church, and between the members one with another in the church.

Paul sets this forth as follows:

1 Corinthians 12

¹² For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.

¹³ 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 been all made to drink into one Spirit.

¹⁴ For the body is not one member, but many.

¹⁵ If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

¹⁶ And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

¹⁸ But now has God set the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased Him.

¹⁹ And if they were all one member, where were the body?

²⁰ But now are they many members, yet but one body.

²¹ And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

²² Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary;

²³ And those members of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and

our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

²⁴ For our comely parts have no need; but God has tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked;

²⁵ That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

²⁶ And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

In this it is shown that in the church—the body—of Christ, the members make up the body, as in the human body the eyes, the hands, the feet, etc., form the body. And as in the human body the different members are joined one to another, each in its proper place, to form the perfect body, so also is the body of Christ. And God has...

¹⁸ ...set the members every one in the body as it has pleased Him.

And as in the human body one dislocated member disconcerts and deforms the whole body, so also is it in the body of Christ. As in the human body each member can properly fulfill its function only by working in the place in which it belongs, so also is it in the body of Christ.

For each member to know his place, and keep it, in the church, is just as essential to the efficient working of the church as that each member of the human body shall properly be set in its proper place, in order to the easy, comfortable working of the human body.

But “all members have not the same office;” all cannot be hands, all cannot be eyes, all cannot be feet. Let the eye and the hand change places, and the good of both would be destroyed, and each would be an evil to the whole body. Let the hands and the feet change places, and the efficiency of all would be destroyed. But with all the members—eyes, hands,

and feet—in their proper places, each can be efficient in its own place, and all working together can do that which the hand finds to do.

The eye sees that which is to be done, the feet carry us within reach, and the hands perform the task, and each is essential to the working of the other. Except they all work together no task can be efficiently executed.

²¹ The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

²² Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.

To no part of the body can any other part of the body say, “I have no need of you.” Thus it is with the human body, as everybody knows; and thus it is with the body of Christ, the church—as everybody ought to know. Each member of the church, in his place, is necessary to every other member of the church.

Yea, even “those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.” And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, upon these we should bestow more abundant honor. Christ has honored them with a place in the church, shall we despise them?

²⁵ The members should have the same care one for another.

²⁶ And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

Or as it is said in another place:

Hebrews 13

³ Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

1 Corinthians 12

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particu-

lar.

And, oh, that everyone who is a member of the church would realize how sacred is the relationship into which he has entered! Then indeed would the disciples of Christ be one, and the world would believe that God sent Him.

For the edifying—the building up—of the church, the Lord has placed certain gifts in the church.

Ephesians 4

⁸ When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

¹¹ And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;

¹³ Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

In another place it is written of these gifts,

1 Corinthians 12

²⁸ God has set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Thus we see that the gift of teaching the word of God is only third in importance of the gifts of the Spirit of God to members of the church. It is second only to the gift of prophecy, and is before miracles, or gifts of healings, or diversities of tongues. Paul expressed the matter thus:

1 Corinthians 14

¹⁸ I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all;

¹⁹ Yet 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.

But though all could speak with the tongues of men and of angels, if they have no charity—the love of God—they are but

as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. *1 Corinthians* 13:1.

Though all had the gift of prophecy, and the gift of wisdom to the understanding of all mysteries and all knowledge; and though all had faith that could remove mountains, if they have not charity they are nothing. *1 Corinthians* 13:2.

And though all were so benevolent as that they would bestow all their goods to feed the poor; and though they were all so perfectly assured of what they believe that they would die at the stake as witnesses to it, if they have not charity it will profit nothing. *1 Corinthians* 13:3.

Charity is love. It is the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. *Romans* 5:5. It is that love which keeps the commandments of God,

1 John 5

³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments;

And:

Romans 13

¹⁰ Love is the fulfilling of the law.

Therefore, even though all have all these wondrous powers, and have not the keeping of the commandments of God, they are nothing.

Isaiah 8

²⁰ To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

But if there be in the church the love of God, keeping the commandments of God, then all these gifts, working together with charity, build up the body of Christ, make increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love, and increase it with the increase of God.

How long shall it be ere the church of the living God comes up to the fullness of its high privilege?

8. The Relation of Church-members One to Another

Home Missionary, November 1890

THE subject for our consideration today is the relation of church-members one to another. In order to understand this, it is necessary first to understand what the church is. If we realize what the church is, we can better understand what it is to be a church-member, and then we can better understand what relation these members bear to one another.

First, then,—

The House of God

For says the scripture:

1 Timothy 3

¹⁴ These things write I unto you, hoping to come unto you shortly:

¹⁵ But if I tarry long, that you may know how you ought to behave yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God.

And again:

Hebrews 3

⁶ Christ [was faithful] as a son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

The church being the house of God, those who are members of the church are members of the household of God; for:

Ephesians 2

¹⁹ You are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

Well then, brethren, the church being the house of God, and the members being of the household of God, it ought not to be difficult to discover what is the relation of the members of this

house to one another.

When a person who owns a beautiful house invites us into it, and we go into it, in the very nature of things we expect to act circumspectly, to move carefully, and to treat with deference and courtesy all those within the house. We seek to know the wishes of him who owns the house, and who has so kindly invited us into it, and all endeavor to conform to his wishes; and, if not for their own sakes, out of respect to the owner of the house, we treat all within it with deference and courtesy. Thus it is with men among men, in the houses of men.

Then how much more should it be so in the house of God, which is the church of the living God. wherefore, brethren:

1 Peter 3

⁸ Be all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.

The Body of Christ

Paul says that in the sufferings which he endured he was filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh,

Colossians 1

²⁴ ...for His body's sake, which is the church.

The church being the body of Christ, the members of the church are members of the body of Christ. Therefore, says the scripture:

1 Corinthians 12

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

This idea of the church as the body of Christ is presented under the figure of the human body, and the members of the human body are spoken of as figures of membership in the church.

1 Corinthians 12

¹² For as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.

¹³ 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 been all made to drink into one Spirit.

¹⁴ For the body is not one member, but many.

¹⁵ If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

¹⁶ And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

¹⁸ But now has God set the members every one of them in the body, as it has pleased Him.

The members of the human body, as God has set them in the body, are also members one of another; so also is the body of Christ, the church.

Romans 12

⁴ For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

⁵ So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Now in the natural body, when one of the members suffers, all the other members suffer with it. If a hand or a foot gets crushed, or if there be a felon on a thumb or a finger, all the other members suffer with it, and rally to the relief of the suffering member. So, also, it is in the body of Christ, the church.

1 Corinthians 12

²⁵ That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

²⁶ And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

Therefore:

Hebrews 13

³ Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

Christ is the Head of the body:

Colossians 1

¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.

Colossians 2

¹⁹ And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increases with the increase of God.

Ephesians 4

¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

When any member of our natural body is affected, or in pain in any way, it is the head which is first and most conscious of the pain. So, also, it is with the body of Christ, the church. When any member of Christ, of the church, is afflicted, it is Christ who is first and most conscious of the affliction.

Isaiah 63

⁹ In all their affliction He was afflicted.

Ephesians 5

³⁰ For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

When you or I cause grief or pain to any member of Christ, it is Christ to whom we first and most cause the grief or pain. Therefore, as certainly as we love Christ, so certainly we will never willingly or intentionally cause grief or pain to one of the members of Christ—one of these little ones who believe in

Him. So surely as we love Christ, so surely will we love those whom Christ loves.

Relation of Church Members

The relation of church-members, one to another, therefore, is the relation of these same members to Christ.

- If the relation of church-members one to another is one of hatred, the relation of those same members to Christ is one of hatred.
- If the relation of church-members one to another is one of variance, then the relation of those same members to Christ is one of variance.
- If the relation of church-members one to another is one of envy or bitterness or strife, then the relation of those same church-members to Christ is also one of envy or bitterness or strife.

It matters not what they may say, or profess that it is, that is what it actually is. For from every consideration which the Scriptures present, we repeat, The relation of church-members one to another, is the relation of those same church-members to Christ.

It is clearly evident, therefore, that the only true relation of church-members one to another is the relation of the love of Jesus Christ—a relation created and sustained by the love of Christ. This is so plainly manifest from all the Scriptures, that it is not necessary to multiply references. One quotation is enough:

John 15

¹² This is my commandment, That you love one another, AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.

Some of you will say in your hearts, “Well, how can we love one another as Christ has loved us?” Easy enough, if we go about it in the right way. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever, and everywhere; and His love is the

same. And if the love of Christ be in our hearts, we shall love one another as He loves us. That love will manifest itself in that way, and that is the only thing that it can do, because it is the love of God, who is love.

The Role of the Spirit

How can we have this love? We can have it by the Holy Spirit:

Romans 5

⁵ Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Mark, this does not say that *love for God* is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. But it is *the love of God*. That is God's love itself is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. God's love is the same wherever found. God's love in His own heart loves His enemies; that love in our hearts will love our enemies, nor will we have to try to do it, either. If the love of God be there, it will manifest itself in love to all whom God loves. If the love of God be in our hearts, we can love one another as He loves us.

Then, brethren, henceforth let this be the relation of church-members one to another. Let the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. In this our week of prayer, and in these the last days of our week of prayer, let us cry mightily unto God, that we may receive such a baptism of the Holy Ghost, as shall seal forever upon our hearts the love of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 3

¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us...

¹⁴ That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Then as we plead for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, let faith

ascend and claim the precious promise of the Spirit,

Acts 2

³⁹ For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

And if we know how to give good gifts unto our own children, how much more will our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. *Luke 11:13.*

1 John 4

¹⁰ Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins.

¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loves is born of God, and knows God.

Finally, brethren,

1 Peter 1

²² ...see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently.

Hebrews 13

¹ Let brotherly love continue.

And,

Jude 1

²⁰ Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

²¹ Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Amen.

9. Church Officers

Signs of the Times, August 24, 1888

THERE are but two classes of church officers named in the Scriptures, namely, bishops and deacons; for that the terms elder and bishop refer to the same officer is evident. In his letter to Titus, Paul says:

Titus 1

⁵ For this cause left I you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed you;

⁶ If any be blameless...

⁷ For a bishop must be blameless.

In his first letter to Timothy, in giving directions in regard to church officers, he names only bishops and deacons. *1 Timothy 3*. In the address to the church at Philippi, we read,

Philippians 1

¹ Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.

As Paul was on his way to Jerusalem, it is said,

Acts 20

¹⁷ And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

But when Paul addressed them he said,

²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers [bishops, Revised Version, Greek, episkopous, bishops].

Peter uses the two words in the same way to designate the same officer:

1 Peter 5

¹ The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder,...

² Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight [Greek, *episkopountis*, bishopric] thereof, not by constraint but willingly.

Says Mosheim of the church in the beginning:

The rulers of the church were called either presbyters [elders] or bishops—titles which, in the New Testament, are undoubtedly applied to the same order of men.³

Says Neander:

That the name *episkopoi*, or bishops, was altogether synonymous with that of presbyters [elders] is clearly evident from those passages of Scripture where both appellations are used interchangeably. *Acts* 20:17 with 28; *Titus* 1:5, 7; and from those where the office of deacon is named immediately after that of bishop, so that between these two church offices there could not still be a third intervening one. *Phil.* 1:1; 1 *Tim.* 3:1, 8. This interchange in the use of the two appellations shows that they were perfectly identical.⁴

But, it may be asked, why are there two titles for the same officer? The following from Schaff will explain;

BISHOPS or PRESBYTERS.—These two terms denote in the New Testament the same office; the first signifying its duties, the second its dignity.⁵

The term presbyter, or elder, is a continuation of the Hebrew usage, while that of *episcopos*, or bishop, is adapted from the Greek. Of presbyter Mosheim says:

The word presbyter, or elder is taken from the Jewish institution, and signifies rather the venerable prudence and wisdom of old age, than age itself.⁶

And of both the terms elder and bishop Neander says:

³ Mosheim, *Church History*, cent. 1, part. 2, chap. 2, sec. 8.

⁴ Neander, *Church History*, vol. 1, p. 184, Torrey's edition, 1856.

⁵ Schaff, *Church History*, vol. 1, sec. 42.

⁶ Mosheim, *Church History*, Id., note.

In the Jewish synagogue, and in all sects that sprang out of Judaism, there existed a form of government...consisting of a council of elders, *presbuteroi*, who had the guidance of all affairs belonging to the common interest. To this form, Christianity, which unfolded itself out of Judaism, would most naturally attach itself....

The guidance of the communities was accordingly everywhere intrusted to a council of elders. It was not necessary that these should be the oldest in years, though some respect doubtless was had to age. But age here was a designation of worth....

The founding of communities among the pagans led to another name, more conformed to the Grecian mode of designating such relations....This name was *episkopoi* [bishops], borrowed from the city form of government among the Greeks, and applied to the presiding officers of the Christian communities, as overseers of the whole, leaders of the community.⁷

Thus much for the titles of the officers of the church; now, how are they to be chosen? There is no proposition that can be made plainer than that among Christians there is no superiority of persons or rank.

1 Corinthians 12

¹³ 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 been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Galatians 3

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3

¹¹ There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all.

⁷ Neander, *Church History*, Id.

Mark 9

³⁵ If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

Matthew 23

⁸ Be not called Rabbi [master]; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all you are brethren.

¹¹ But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

¹² And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

Philippians 2

³ Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

1 Peter 5

⁵ All of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble.

Ephesians 2

¹⁹ Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.

1 Peter 2

⁹ You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Revelation 1

⁵ Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

⁶ And has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.

John 1

¹² As many as received Him, to them gave He power [right or privilege] to become the sons of God.

Thus all are “sons of God;” all are “priests;” all are “fellow-

citizens;" all are "brethren." Primarily, therefore, among Christians there is no superiority of dignity or of rank; but there is perfect and entire equality, each one possessing, in his own right, all the rights that belong to any or all others.

It is as certainly true of the new creation in grace as of the old creation in nature, that "all men are created equal," and "are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights."

But God is the God of order. He is not the author of confusion, either in nature or in grace. *1 Corinthians* 14:33. He is the author of government and order, both in nature and in grace; both in the world and in the church. He has established an organization, and an order of government, among Christians. This organization is the church; this order of government is that which is set forth in the Scriptures as the means of assuring to the church order, efficiency, and discipline.

Organization is essential to the efficiency of any class of people with a common purpose. For whereas one in his individual capacity can chase only a thousand, two with a common purpose and with their efforts united can put ten thousand to flight.

But, although it be true that each one possesses all the rights and privileges that belong to all, yet it is equally true that everyone cannot perform the duties and offices that are common to all, with equal profit to all. Therefore, by the united wisdom of all, those are chosen who possess most fully the qualifications by which they can perform the offices that are common to all, with the greatest benefit to all.

We say that it is by the voice of all that these are to be chosen, because no one can exercise the offices that are common to all without the common consent. The following passage from Luther states the case exactly:

It has been said that the Pope, the bishops, the priests, and all those who people convents, form the spiritual or ecclesi-

astical estate; and that princes, nobles, citizens, and peasants, form the secular or lay estate. This is a specious tale.

But let no man be alarmed. All Christians belong to the spiritual estate; and the only difference between them is in the functions which they fulfill. We have all but one baptism, but one faith; and these constitute the spiritual man. We are all consecrated priests by baptism, as St. Peter says: "You are a royal priesthood;" although all do not actually perform the offices of kings and priests, because no one can assume what is common to all without the common consent.

But if this consecration of God did not belong to us, the unction of the Pope could not make a single priest. If ten brothers, the sons of one king, and possessing equal claims to his inheritance, should choose one of their number to administer for them, they would all be kings, and yet only one of them would be the administrator of their common power. So it is in the church.

Were several pious laymen banished to a desert, and were they, from not having among them a priest consecrated by a bishop, to agree in selecting one of their number, whether married or not, he would be as truly a priest as if all the bishops in the world had consecrated him....Hence it follows that laymen and priests, princes and bishops, or, as we have said, ecclesiastics and laics, have nothing to distinguish them but their functions. They have all the same condition, but they have not all the same work to perform.⁸

This is the genuine philosophy of the election and ordination of officers in the church. As all cannot exercise, with equal benefit to all, the functions that are common to all, by the common consent certain ones who are considered best qualified are chosen to exercise those functions, as the representatives of all. And by the laying on of hands, the powers of all, to the fulfillment of that office, are delegated to the ones chosen by common consent.

So absolute is this principle that where men were already chosen and appointed by the Lord to the work of the ministry,

⁸ D'Aubigne's *History of the Reformation*, book 6, chap. 3.

they were not allowed to enter upon that work until the action of the church was taken in setting them apart with the common consent and delegation of powers.

Paul when on the way to Damascus was apprehended by the Lord Jesus Himself, and was then made a chosen vessel unto Him, to bear His name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. *Acts* 9:15. Yet it was several years after this when the following occurred:

Acts 13

¹ Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

² As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

³ And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Thus, although Paul had already been chosen most miraculously to the work of the ministry, yet order and governmental authority in the church were of such importance that the Lord, who had already so miraculously chosen him, would not suffer him to go forth without the express consent of the church and his setting apart by the church in the laying on of hands.

As the numbers in the church were generally too great to allow the hands of all to be conveniently laid on, it was done by those to whom the powers of the church had already been delegated. Thus Timothy was ordained:

1 Timothy 4

¹⁴ ...by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

That is, by the laying on of the hands of the elders. *1 Timothy* 4:14. And when Paul and Barnabas had been sent forth they “ordained them elders in every church.” *Acts* 14:23. And

Titus was appointed to ordain elders in every city. *Titus* 1:5.

But the choice of the elders and deacons lies always with the brethren from among whom they are to be chosen; while the choosing of a minister for the work of the Lord at large lies with the Lord, and the choice sanctioned by the action of the church according to the order of God.

10. The Qualifications of Church Officers

Signs of the Times, August 31, 1888

THE officers of the church named in Scripture are, as we have shown, bishops and deacons. The bishopric or eldership of a church is a most important office. This is evident from three considerations:

4. The Scripture says so;
5. It is the highest office in the church; and
6. It is evident from the number and nature of the qualifications which the Scriptures require shall be found in him who is to be chosen to the office.

Qualifications for Elder

These qualifications we shall notice fully and in detail as they are given in the directions to Timothy and Titus: *1 Timothy 3; Titus 1.*

1. "A bishop then must be blameless." *1 Timothy 3:2.* This word in itself tells all that it means. It cannot be made much plainer than it is. The definition of the Greek word is,

"not open to be attacked."

Webster's definition is:

"Without fault, innocent, guiltless, not meriting censure."

"We speak of a thing being blameless when it is free from blame, or the just imputation of fault, as a blameless life of character."

"A bishop then must be blameless" signifies therefore one whose life is so fully conformed to the rules of right that no one can justly lay blame upon him, or find fault with him.

2. "The husband of one wife." *1 Timothy 3:2.* This needs no explanation. We might however observe that we do not

think that the meaning is that he shall be a married man; but that he shall not have more than one wife.

3. “Vigilant.” *1 Timothy* 3:2. That is,

“attentive to discover and avoid danger, or to provide for safety, wakeful, watchful, circumspect.”

The word “circumspect” is from two Latin words, *circum*, around, and *specere*, to look; that is, to look all around a thing.

“A man who is circumspect habitually examines things on every side, in order to weigh and deliberate.”

This idea is in the Greek word rendered “vigilant” in the text. The importance of this qualification is evident at once in view of the many different dispositions that are brought together in church relationship, and the readiness with which so many accuse one another. The one who is chosen to deal with all these, as for those for whom Christ died, must be one who will not only be attentive to avoid danger and provide for safety, but who will examine things on every side before he decides or acts in the premises.

4. “Sober.” *1 Timothy* 3:2. This word signifies one of sound mind, a well-regulated mind, collected, discreet, self-controlled.

“Sober supposes the absence of all exhilaration of spirits, and is opposed to flighty.”

One who is “not wild, visionary, or heated with passion,” but who exercises “cool, dispassionate reason” in all things.

5. “Of good behavior.” *1 Timothy* 3:2. The Greek word here is *kosmion*, from *kosmeo*, which signifies “to adorn, decorate, embellish;” and it conveys the same idea as is expressed in *Titus* 2:10, “adorn the doctrine.” The meaning of the expression “of good behavior;” therefore, is that he must be one who is:

“desirous of order and decorum; modest, orderly, decent, and becoming;”

—one who will so conduct himself as to “dignify,” and “be an honor to” the position to which he is called; not exalting nor magnifying himself, but exalting his calling and magnifying his office.

6. “Given to hospitality.” *1 Timothy* 3:2. This word signifies, literally, “loving strangers,” “kind to strangers.” Thus he must be...

“...one who receives and entertains strangers, with kindness and without reward;”

“with kind and generous liberality.”

7. “Apt to teach.” *1 Timothy* 3:2. He must be one who is skillful in the word of knowledge, so that he may be able to instruct by proofs, and “show by argument.”
8. “Not given to wine.” *1 Timothy* 3:3. The word here rendered wine is defined by Liddell and Scott,

“the fermented juice of the grape.”

Therefore he must be one who does not drink the fermented juice of the grape.

9. “No striker.” *1 Timothy* 3:3. Not “one who is contentious, or given to reproaches.”
10. “Not greedy of filthy lucre.” *1 Timothy* 3:3. Not a lover of money. Nor is this all, the word signifies not a lover of wealth or abundance of any kind; or, as is said further on in the verse, “not covetous,” close, or stingy, but liberal and generous.
11. “Not a brawler.” *1 Timothy* 3:3. Not disposed to fight, not quarrelsome or contentious; not a complainer, nor one who scolds.
12. “But patient.” *1 Timothy* 3:3. Reasonable, fair, kind, gentle, yielding.
13. “One that rules well his own house, having his children

in subjection with all gravity” (1 Timothy 3:4); or, as is said to Titus,

Titus 1

⁶ Having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

And the reason for this qualification is plainly given:

1 Timothy 3

⁵ For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?

The man who will allow his children to be disobedient, or unruly, or self-willed, and allows them to domineer in the family, will allow the same elements to rule in the church; and under such a man the church will be just anything but what the church ought to be.

Upon this point God has given to fathers a lesson for all time. Eli was descended in the right line in a house which God had established in the priesthood, but his two sons were a pair of hoodlums. And:

1 Samuel 2

¹⁷ The sin of the young men was very great before the Lord; for men abhorred the offering of the Lord.

This is another great evil that would spring from having a man as elder who did not govern his own children. Their unruly conduct brings reproach upon his office, and other men seeing it are led to despise the worship and service of the church. Because of the wickedness of Eli’s sons, “men abhorred the offering of the Lord.”

1 Samuel 3

¹¹ And the Lord said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that hears it shall tingle.

¹² In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house; when I begin, I will also make an end.

¹³ For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever

for the iniquity which he knows; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

14. “Not a novice.” *1 Timothy* 3:6. Not a new convert, not one newly come to the faith; and here also the reason is given,

1 Timothy 3

⁶ Lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

Let him grow up, and build up, in the faith, but never do anything that will tend to puff him up.

1 Corinthians 8

¹ Knowledge puffs up, but charity builds up.

15. “Moreover he must have a good report of them that are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.” *1 Timothy* 3:7. The church must have a care for the opinion of those who are outside of the church. We must:

Colossians 4

⁵ Walk in wisdom toward them that are without.

Ephesians 5

¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.

It is a most proper—yes, a necessary—question to ask in choosing a man for a bishop,

- How does he stand toward those who are without?
- How do his neighbors look upon him? for they may despise his faith; but how do they look upon him as a man, and as a neighbor? Is he neighborly?
- Is he kind, gentle, and accommodating?
- Is he straightforward and honest in all his dealings?
- Does he pay his bills promptly? or is he careless about running into debt?

“He must have a good report of them that are without.”

16. “Not self-willed.” *Titus* 1:7. Not governed by his own will; “yielding to the will or wishes of others; accommodating or compliant;” not dogged, stubborn, nor presumptuous.
17. “But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.”
Titus 1:8-9.

These are the qualifications which the word of God requires in him who is to be an elder of the church of God.

Qualifications for Deacon

The qualifications to the office of deacon are much the same, for says the word:

1 Timothy 3

⁸ Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

⁹ Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

¹⁰ And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

¹¹ Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

¹² Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

¹³ For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

It is very likely that many, as they have read the foregoing, have said within themselves,

“Where can such a man be found?”

Well, he ought to be found in every church in the land. He ought to be found in the very church to which you belong. He ought, in fact, to be found in yourself.

See: These are the qualifications which the word of God requires that there shall be in the officers of the church. The officers of the church are to be chosen from among the membership of the church. Therefore these are the qualifications, these are the virtues, which the word of God requires shall be found in every member of the church.

If these qualifications are not found there, then whose fault is it? It is your own fault. And if such persons as are here required are not found in the church, then whose fault is that? It is still the fault of the individual members. For every member of the church of God is required by the word of God to be just such a person as is described in these scriptures.

11. The Duties of Church Officers

Signs of the Times, September 7, 1888

WE HAVE already shown that the terms “elder” and “bishop” denote the same officer, the one being derived from the Hebrew usage, and the other being adapted from the Greek: the term “elder” signifying the dignity of the office, while that of “bishop” signifies its duties.

The Bishops

It is not at all necessary, therefore, to avoid the term bishop in speaking of the elder of a church. Any man who is regularly chosen and ordained to the eldership of a church is, so far as the office is concerned, as really a bishop as anybody is or can be; and it is perfectly proper to call him bishop.

The duties of the bishops are suggested in the Greek word used to designate the officer—*episkopos*. This word is composed of two others—*epi* and *skopos*. The word *skopos* is the real root, as *epi* is but a prepositional prefix. The word *skopos* signifies:

“one that watches, one that looks about, or after things;”
spoken of a “housekeeper,” a “guardian,” a “protector.”

Mostly, however, it is used with the meaning of a

“lookout man, watchman, watcher, stationed in some high place (*skopia*) to overlook a country, especially in war;” used also to designate “a scout.” (Liddell and Scott.)

It is very easy to be seen how readily and appropriately this word would be chosen from the Greek, and adapted to the office of the elder, when it is remembered how often in the Scriptures Christians are spoken of, not only as dwellers in a strange country, but in an enemy’s country. The Christian life is represented as a warfare. *2 Corinthians* 10:3-5. The Christian is a soldier clothed in complete armor; protected by a shield;

holding a sword; and ever watchful, prayerful, and vigilant. *2 Timothy* 2:3, 4; *Ephesians* 6:11-18; *1 Peter* 5:8, 9.

This little band of soldiers, then, on the way to their own country, having to make their way through both a strange and an enemy's country, choose one of their number and set him upon—*epi*—a high place—*skopia*—thus making him their *episkopos*, their lookout man, their sentinel, to watch for danger; their scout, to detect the plans of the enemy.

This is the idea conveyed in the texts which speak of the bishops and their duties. In Paul's address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, he said:

Acts 20

²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers.

And Peter says to the elders,

1 Peter 5

² Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof.

And in *Hebrews* it is said,

Hebrews 13

¹⁷ Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.

The duty of the bishop is, therefore, to be a watchman, not only outside of the church but in the church as well—not only to watch the enemy, but also to watch those within his own camp.

This view corresponds to the idea suggested by the phrase above quoted from both Peter and Paul, "Feed the flock of God." The idea here suggested is that of a shepherd; and this is directly conveyed by Peter in the same chapter before referred to, where he says:

1 Peter 5

⁴ And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away.

Christ is the chief Shepherd, he is “that great Shepherd of the sheep” (*Hebrews 13:20*), and the bishops are under-shepherds. This word and its scriptural illustrations give an excellent, perhaps the best, view of the duties of the bishop.

Peter in writing thus to the elders speaks of himself as “also an elder;” and when he exhorts the elders to “feed the flock of God,” he is only repeating to them the command which Christ gave to him. As that conversation which the Saviour had with Peter has a direct bearing upon this subject, we shall here repeat it entire.

John 21

¹⁵ So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love me more than these? He said unto Him, Yea, Lord; you know that I love you. He said unto him, Feed my lambs.

¹⁶ He said to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love me? He said unto Him, Yea, Lord; you know that I love you. He said unto him, Feed my sheep.

¹⁷ He said unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, do you love me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Do you love me? And he said unto Him, Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you. Jesus said unto him, Feed my sheep.

These words of Christ to Peter are too often passed by with the observation only that Jesus in asking Peter this question three times, was delicately bringing to his mind his thrice-repeated denial of his Lord. We do not deny that that idea was in the Saviour’s words; but we believe that there is also another point in His words, a point that is weighted with a most important meaning for everybody, and especially to everyone who is called to the office of elder.

It will be noticed that three times the Saviour told Peter to

feed the flock, and each time before he told him this he asked him,

“Do you love me?”

Thus he would impress upon Peter, and upon every soul who should come after Peter, in his place, the all-important consideration that before he should attempt to feed Christ’s flock, he must be assured in his very soul that he loves Christ.

To every man who is chosen to the office of elder, this question is asked: “Do you love me?” “Feed my lambs.” And again the second time: “Do you love me?” “Feed my sheep.” And the third time: “Do you love me?” “Feed my sheep.” And oh, that it might be repeated from the depths of the heart of every elder of every church in the land, “Yea, Lord, you know that I love you!”

Jesus Himself has given us one characteristic of a good shepherd:

John 10

¹¹ The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep.

At the reading of this, the mind of one who is familiar with the Scriptures, not only remembers that Jesus gave His life for the sheep, but almost instantly reverts to the instance that occurred in the life of David:

1 Samuel 17

³⁴ And David said unto Saul, Your servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock;

³⁵ And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

³⁶ Your servant slew both the lion and the bear.

Think of that stripling facing a lion to rescue a lamb; and not only facing him, but facing him so closely that when the lion rose to strike him, he could grasp the lion by the beard.

There was a good shepherd. He put his life in the balance against that of a lamb. He risked his life to save the life of a sheep.

John 10

¹² But he that is a hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees; and the wolf catches them, and scatters the sheep.

¹³ The hireling flees, because he is a hireling, and cares not for the sheep.

To protect the sheep, the good shepherd will face a bear, or a lion, or both; but the hireling will run when he sees but a wolf coming.

Another duty of the good shepherd is to seek for the straying.

Matthew 18

¹² If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, does he not leave the ninety and nine, and go into the mountains, and seek that which is gone astray?

¹³ And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoices more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

¹⁴ Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

When one of the flock has gone astray and is lost, it is not sufficient excuse for the shepherd to say,

“I had no time to visit him.”

He has no time for anything else just then. That is what he is there for. Of the Lord it is said:

Isaiah 40

¹¹ He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

This is the work of a shepherd. David, in that beautiful Psalm, the 23rd, speaks of the Lord as his shepherd:

Psalm 23

¹ The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

This is the way the chief Shepherd does with His flock. Therefore, as the elders are under-shepherds, as they must be like the chief Shepherd, thus must they do;

- to make the flock to lie down in green pastures—fresh pastures, pastures of tender grass;
- to lead them beside the still waters;
- to restore their souls;
- to lead them in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake;
- to comfort, and encourage them as they enter the valley of the shadow of death;
- to prepare a table before them in the presence of their enemies;
- and thus to make goodness and mercy to follow them all the days of their lives,
- and that they may dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

To the elders of the church it is said by Paul:

Acts 20

²⁸ Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood.

And by Peter:

1 Peter 5

¹ The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed;

² Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

³ Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock.

⁴ And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fades not away.

The Deacons

To be a deacon of the church is to be a servant of the church, for in the Greek the meaning of the word deacon is a servant. This is also shown by translation of the word in:

Romans 16

¹ I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea.

The word translated servant is *diakanon*—deaconess. Phebe was deaconess of the church at Cenchrea, and was going to Rome on business, and Paul asked the Roman Christians to help her because she had been a helper of many.

The account given in the Scriptures of the first election of the deacons shows what their duties are:

Acts 6

¹ And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the

daily ministrations.

² Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

³ Wherefore, brethren, look out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

⁴ But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

⁵ And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch;

⁶ Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

It is recorded before, that there was a common fund, that whosoever had houses or lands sold them and brought the money and laid it at the apostles feet,

Acts 4

³⁵ ...and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

The very purpose, therefore, of the choosing of deacons was that they should have charge of the temporal matters of the church. In short, they are properly the treasurers of the church, and the sooner we as a people reach the place where we shall have the deacons filling the office of treasurers the sooner we shall be in harmony with Scripture order on that point.

As the deacons are the servants of the church, to them also properly falls the duty of providing and preparing the elements for the celebration of the ordinances of the Lord's house; of arranging for baptisms; and, in short, all such things that pertain to the work of the church.

We are glad, indeed, that this subject of church officers and their duties is being given special attention among us as a

people. We earnestly pray that it may end in securing that efficiency in the work of the church that becomes a “people whose God is the Lord.”

Psalm 144

¹⁵ Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.

12. Apostasy of the Church

American Sentinel, December 1, 1892
Original title: Editorial

IN the Scriptures the Christian's relationship to Christ is described under the symbol of the marriage tie:

Romans 7

⁴ Wherefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that you should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

2 Corinthians 11

² I have espoused you to one husband...

And the individual Christian is in this represented as having been espoused

² ...as a chaste virgin to Christ.

Such individuals gathered in fellowship form the Church of Christ. And the relationship to Christ of such collection of individuals is also described under the symbol of the marriage tie:

Ephesians 5

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it.

²⁸ So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loves his wife loves himself.

²⁹ For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the Church.

³¹ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

³² This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.

In accordance with this idea the Church of Christ is represented in the Scriptures as the purest and fairest of women, leaning upon the arm of her beloved; drawn to Him with the

drawings of His love; her only thought being of her beloved; to her the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely, whose banner over her is love and who would present her to Himself...

Ephesians 5

²⁷ ...a glorious church not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Such is the Church to Christ; such is Christ to His Church; and such is the relationship between Christ and His Church. To such a church as this Christ committed His gospel to be by her made known to every creature. It is only such a church as this that can make known the gospel of Christ. That gospel...

Romans 1

¹⁶ ...is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes.

No one can make known that power who does not know that power for himself and in himself. And the Church could make known the power of God only by knowing the power in and for herself. And that power being known only by faith, in the nature of things it is only by abiding faithful to her Lord that the Church could fulfill the work of the gospel committed to her trust.

Again: The gospel is Christ in men the hope of glory. *Colossians* 1:27. This is what the Church of Christ is to make known to men. No one can make known Christ in men who for himself does not know Christ in himself. It pleased God...

Galatians 1

¹⁶ ...to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him.

But Christ dwells in men only by faith:

Ephesians 3

¹⁷ That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.

It is evident, therefore, that the only way in which the

Church can make known Christ in men the hope of glory, is to have, and to know, Christ revealed in herself. And as this is only known by faith it is evident that it is only by abiding faithful to Christ that she can know Christ in herself or make Him known in men.

Once more: In the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed; and the righteousness of God only. And it is the righteousness of God only which the Church of Christ is to know, and which she is to make known to all the world. This is the ministry of the gospel which is committed to the Church of Christ. This righteousness is known only by faith, and revealed only to faith.

Romans 1

¹⁷ Therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.

Romans 3

²² Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.

As, therefore, this righteousness is known only by faith, and is revealed only to faith, it is plain that it is only by abiding steadfast in faithfulness to Christ that the Church can know or make known the righteousness of God which is revealed in the gospel.

And the sum of all these counts, and of many more that might be given, is simply to demonstrate over and over that it is only by abiding wholly in Christ, by trusting in Him entirely, by depending upon Him completely, by perfect faithfulness to Him, that the Church can be what she must be in order to do what she is established to do.

Such was the Church of Christ in the beginning. Such is always the Church of Christ indeed. But such neither is nor has been the professed Church of Christ. For there has been an apostasy from Christ and from the true Church of Christ. In

the apostles' days the warning was given:

Acts 20

³⁰ Of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

And there shall come...

2 Thessalonians 2

³ ...a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition,

⁴ Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

⁷ For the mystery of iniquity does already work.

The Lord exalted His Church, and clothed her with the beautiful garments of salvation and righteousness, and the power of godliness, before the eyes of all the nations. He made her exceeding beautiful, and she prospered, and her renown went forth to all the world for her beauty; for it was perfect through His comeliness which He had put upon her. *Ezekiel 16:13-14.*

But:

- Not satisfied with the exaltation which the Lord gave, which could come and remain only through her own humility, the church grew haughty and exalted herself.
- Not content with the beauty of the Lord, which He had put upon her, she prided herself upon her own beauty; and instead of trusting in Him for her beauty, she trusted in herself.
- Not content that God alone should be glorified in her, she glorified herself and lived deliciously.

Then, trusting in herself, priding herself upon her own beauty, magnifying her own merit, and satisfied with her own sufficiency,—this in itself was to put herself in the place of God. Then it was natural enough that she should seek to draw disciples to herself rather than to the Lord. Not only this, but

having exalted herself, and magnified herself, and trusting in herself, it was impossible for her to draw disciples to anybody but herself. Thus came the apostasy.

And thus, instead of remaining the Church of Christ in truth, manifesting to the world the mystery of God and of godliness, she became, though still professedly the Church of Christ, only the manifestation to the world of the mystery of self and of selfishness, which is the very mystery of iniquity.

The Church at Rome

Preeminent in both phases of this career was the church at Rome. She was preeminent in apostasy, insomuch that this likewise has been spoken of throughout the whole world, and for nearly eighteen hundred years. As she had been so highly exalted and honored by the Lord, correspondingly low did she fall, and correspondingly dishonored did she become, when she exalted herself.

As high as was her privilege while abiding in the faith, so correspondingly low was her degradation in her apostasy. As she had been perfect in beauty through the comeliness which the Lord had put upon her, so she became frightful in the ugliness of her own uncomely self-conscious pride of her own accomplishments, which were only evil.

Power She Must Have

As she was now trusting in her own merit and her own sufficiency, and seeking to draw disciples to herself, she was left to her own inventions to attract them. She accommodated herself to the ways of the sun-worshipping heathen; she perverted the right way of the Lord, and spake perverse things. She decked herself in gold and jewels and costly array. By such means her adherents multiplied greatly.

But lo! just here she encountered a serious difficulty: she found it impossible of herself to hold her converts in subjection to her bidding. The chiefest trouble in this respect was in

securing conformity to her will in the matter of the observance of Sunday as a holy day, which she had set up as the sign of her authority to command the obedience of men. To accomplish this she realized the want of a power beyond herself, a power other than her own.

The power of God was not open to her in this; nor, in fact, in anything else that she commanded, for none of these things had the Lord required. It is the Church's duty to obey God, not to command men. True, the power of God was still for her, and free to her, but the way to it lay only through sincere repentance, through humbling herself, and confession of sins, and separating from her heathen customs and from all iniquity. This she would not do.

But power she must have and power she would have, even though it were illegitimate. Having forsaken the heavenly power she now sought for earthly power. Having forsaken the arm of the Lord, she sought the arm of man. Having disconnected herself from the kingdom of heaven, she would now connect herself with kingdoms of earth.

Still trusting in her own beauty, and her own bedecking of silk and gold and precious stones and pearls, and holding in her hands the proffer of rich gifts to any lover that would receive her pernicious advances and form an alliance with her, she finally succeeded, through Constantine, in gaining imperial favor and forming an adulterous connection with an earthly lord. The now unholy Church formed an unholy connection with the unholy State. And the very first fruit of it was an imperial law enforcing her will in Sunday observance; and the next was the definite placing of the imperial authority at her disposal with which to compel conformity and to punish obstinate heretics.

Formed an Adulterous Union

Thus did she who had been espoused as a chaste virgin to

Christ; she who had been joined in the bonds of pure and holy marriage to Him who is perfect in power, in love, and purity; she who had known the blissful delights of His love—thus did she violate her virgin vows, break her marriage ties, and become a bloody, murderous harlot, and the very symbol of confusion. Accordingly, the next view that is given of her is this:

Revelation 17

³ I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

⁴ And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

⁵ And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

⁶ And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

The Lord Would Have Healed Babylon

And though in the course of time she had scattered her pernicious ways to all the heathen, and had indulged her lascivious propensities with every kingdom on earth, even yet the Lord would have healed Babylon.

In the Reformation He sent a balm for her, if so be that she might be healed. But she would not. Therefore such as loved the Lord were obliged to forsake her. But lo! those that had forsaken her to join themselves to the Lord, instead of remaining faithful to Him, followed her evil example, and forsook Him and joined themselves also to the kingdoms of the earth in illicit connection.

Thus it was with every professed Protestant church, except the Baptist, that ever had a chance, from the Reformation to the founding of the National Government of the United States. This Government, by utterly prohibiting to itself any connection with the Church or religion, intended to shut off

all opportunity for any church to follow here the Romish-Babylonish example of joining itself to the national Government, though even then and ever since it was sorely against the will of some.

Following the Same Course

Yet in spite of this national principle of government, and in the face of the warnings of the history of eighteen hundred years, the churches of the United States for the last fifty years have been gradually drifting into the course of the original apostasy, and in the last fifteen years their progress in this way has been most rapid, until its culmination in the present year.

We might here give representative facts showing the progress of this apostasy all the way; but what is the use of it when the final step has been taken the present year before the eyes of all the world. Everybody knows that for several years the professed Protestant churches of the United States have boasted of the greatness of their numbers, but yet have openly and repeatedly—by pulpit, platform, and press—confessed their lack of power to maintain the observance of Sunday as the “Christian Sabbath” by their own adherents.

But what have they done to recover this loss of power? Did they resolve to insist upon strict conformity to discipline on the part of these disloyal adherents? No, no; instead of this, one prominent preacher lately expressed the sentiment that has pervaded all upon this subject, when he declared that he himself would go out of the Church, as he stated it, “body, boots, and breeches,” before he would discipline a single one of them.

Did they resolve to preach the gospel fervently in the demonstration of the Spirit and power of God? No; for in this they experienced the same difficulty that was met in the original apostasy—they were compelled to confess that there is no

“thus says the Lord” for Sunday observance. There was therefore no authority of God to which they could appeal to arouse the conscience, no word of the Lord through which they could invoke the agency of the divine Spirit to touch the heart.

Did they then act upon this confession of no “thus says the Lord” for the observance of Sunday as the Sabbath, and turn about and seek to conform their ways to what the Lord has indeed spoken with His own voice and written with His own finger with respect to the day which shall be observed? No; they did not do this, either. What, then, did they do?

They Did This

Resolved, That we give our votes and support to those candidates or political officers who will pledge themselves to vote for the enactment and enforcing of statutes in favor of the civil Sabbath.

For several years they offered themselves upon this bid to all takers. But until the present year no opportunity was presented upon which they might act positively and decidedly upon the resolution which they had formed. The World’s Fair enterprise, however, when it was taken up by Congress, presented the very chance for which they had been looking. Consequently, at this they acted together as one body in demanding the Nation’s recognition and support of Sunday sacredness, in this way:

Resolved, That we do hereby pledge ourselves and each other that we will, from this time henceforth, refuse to vote for or support for any office or position of trust nay member of Congress, either senator or representative, who shall vote for any further aid of any kind for the World’s Fair except on conditions named in these resolutions.

The grand condition was that the gates should be closed on Sunday, so that the “Lord’s day” might not be desecrated.

They Found It

God has said that He...

Acts 17

²⁶ ...has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

²⁷ That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him.

Here are these churches who find themselves sorely in need of a power beyond themselves, and other than their own. But instead of meeting the Lord's mind and seeking Him, and so setting a bright example to all men, they turn their backs upon the Lord and seek the Government of the United States, and feel after it,—and they found it, too.

The Church of Christ is the Lord's appointed agency through which He would call men unto Himself that they may find in Him deliverance from this present evil world. Now here are these professed churches of Christ who find themselves overloaded with worldly influences and worldly practices.

But instead of seeking the Lord for deliverance from this burden of evil, they seek by the chiefest of worldly means a closer alliance with the highest source of worldly influences and worldly practices! For deliverance from an evil which they know, they seek the very source of that evil!! For deliverance from the power of the world, they enter by force into the possession of the greatest worldly power!!! Was there ever a more complete apostasy than this? Could the example of the original apostate church be more exactly followed than it has been in this procedure?

And in this even the Baptist Church is in large measure included. Even she who had always kept herself clear of such an illicit connection has been carried away in this evil tide of apostasy; and all together joined hands with the original apos-

tate church to make successful their determination to secure the power of earthly government.

Violated Vows and Broken Pledges

Thus again have those, who had been espoused to Christ, who had been joined to Him in the bonds of heavenly alliance, violated their vows and broken their marriage bonds to Him who is perfect in power, in love, and purity. Once more:

- They have forsaken the heavenly power and sought for earthly power.
- They have forsaken the arm of the Lord and have put their confidence in the arm of flesh.
- They have forsaken the heavenly Husband and have formed an adulterous connection with an earthly lord.

Once more the unholy Church has formed an unholy connection with the unholy State. And once more the very first fruit of it is a national law expressive of her will in the matter of Sunday observance: and the rest of the baleful fruit of such illicit connection will inevitably follow. Is it at all strange, therefore, that the following passage should have been printed, even some time ago, by a leading D.D. in one of the leading "Protestant" papers of the country? Discussing the question of the reunion of Christendom, he argued for it against certain ones thus:

You would exclude the Roman Catholic Church, the mother of us all, the church of scholars and saints, such as Augustine, and Aquinas, and Bernard, and Fenelon: the church of all races, ranks, and classes, which already gives signs of becoming American as well as Roman....You would exclude also the Protestant Episcopal Church, the beautiful daughter of a beautiful mother.

That was printed February 9, 1888, in the *Evangelist*, New York City, one of the two leading Presbyterian papers of the country. And from that time to this, never have we seen or

heard a single word of protest or dissent from any of the professed evangelical Protestant churches of the country. This states their relationship to “Babylon, the mother of harlots,” as that of daughters; and even beautiful daughters, after the “beautiful mother.”

Their silence is consent that the relationship is correctly stated. And their action in forsaking their rightful Lord and entering into this illicit union with another is positive demonstration the relationship is herein correctly given. For just as certainly as the original apostasy created “Babylon the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth,” just so certainly this apostasy in our day and in our country has created the harlot daughters of “Babylon the mother.”

She is the mother only of “harlots and abominations.” By positive statement it has been said of them and for them that they are her daughters. By silence they have confessed it, and by action they have demonstrated it. And it is so. We are sorry; but so it is.

13. The Church as a Light

American Sentinel, April 1, 1897

THERE can be no more important question for the Church than that of her proper attitude towards the world. This is, of course, a question that must be answered by the Word of God.

From the example of the Church today however, it might be concluded that the inspired Word gives no instructions upon this question which apply to the present time. For it is certain that the Church's attitude today, as indicated by her efforts to acquire political power and authority, and her hopes for the future in this respect, is not sanctioned by a wisdom higher than her own.

But the Scriptures of divine truth are not silent concerning the duties of the Church and of individual Christians in the midst of their worldly environment today. When Christian speakers and writers lament the awful depravity which civilization is unable to hide, and exhort the civil authorities to adopt measures for grappling with the moral emergencies of the times, it is not because all this iniquity was not foreseen and foretold by the Author of holy writ, and instructions given by Him for the guidance of the Church in the most critical hours of moral darkness.

The Scripture likens this period of the reign of sin and evil, to a night. Such indeed it is, with the light of righteousness so nearly obscured as it is by the black shadows of sin. But the Scriptures are full of predictions of a coming day: and even here a light shines upon the pathway of the Christian, in which he is exhorted to walk. Says the psalmist:

Psalm 119

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

The night is not passed by the Church of God in slumber. Watchmen are upon the walls of Zion, to warn of lurking dangers and to herald the long-looked for dawn. In the prophecy of *Isaiah* an occasion comes when the inquiry is made from Zion:

Isaiah 21

¹¹ Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?

And the answer is returned:

¹² The morning comes, and also the night.

—the morning of an eternal day for the righteous and of eternal night for the finally impenitent.

The Apostle Paul exhorts Christians to act as becomes those who have the light of divine revelation. The Church is to know the approach of the coming day. He writes:

1 Thessalonians 5

⁴ You, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

⁵ You are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

⁷ For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

⁸ But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation.

It is the night of sin, and the drunkenness and revelings of those who are of the night, that we see around us today. The terrible depravity that is seen in society at the present time is natural enough to those who are “drunken in the night.” It is only such a feature as the reign of carnality may be expected to develop before the night is ended. That night seems now to have reached its darkest hour; but the darkest hour comes just

before the dawn.

The Church cannot help the fact that it is night. She cannot turn the night into day. She cannot take possession of the world, and eliminate the sin and evil which have brought night upon it. The divine Word which is her guide, nowhere instructs her to attempt such a thing.

But she herself has light—the light of the Word, “that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn” (*1 Peter* 1:19),—and she is to reflect the light upon the pathway of those in darkness. The divine message now comes to her:

Isaiah 60

¹ Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you.

² For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, but the Lord shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you.

³ And the Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.

This is a glorious privilege. It is one which the Church should eagerly embrace. But what is the Church doing? Is she appalled at the “gross darkness” which today covers the people? Then let her not appeal to the arm of flesh in the vain fancy that this darkness can be dispelled by civil enactments; but let her arise and flash forth the divine glory from the throne of God.

That, and that alone, can dispel the darkness from the way of those who will turn and heed it.

14. Christian Discipline

Advent Review, January 25, 1898

CHRISTIAN discipline is the best thing in the world. It is the only true discipline. It begins with the individual himself, before God, and is accomplished in the fear of God, by the word and Spirit of God. the individual puts himself, and keeps himself, under discipline to God.

Not by Rules but by the Power of God

This discipline is not accomplished by means of a set of rules, but by the living principles of the will of God. Every person is free to adopt, or not to adopt, these principles. If he does not adopt them, he cannot be a Christian, however much he “tries.” And having adopted them, and so become a Christian, he can remain a Christian only by maintaining true-hearted loyalty to those principles every moment of his life. He will not sanction for a moment, he will not overlook nor wink at at all, he will not apologize for in any degree, in himself, any lack of perfect conformity to the living principles of the will of God, as made known in the word, and by the Spirit, of God.

This, and this alone, is Christian discipline. This is the discipline that belongs in the Christian church. And it is the only discipline that becomes the church. Indeed, it is the only true discipline that there can be in the church; anything different from this is not true discipline; so far as it differs from this, it fails to being true discipline.

Being Faithful to Our Profession

No person is compelled to be a Christian. This is a matter that always rests wholly upon his own free choice. But having chosen, and having professed, to be a Christian, he is bound by his very profession to maintain, in unswerving, perfect loyalty, the principles of that profession; that is, the principles

of the word and Spirit of God. and whenever he loosens down this discipline; whenever he entertains in himself any disloyalty to these principles; whenever he adopts, or allows the practice of, any other principles, just then he owes it to the Christian profession and to the world to make it publicly known that he no longer belongs to that profession; this should be made known as openly and publicly as was the profession at the first.

Not to do this is to be essentially dishonest; it is to destroy all distinctions of propriety and right; it is to annihilate discipline, and give over everything to the confusion of every evil work. In a word, it is simply devilish; for it is precisely the thing that the devil attempted first of all to do in heaven.

Lucifer: An Attempted Usurpation

Lucifer, in his original place in heaven, chose to have his own way apart from God; he chose not to hold the principles of the word and Spirit of God; he chose not to conform to the discipline of heaven.

All this he was at perfect liberty to do. There was in heaven no disposition to compel him either to hold the principles or to conform to the discipline of that place. But when he had chosen other principles than those of heaven, and had refused to conform to the discipline of that place, the only proper or honest thing for him to do was to leave that place.

Yet when this was suggested, he considered it an outrage; and with great show of virtuous indignation and injured innocence, he resented and utterly rejected it.

- It was not enough for him that he should have his own way; but he must have his own way in his own way—he must have his own way in heaven.
- It was not enough for him that he should be at liberty to adopt the principles of hell; but the principles of hell must become the principles of heaven.

- It was not enough for him that he should be free to refuse conformity to the discipline of heaven, and to adopt the confusion and anarchy of hell; but this confusion and anarchy must be made to prevail in heaven.

In short, heaven itself must be turned into hell, righteousness must surrender to sin, God must give place to Satan. This simply could not be. And as the rebel and his adherents would not go, they had to be cast out. They resisted:

Revelation 12

⁷ And there was war in heaven. Michael and His angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

⁸ And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

As Applied to Workers in Christian Institutions

Now this is precisely the course that is taken by every person who makes the Christian profession, and then disregards the principles and loosens down the discipline of the word and Spirit of God.

And this holds good throughout the whole connection of the Christian name and profession. In every Christian church, every Christian school, every Christian sanitarium, and every Christian publishing house, the principles must be strictly Christian principles,—the principles of the word and Spirit of God; and the discipline must be strictly Christian discipline,—the discipline of the word and Spirit of God.

No one is compelled to become a member of any Christian church, nor a student in any Christian school, nor an employee of any Christian sanitarium or publishing house: that is altogether a matter of personal, free choice of the individual himself. And when he, of his own free choice, joins himself to the church, or the school, or the sanitarium, or the publishing house, in that very act he publishes to that institution and to the world that he accepts the principles, and will conform to

the discipline, of that institution.

Having once done this, he is not, even then, compelled to remain; he is at liberty at any moment to change his mind, and separate himself from the institution. But having of his own free choice joined, and it being upon his own free choice that he remains,—so long as this is so, that itself is public notice that he holds the principles and conforms to the discipline of the institution.

And if he knowingly violates any of the principles, or disregards the discipline, of that institution, and neglects or refuses to make amends and discipline himself, that thing itself separates him from the institution, and the only honest or proper thing for him then to do is to make public the fact that he has separated himself from it. For him to insist on remaining in the institution, while violating its principles and disregarding its discipline, is only to insist on subverting those principles and annihilating the discipline,—it is to insist on destroying the institution as a Christian institution, and turning it into the opposite, as did the devil at the first.

And when this point has been reached, and such persons so insist, it then becomes the Heaven-appointed and Heaven-bound responsibility of those whom God has placed in charge of the interests of that institution to see that it is publicly known that such persons are no longer recognized as being connected with the institution. And for those persons to resent such a course or resist such procedure, is nothing else than to take the exact position that the devil did at the first.

How the Discipline is Administered

Now on the other side: for all this it is perfectly clear that it strictly becomes all who are in places of responsibility in any Christian church, or Christian school, or Christian sanitarium, or Christian publishing house, to know, personally for themselves, that God has placed them there, and that they occupy

that place and discharge that responsibility unto God, in the sight of God in Christ.

It becomes all those also to know of a surety that the principles which they represent are none but the principles of the word and Spirit of God; that the discipline which they maintain is nothing else than the discipline of the word and Spirit of God; and that the way in which they seek to maintain this discipline is strictly the way of the word of God and Spirit of God.

Upon this the word of God is perfectly plain. Therefore let us read:

Galatians 6

¹ Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering yourself, lest you also be tempted.

What is the position of the man? He is “in a fault.” What are the spiritual to do? “Restore such a one.” “Restore” him. What does “restore” mean?

To bring back to a former and better state; to bring back from lapse, degeneracy, or a fallen condition, to a former state.

Then what has the man’s fault done to him? It has separated him from the good and proper relation of his profession in the body. Is he, then, by his “fault,” already separated? Surely; or else there is no meaning in the direction to “restore such a one,” which is to bring him back and set him in his place again. If he is not separated, he does not need to be, indeed he cannot be, restored.

His fault, then, his violation of principle, has separated him from the place which his profession proclaims that he occupies. But the Lord does not want him to be separated from these principles; for these principles are life, and to be separated from these is to be separated from life. The Lord does

not want this, and the “spiritual” do not want it. Therefore the Lord directs, “You which are spiritual, restore such a one,” and the spiritual always have the desire to do so; and being “spiritual,” they are able to go about it all “in the spirit of meekness.” In another place the Lord of Christians and of Christian institutions says:

Matthew 18

¹⁵ Go and tell him his fault between you and him alone: if he shall hear you, you have gained your brother.

If he hears you, what have you done? “You have gained” him. “Gained him” to what? To the right, certainly; to that from which his “fault” had separated him. He is already separated; “his fault” has done that. And you are to gain him, you are to restore him.

Then for what is it that you speak to him? To “gain” him, to “restore” him—not to condemn him, not to find fault with him, not to separate him. Nothing needs to be done to separate him; he is already separated by “his fault.” Everything that is done is to “restore” him; everything that is said is to gain him. And if what you can do will be done *not* to restore, if what you can say will be said *not* to gain, then you have nothing either to do or to say in that matter; your part is to become “spiritual.”

But if he will not hear you, if he will not be restored, if he will not be gained, what then?

¹⁶ Then take with you one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

And if he will not yet hear, if he will not yet be restored,—what then?

¹⁷ If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church.

And if he still will not hear; if he still will not be restored; if he holds to his fault; if he holds to his violation of the princi-

ples, and his disregard of the discipline, of the word and Spirit of God; if he persists in the separation which his fault has made,—what then?

¹⁷ If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican.

Titus 3

¹⁰ A man that is a heretic [one that persists in choosing for himself against the word and Spirit of God] after the first and second admonition reject;

¹¹ Knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sins, being condemned of himself.

He being already separated, and now subverted and condemned of himself, it must be known that he has repudiated the principles and the discipline of the Christian profession, lest that profession itself be subverted and condemned by sanctioning the principles of the devil under the profession of allegiance to the principles of Christ.

Such is the course, and the only true course, of the exercise of Christian discipline anywhere in the Christian connection, —whether in the Christian church, the Christian school, the Christian sanitarium, or the Christian publishing house. And the word “tell it to the church” when it is done in church connection, is, in principle, tell it to the school, or the sanitarium, or the publishing house, when this course must be taken in connection with these respectively.

And in all this discussion the term Christian church, Christian school, Christian sanitarium, and Christian publishing house, means Seventh-day Adventist church, or school, or sanitarium, or publishing house.

No Place for Church Trials

Some Seventh-day Adventists have the wild notion that because they cannot have church trials, with their resulting divisions, wars, and fightings, there is to be no discipline at all,

but everything is to be left to the devil. No greater mistake was ever made.

The truth is that while there is no place for a church trial, there is no place for anything but church discipline; that is, Christian discipline of the word and Spirit of God. That is what the church and church organization in the world are for; for the church is the pillar and ground, the support and stay, of the truth of God in the world.

This article is longer than we usually care to print at one time; but we consider this matter of such importance that we think it better to print it all at once, so that it can be studied in its full connection, than to issue it in divisions. We firmly believe that with the presence of the Holy Spirit, God is giving to His organization both the love and the practice of Christian discipline; and the churches must be ready to rise to this call, and the people to fall into line with it.

We thank the Lord that he has well begun this in the institutions—church, College, Sanitarium, and Publishing House—in Battle Creek. It has not been begun by a plunge and a spurt of some committee, or plan of men banded together, but by the gentle, steady, elevating, and reforming power of the Spirit of God. The cause, the church, the institutions,—all are the Lord's. He is Head of all, and over all. Only let Him have the place that belongs to Him, and all is well.

15. Bear One Another's Burdens

Advent Review, July 5, 1898

HOW many times in the life of every one there come disappointments because some cherished plan or idea fails to carry. Particularly is this true in church matters, in the election of officers to carry on the Sabbath-school and church work, especially when there is present more of self than of Christianity.

We think that if only this or that one had been given charge of the work, how much better it would have been. Perhaps so; yet it should not be forgotten that all are brethren; that each has a right to his personal opinion, the same as ourselves; and, obviously, that what would please us would not be likely to satisfy those who think differently.

But suppose things have not gone as they really should, what ought to be the attitude of us who have been disappointed? Self suggests:

“I will do nothing; let those who have the work in charge conduct it as they please.”

Of course, single-handed, or with opposing elements, there may be a failure, and then out come the words:

“I told you so.”

How much better it is when we accept the situation and make the best of it, trusting to the future to right any errors that may be committed. A poor leader, with the cooperation and sympathy of his brethren, can accomplish more than a good leader without this cooperation and sympathy.

If any member of the human body, because of physical weakness, is unable to perform its legitimate function, the other members assume additional responsibility; and what the weaker one is unable to perform, the others do, and the bur-

den is equalized. So it should be in the Master's service: we are exhorted:

Galatians 6

² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

When people who are disqualified are given charge of work in the cause, and that work is not a success, it is the cause that suffers, not particularly those who have failed. Can anyone who loves the cause stand by and see it suffer for lack of assistance that he could render? Surely not.

16. Local Elders

Advent Review, August 16, 1898

THOSE servants of the Lord who are set apart for their work by prayer and the laying on of hands, hold an important position in the church. They are to have the “oversight” of the flock. They are to “feed the flock of God.” One writer, speaking of the work of elders in the early church, says:

These men assisted by deacons and deaconesses who were servants of the church for the performance of the needful duties in it, had the care and oversight of local flocks or churches where they dwelt. They fed the flock of God.

Feeding a flock in this case did not mean shutting them up in a pen, and dealing out dry beans and cut feed once or twice a day, as men do in this country: but in feeding their flocks, the Eastern shepherds *went before them*, and led them forth into green pastures and by the side of still waters. So these shepherds fed their flocks, guiding them in all their course of life; teaching them the words of God; presiding in their assemblies for worship and fellowship; having a care over the sick and weak and feeble and unwary; and watching against grievous wolves that were to enter in, not sparing the flock, and against men that were to arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. *Acts 20:29, 30....*

In such churches as these, where people met, not merely *to listen to empty harangues, nor elaborate essays prepared by ministers who must say something, whether they have anything to say or not, but rather to hear the stated and protracted reading of the Scriptures of truth*, with such exhortations as were suggested by them or by the necessities of the flock, delivered by men of sound speech, who were apt to teach, though perhaps not always of eloquent lips; and also to listen to those words which any Christian, prompted by the Holy Ghost, might utter for the edification and exhortation and comfort of the people of God, joined with the breaking of bread in memory of the Lord, who died to save His people,—in such churches, in upper chambers, in catacombs and caves, was the light of the gospel preserved, and perpetuated, and

scattered abroad by the personal contact of Christians with their fellows and neighbors, until it pervaded communities, subverted religions, revolutionized empires, and changed the face of the world.

If our elders would study how they might get their flocks to feed on the living Word, rather than try to preach to them about what good food there is for them, a new life would spring up in all our churches.

Twenty years ago our churches did not have nearly so many ministerial visits as they have now; nor did their elders think themselves so much preachers that the Sabbath meeting was spoiled by an effort to present some great theme that the speaker had heard at some general meeting. Then the brethren and sisters were more ready, with Bible in hand, to present some thought that was a real experience to them. These short experiences, founded on the living Word, were food for the whole congregation.

The elder did not hold himself so much responsible for entertaining the congregation as for the exercise of that oversight of the flock by which he led them into the green pastures where they themselves could feed upon, rather than hear about, the good food.

The *Testimony* of the Lord has for years been calling for this work to be done again in the churches. It calls the ministers to go out where the message has not been heard; and it calls upon the churches to say to the ministers:

“Go and preach the Lord’s message to those who have not heard it; we will meet together, and build up ourselves on our most holy faith, while you tell to others the truth which we love.”

When shall the *Testimony* be heeded? It will be heeded when the Holy Spirit is recognized, and received, and allowed to reign.

17. Sharp Letters

Advent Review, August 16, 1898

MEN and women in places of responsibility, where there is a large correspondence, often have to deal with circumstances that have a tendency to stir up their feelings. When the brain is tired, and the senses are unsettled, the mistakes of those under their direction look more grievous than at other times. Besides, they are away from the offender, and do not have to meet him face to face, and hear any explanations he might make.

It is at such times that these are apt to write to the "offender" a letter of a nature to "shake him up." With nervous hand the pen is taken up, to let the wicked thoughts run on the paper, never heeding that the letter may be the means of so wounding the poor soul that all they may do afterward will never heal the wound.

The letter is written; and, too tired even to read it over before sending, the writer hastens it off to the mail, with a sense of relief after the blast he has given, which, he tells himself, will make the offender "tremble," and "teach him a lesson."

How often ministers of the gospel, who are holding an official position which gives them some dignity before their fellow ministers, allow themselves to write words that they would never think of putting on paper if they but waited until the tired brain was rested. The offense that seems most aggravated at first, would appear so different, after time had been taken to consider the circumstances, that there would be no need of writing a "sharp letter."

The following interesting sketch, though printed once in these columns, may be read again with much profit by those who sometimes think it advisable to write a sarcastic letter to some "subordinate:"

It is said that Secretary Stanton was once greatly vexed because an officer had refused to understand an order, or, at all events, had not obeyed.

“I believe I’ll sit down,” said Stanton, “and give that man a piece of my mind.”

“Do so,” said Mr. Lincoln: “write it now, while you have it on your mind. Make it sharp; cut him all up.”

Stanton did not need a second invitation. It was a bone-crusher that he read to the president.

“That’s right,” said Lincoln: “that’s a good one.”

“Whom can I get to send it by?” mused the secretary.

“Send it!” replied Lincoln, “send it! Why, don’t send it at all, tear it up. You have freed your mind on the subject, and that is all that is necessary. Tear it up. You never want to send such letters; I never do.”

How many heartaches would be avoided if we would take Lincoln’s advice when we write cutting letters. When the mind is freed, tear up the letter, and thus avoid giving pain to another.

Then, still better even than this, is to cultivate and acquire so much of the grace and Spirit of Christ that we shall never see any subordinates, but only superiors; and so shall never have any sharp letters to write, no “shaking up” to do, nor any such “lessons” to teach.

18. Follow Me

Advent Review, March 28, 1899

THE principle that each person shall mind his own business (*1 Thessalonians* 4:11), and let other people's business alone (*1 Peter* 4:15),—in other words, that each person shall give account of himself to God, and shall leave every other person absolutely free to give account of himself to God and to nobody else,—is not only specifically stated in the Bible, but is emphasized by many illustrations.

When Jesus was talking to His disciples just before He ascended to heaven, He asked Peter, three times, the question:

“Do you love me?” (*John* 21:15-17)

Peter responded that he did, and Christ replied,

John 21

¹⁵ ...Feed my lambs.

¹⁶ ...Feed my sheep.

And then, as they were walking along,—Jesus, Peter, and John,—Peter turned to Christ, and said,

²¹ ...What shall this man do?

Jesus replied,

²² If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to you? follow me.

The Scripture says that Peter turned and saw the other disciple following Jesus. That was what John was doing,—following Jesus. Peter, too, at first was following Jesus; but when he turned to see John, what then was he doing? If he was following Him at all, he must have been following Him backwards. But backwards is no way to follow Jesus. Men must follow Him with the face to Him and the eyes upon Him.

The only way for Peter to follow the Lord was to keep on

the way he was going. But he was so concerned with the other disciple's welfare, as to whether he was following the Lord just right or not, that he himself must turn from following the Lord to behold the other who was following the Lord, and to inquire,

“Well, Lord, I am to do so and so; but what about this man?”

Jesus simply said, in other words:

“That is none of your business. What that man does is nothing whatever to you. Follow me.”

This illustrates the principle which the Lord Jesus established for the guidance of His disciples, and which he has drawn out in the 13th and 14th chapters of *Romans*.

Therefore it is written:

Romans 14

¹³ Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

That is the point we are to watch. I am to watch myself that I do not put in your way an occasion for you to fall; and the only way I can do that is by keeping my eyes upon Jesus, and Him only. Yet at this many will query,

“Why, are we not our brother's keeper?”

Yes. And it must not be forgotten that the man who first asked the question, “Am I my brothers keeper?” was brought to the point where he asked that question, by his disregard of the very principle which we are studying.

If Cain had regarded the principle which is here before us, of following the Lord for himself, and letting Abel follow the Lord for himself, rendering allegiance to his own Master in everything which he did, he would never have been brought

to the place where he said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" for the question would never have been asked him, "Where is Abel your brother?" It was only when Cain had failed to follow the Lord, that he turned his attention to his brother; and because his brother's ways did not please him, he began to sit in judgment upon him and to find fault with him.

And at last Cain decided that his brother's ways were so seriously wrong that he was not fit to be on the earth; and therefore the only reasonable and legitimate thing for him to do was to put Abel out of the way; and so he killed him. Why was not Abel fit to live? Oh, because his ways did not please Cain, who set himself up to judge and correct Abel, and say what he should do, and how he should do it.

This incident is placed at the very beginning of the Bible (*Genesis* 4:8-9), and is repeated to the end of the Bible (*1 John* 3:12; *Jude* 11), as a warning to all people to regard the principle that we are to honor God ourselves, and follow Him ourselves, and let others do the same.

There is a secret in this which people do not realize. When an individual is following the Lord, and Him only,—with his eyes upon the Lord, his whole heart devoted to the Lord,—an influence goes forth from him that is ten thousand times more helpful to the man who is the farthest away from God than can possibly be all the superintending that man can do when he takes his eyes away from Christ.

People forget that it takes the power of God to convince a man of truth; and because a man does not go in the way which they think the Lord would have him go, or because he does not go readily enough to please them, or does not shape his ways satisfactorily to them, they grow impatient, and put forth their hands to undertake to steady the ark. And there the mischief comes in.

There is no power but of God.

Psalm 62

¹¹ God has spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongs unto God.

We pray every day, “Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.” Fellow Christians, please never forget this:

*Christians must depend
on God’s power alone
to influence people to do right.*

19. Ministers as an Example

Advent Review, April 4, 11, 18, 1899

1 Timothy 4

¹² Be an example of the believers.

THIS is a word of instruction addressed originally to the young minister Timothy; and in that to all ministers of the gospel to the end of the world.

An Example of the Believers

The minister is to be an example of the believers, not only to the believers, but of them. In all the body of believers the minister is, above all, an example, a sample, a pattern, a specimen, a copy for imitation. And any one inquiring what those of the body of believers really are, is justified in assuming what they are by what the ministers are; for these are samples, specimens.

We ministers are to be examples of the word and way of God when we are out of the pulpit, just as certainly as while in the pulpit. An example is something that must stand all the time, or it is not an example.

An Example in Word

1 Timothy 4

¹² Be an example of the believers, in word.

We ministers are to be examples of the believers, "in word." We are to be examples in the matter of our own words,—the words which we speak. We are to be examples of the word of God; for it is the word of God that we are to preach.

In our own words we are to be examples out of the pulpit and in the everyday life, just as certainly as we are to be examples of the word of God in the pulpit and in the sermon while we are preaching.

Indeed, our being examples in word is not in our word as

separate and distinct from the word of God; because as it is the word of God only which we are to preach, and as we must be what we preach, or else our preaching is vain, so our being examples “in word” is neither more nor less than being in ourselves, in our everyday life, examples of the word of God, which we profess to preach, and which we must be in order to preach it.

This is shown more fully in the next expression:

1 Timothy 4

¹² Be an example of the believers...in conversation.

We are to be examples “in conversation.” When the Bible was translated, the word “conversation” did not primarily mean even our words; but our whole course of action, everything that pertains to the everyday life, in all that makes up the character, in all that makes a person what he really is.

This is the Christian ministry; and the Christian ministry is Seventh-day Adventist ministry.

1 Timothy 4

¹² Be an example of the believers, in word, in conversation.

1 Corinthians 2

¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world; but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

¹³ Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teaches, but [in the words] which the Holy Ghost teaches.

An Example in Charity

1 Timothy 4

¹² Be an example of the believers...in charity.

Charity, in the Bible, is but another word for love; it is the “bond of perfectness.” *Colossians* 3:14. The minister of the gospel is to be an example in that which is the bond of per-

fectness. Then perfectness must ever be kept before the minister—nothing but perfectness must be his standard—in all things. Such a condition, or state, can come only from a pure heart:

Matthew 5

⁸ ...the pure in heart...shall see God.

Not alone when He is revealed in the clouds of heaven with all His holy angels, but now. And when we see Him, we shall be like Him.

When Christ comes in the clouds of heaven, we shall see Him with open face, with all things rolled away. But even here, and now, if we continually hold God ever before our face, we shall be like Him; because it is written:

2 Corinthians 3

¹⁸ We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.

So as certainly as we behold God, and see only Him, even now, we shall be like Him.

20. Corporate Repentance

Advent Review, May 23, 1899

THERE is one very important thing that was learned by the people of God in ancient times, that has not yet been learned by the people of God of today; that is, the whole congregation at once repenting, confessing, and separating themselves from all iniquity.

Even though only a few persons, or even only one, had actually sinned, yet the whole congregation felt it, considered themselves involved, as indeed they really were, and repented and confessed and separated themselves just as if all had actually sinned. And whether it were a matter of sin in their own day, or in preceding generations, it was all the same.

Again and again this occurred in the history of the people of God of old time; and in every instance when they had done so, the Lord wrought most wonderfully for them. And all this is written for our learning, and for our admonition.

All this is simply the old-time illustration of the prayer of Christ for us, "That they all may be one" (*John 17:21*); and of that description of the true unity of the church:

1 Corinthians 12

²⁵ That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

²⁶ And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

Let the people of God of today in every congregation, organization, and institution,—even the whole body together,—study and learn this principle, and act according to it, and God will work for Israel today as wondrously as He did in any time of old.

For at that time it was written, and it is forever true, and the

truth of it was demonstrated whenever Israel really did act together, that one shall “chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.” *Deuteronomy* 32:30.

When one chases a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, what will three do? what will four do? Yes, what will fifty thousand do? what will one hundred thousand do? what will one hundred and forty-four thousand do?

Take the ratio of one chasing a thousand, and two chasing ten thousand, and expand that ratio. It will be carried only a few figures before the result will be past all human comprehension. And the further it is carried, the further it is beyond all human comprehension.

Yet that simply illustrates the working of God with His people when they are really united; when they are one in repenting and confessing sins which individually the great mass of them did not actually commit, as heartily as they are one in shouting a victory in which the great mass of them did not have a share in actually winning.

The prayer of Christ that His people “all may be one,” is for unity such as exists between the Father and the Son, a unity that is forever and in all things. Then God will be manifest always and in all things with that people, in ways that are beyond all human comprehension; and the world will know that God did send Jesus, and has loved these, His people, as He loved Jesus.

John 17

²¹ That they all may be one; as You, Father, are in me, and I in You, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that You have sent me.

²² And the glory which You gave me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

²³ I in them, and You in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that You have sent me, and have loved them, as You have loved me.

21. Church Organization

General Conference Bulletin, April 4, 1901

Ephesians 4

⁷ Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the grace of Christ.

THE word was given to us today that God calls for a reorganization of the General Conference, its work, its processes. That, consequently, must be our chief study.

The General Conference is now formally, by representation in session; but this representation that is here is not all that there is of the General Conference. We do not find all of the General Conference, till we have included every Seventh-day Adventist in the world. Consequently a reorganization of the General Conference calls for a reorganization of each individual Seventh-day Adventist throughout the world.

This is called for not only on the part, and in behalf, of the General Conference itself within itself, but it is called for by the interests of God in the earth. The world has reached that time in which a work is to be done by the Lord, which work He cannot do unless each one of us shall be reorganized, renewed. Therefore I have begun with this verse; and we shall follow on through a number of verses of this same chapter; for this is the story of reorganization.

Life, the Source of Organization

All organization that is not of God is a mere makeshift for the time being. There is no true organization but that which is of God. And it is only life that is the source of organization. Organization is not the source of life. Life produces organization.

Therefore, for God to have a reorganization of only the General Conference that is in session here, demands that God's life shall reach us anew and in fuller measure than ever

yet it has. And whomsoever it is that God shall reach by that life of His, that is organization; and whomsoever He shall reach by that life of His in greater measure, that is reorganization. Therefore I have read this verse; for this is the beginning of life. All true organization comes from God to men by the grace of God, which is the gift of God Himself to men. So then,

Ephesians 4

⁷ Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Then, since the grace of God is the fountain of all good to men, and that grace is given unto every one of us according to the measure of Christ, it follows that there is the supply, there is the source, the fountain of abundance of grace to accomplish that for which God calls today.

What is the measure of the gift of Christ?

Colossians 2

⁹ In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Unto every one of us, then, is given grace according to that measure of all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And He gave Himself—not loaned Himself, but gave, gave in an eternal gift, Himself—to us.

That is the measure of the gift of Christ. There is no limit to it. It is boundless as the fullness of God; and is given to every one of us—US! to you, to me. Oh, then, when God opens (I will not say the fountain, but) the boundless sea of His grace to you and to me individually, and then says to us that God calls for a reorganization, what shall hinder? Is not the prospect bright enough for us to throw ourselves away upon His offer,—to plunge off into that boundless sea of His grace, which works only salvation to every one whom it reaches? Oh,

There's a wideness in God's mercy

Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice
That is more than liberty.

So much for the gift; so much for the inducement, the qualification, which He gives to every one of us to accomplish upon us, to accomplish in us, and to accomplish for us; and then, having accomplished upon us and in us and for us, to accomplish through us; His wondrous purpose in this day, to glorify God upon the earth, and to finish the work which is given us to do.

Object of the Gift of Grace

Now let us see what He proposes to do by that grace which He has given boundlessly to every one of us.

First of all this grace is given,

Ephesians 4

¹² For the perfecting of the saints.

And anything else for which this grace is given can never be accomplished, unless this first purpose for which it is given shall be recognized, looked unto, and aimed at,—the perfection of the saints.

The next clause is:

¹² ...for the work of the ministry;

and the next,

¹² ...for the edifying [the building up] of the body of Christ.

But what can God do with a ministry that does not recognize the perfecting of the saints? What can God do in building up His church, when God's grace in the perfecting of the saints who compose the church, is not recognized?

So then He has rightly laid the foundation; rightly, He has put the first truth first. The perfecting of the saints, then is the first work of the grace of God. And since He has given all the

grace that He has, and has given all the fullness of God in the gift of grace—all that God is, all His power, all His sanctifying holiness and Spirit—all this is given, pledged, to him who receives the grace, that this grace shall accomplish God's purpose in bringing him unto perfection.

Then no one who has named the name of Christ, no one who professes to have received the grace of God, is ever to be content for one moment with anything short of perfection as God sees it—as He has set it before our eyes in Jesus Christ.

And it is He who is to do it; we do not perfect ourselves, we do not do the work, but He who gave Himself that He might do it. There is the foundation of our confidence! there is fixed the foundation of our trust,—that it is He who is to accomplish it; and then we know that it shall certainly be done.

The Gospel Ministry

The next thing for which this boundless gift of the grace of God is given, is “the work of the ministry.” The ministry of the gospel is the highest calling, and to be a minister of the gospel is to hold the highest position in the wide universe. That is the truth. I mean the highest among creatures, of course.

I say it again: the ministry of the gospel is the highest calling; to be a minister of the gospel is to occupy the highest place, and to hold the highest position, that there is to be held or occupied in the universe of God.

Therefore, I exhort every soul who has ever thought of the ministry, not to allow himself to entertain any thought of the ministry of the gospel that is any lower than that which I have named. For anyone to allow himself to think of the ministry of the gospel of Christ in any lower degree, to any possibly conceivable extent, is to miss the true ministry of the gospel.

Any man who holds the ministry of the gospel at any lower standard, in any degree, than that which I have named, has

missed the true idea of the gospel ministry. Then may the Lord by His Spirit and by the abundance of His grace work upon our minds and our hearts, to broaden our comprehension, and lift us to that height at which He Himself has placed the standard of the ministry of the gospel of Christ.

Think, for a moment, of what it is to be a minister of the gospel. What is the gospel? It is the power of God.

Romans 1

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the *power of God* unto salvation to every one that believes.

Then the ministry of the gospel is the ministry of the power of God. You and I, brethren, are commissioned of God to go and minister to men the power of God. The power of God is to be ministered unto men by us in such a way that it shall work their salvation.

But wherein lies the power of God which the gospel is? Why is it that the gospel is the power of God? The next verse tells:

¹⁷ For therein is the righteousness of God revealed.

The righteousness of God is the very essence of His character; and that is the source of the power of the gospel. The gospel is the power of God, because therein—in the gospel—is the righteousness of God. The ministry of the gospel is the ministry of the character of God.

To you and me, as ministers of the gospel, God has given by His grace that commission to preach the gospel, to preach the power of God, to preach the very essence of the character of God, unto men; so that they shall find the essence of the character of God; and in that find the salvation which God works in the lives of men, in human flesh.

And how shall you, how shall I, how shall we, minister the power of God unless we ourselves have the power of God?

How shall we minister the power of God unless God shall so clothe us with the power of God that the words of the gospel which we speak shall reach the hearts of men in such a way that they shall know that God is speaking to their hearts; that they shall recognize that God is present, and that they shall answer to God for what they shall do in response to the word that He has given them? But God does just so clothe those whom He sends:

Isaiah 61

¹⁰ He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness.

And in the way of righteousness is life—the life of God. Is it not true that He has said that in former times we, as Gentiles, were alienated, separated from the life of God? But in Christ we are joined to the life of God: and that is eternal life. And so it is written:

John 5

²⁴ Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that hears my word, and believes on Him that sent me, has everlasting life.

Has it—not shall have it, but *has it*. As to the future it is:

²⁴ ...shall not come into condemnation,

But as to the present:

²⁴ ...but is passed from death unto life.

Thus the believer in Jesus is joined to the life of God, even as it is written:

Psalms 36

⁹ With You is the fountain of life.

Then this life of God becomes our life. And there is the revealing of His power: for Jesus Christ is made a High Priest,

Hebrews 7

¹⁶ ...after the power of an endless life.

And He has made us “a royal priesthood” (*1 Peter 2:9*), with that same power of an endless life; for nothing short of the power of an endless life can ever make anybody a priest and minister of God, in the gospel of God.

Isaiah 61

⁶ You shall be named the priests of the Lord: men shall call you the ministers of our God.

The gospel is the power of God, because that in it the righteousness of God is revealed, and:

Proverbs 12

²⁸ In the way of righteousness is life.

And there is the hiding of His power (*Habakkuk 3:4*), the endless power of an endless life. *Hebrews 7:16*. And this endless life of God that comes in the boundless righteousness of God, is revealed in the gospel which He has given to us to preach.

The True Christian Life

Another word about that life. That life of God is in Jesus Christ. He is the source of life. Brethren, there is a higher conception for us than to think that we as Christians get our life through the breath which we breathe here, as all men breathe; and the food which we eat, as all men eat. We had all that before we were Christians at all. We would have had all that if we had never been Christians.

But when God calls us to Him, to become connected with the life of God, we are lifted above the place we were before, and are joined to that boundless sea of the life of God. And there is the source of our life as Christians. God proposes so to connect us with Himself that we shall be conscious day by day; and all the time, that there is an inflowing of life from the

throne of the living God to the heart and life of the believer in Jesus. And when we have allowed ourselves to be lifted up to that place, and to receive that flow of the life of God into our lives day by day,—Oh, then the power of God will be upon us! Then the power of God will be manifested in our ministry, even the endless power that belongs to the endless life of God. That is the truth.

There is just as much reality—in degree there is more, of course, because it is more substantial; but in the matter of fact—in the matter of tangibility, there is just as much reality in finding the life of God flowing to our lives day by day, when we believe in Jesus, as there ever was in finding life flow to us day by day by our breathing when we first lived in the world. That is the divine fact. That is the true higher life. That is the true Christian life.

The life that flows to us from Jesus Christ, we get from heaven day by day, by faith, as constantly as we breathe; so that faith is the breath of the spiritual life as really as the air is the breath of the natural life. We breathe it in from Jesus Christ direct, the Life-giver. That is the Christian life.

Ministers of an Endless Life

But why is that given to us? Oh, for the work of the ministry. But to whom do we minister? To mankind. What do we minister? Oh, Jesus Christ has thus brought us to the Fountain of life, and connected us therewith, that we may be indeed those who shall stand between the living and the dead, to convey to the dead the life that shall cause them to live. That is what we are in the world for. It is that Jesus Christ, the living, may, by us, reach the dead with the life that measures with the life of God.

Thus we are ministers of life. We are called, correctly, truly, ministers of Christ. But what is Christ? He is “our life,” and “the Author of life.”

Let us read that beautiful passage:

1 John 1

¹ 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.

And that shall be all true of you and me today. True, John spoke of the time when they looked upon Him in the flesh; but John did not stop with that. John looked upon Jesus Christ in the Spirit after He had left the flesh and gone to heaven. And it belongs to you and me today to look upon Jesus Christ, to behold Him with our eyes as He is today at the right hand of God, to give repentance, remission of sins, to shed forth life to the dead.

1 John 1

¹ ...which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life.

² (for the Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

³ That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

Who is He? The life. When we are ministers of Christ, we are only the ministers of that endless life, “that eternal life.” Oh, then, how can I be a minister of the life of Christ, a minister of the life of God, when my ministry is as continuous as my life, unless I am connected with that fountain of life, so that this eternal life is my life? Only thus can I become a minister of life; and,

John 17

³ This is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.

Do “you see your calling, brethren”? *1 Corinthians* 1:26. We are ministers of Christ, and in that are ministers of eternal life

to the dead. What a calling! and what a height there is to the calling!

Brethren, let us ask God to lift us up to the height of it; and there let us dwell. There let us remain, never asking to come down. There at that height let us abide, looking into His face, drawing from Him the life, the light, the glory, that perfects saints, and makes efficient the ministry of the gospel.

That is the great thing. Each of those steps we must take, or the next one cannot follow. Then I beg again, I pray again, that the Lord, in the abundance of His grace, may so impress it upon each soul, that we have not found our true attitude in the Christian life until we know that there is flowing constantly to us from the throne, the stream of life that shall cause us truly to live; and shall make us the channel of life to the dead.

Ephesians 4

¹² ...for the building up of the body of Christ,

—the church of God.

- First, the perfecting of the saints;
- Then the work of the ministry;
- Then the building up of the church.

The church needs building up! That is why God calls for re-organization. Then let us recognize that He has set before us that true standard,—nothing short of the perfecting and the perfection of the saints, then the true height of the ministry of the gospel, the ministry of Christ.

Ministry Embraces All

Now just a word or two before I leave that finally,—that this ministry takes in all:

1 Peter 4

¹⁰ As every man has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace

of God.

Whosoever has received the grace of God has received in that the gift of the ministry of that grace, the ministry of Christ, the ministry of the gospel.

The 5th chapter of *2 Corinthians* states:

2 Corinthians 5

¹⁹ That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself,...and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Whosoever finds reconciliation, the reconciliation of God in Christ, in that finds the ministry of that same reconciliation to those who have not found it. So the ministry, this ministry, is universal. But, brethren, unless we who are called to the preaching ministry, appreciate what that ministry is, how can those to whom we preach ever appreciate it?

And this is all given,

Ephesians 4

¹³ Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man.

A perfect man. How many of us? Till we all. Put the two together. Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, till we all come to perfect men. Thank the Lord!

¹³ Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, *unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*

Next, the blessed reward that comes upon that:

¹⁴ That we be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

Brethren, God has that for us that shall make us stable. God

has that for us that shall make us, in the truth,—in righteousness, and in the principles of righteousness,—as firm as the Rock of Ages Himself.

Organization from the Head

More. Read in that verse again and the next one with it:

Ephesians 4

¹⁴ That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ.

Here is true reorganization, and there is no other:

¹⁵ Speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ,

¹⁶ From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

There, is reorganization; and there is no other way. Any organization that does not come from Jesus Christ is not organization at all: it is only machinery.

Note that this organization—this reorganization comes from the HEAD. Organization does not come from the members; it comes from the Head. Let me read that again now, and I will read another verse with it.

“Speaking the truth in love,”—this body of Christ,—“speaking the truth in love,”—these members,—“may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ;” from whom? from Christ—“the whole body”—that is, all the members—“the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part,”—this from the Head,

—“makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” Then do you not see that only this is organization in the church of Christ? All reorganization must come from Christ Himself, through the Spirit of God. He can do it; and only He can.

Turn also to *Colossians*, to the corresponding verse to which I call your attention in connection with this:

Colossians 2

¹⁸ Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,
¹⁹ And not holding the HEAD, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increases with the increase of God.

This says, then, that this body is built from the Head; and that those who do not hold the Head are beguiled of their reward. They humble themselves, they work, they pray, and all that; but what does it amount to? It is all simply works. And all this simply because the Head is not recognized, “not holding the Head.”

So then the body is organized from the Head. The life energy, flowing by the Spirit of God from the Head to all the members,—each member actuated from the Head, each member guided by the will that resides in the Head—that is perfection of organization.

The human body is the same; and that is the illustration which the Scripture uses for this very thing. Here is the human body—many members, but it is all one body. Each member of this body of ours which God has given us, is actuated and guided only by the head.

By the way, let me pause upon that one thought. In our bodies, which we have ever with us, and to which we were directed today,—why is it that in all this exhortation of the *Spirit of Prophecy* to reorganization, health reform comes in

every time? Today it was clearly cited:

Psalm 139

¹⁴ I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Why is this? It is because that in this organization in which we ourselves are, our bodies which God has made us, He has presented before us an everlasting illustration of the organization of the church. And it is exceeding carelessness, and from that, blindness, that cannot see the organization of the church,—what it must be,—when every day each one carries about with him, and is constantly using, this body, which is composed of many members. Every one of these members is actuated by the head, and no two of them ever come into quarrel, ever have any difference of opinion, or act in contrary ways.

You simply cannot have schism in the body which God has organized from the Head. Therefore, since God calls for reorganization, let not any soul be afraid that there is going to be confusion, or schism, or anything of the kind. There is no danger whatever—except among those who hold not the Head.

Who compose the church? Those who look to the Head; those who seek the Head; those who are joined to the Head. It is no difference how many members there may be, though we are only one on one side of the earth, and another on the other side of the earth, we two members will move together, and act together; because the Head, Christ Jesus, the Lord, is organizing both, His will actuates both, He is the One who is working in both.

Look Out Among You

Then we come to this: There must be reorganization. God calls for it. In this reorganization now, God calls for an additional thing to what He called for before, and that is a change of men. Those other men whom God calls for, and whom God will call—let me say that again, whom God will call,—these must come from this company. They must come from our-

selves, must come from the church of God somewhere. Then that throws upon you and me, upon each soul of us, the Heaven-sent responsibility that each one of us shall be reorganized from heaven by the direct power and agency of the Head.

These coming men must be chosen to places. The Scripture says, has said it all the time, “Look out among you...men.” *Acts 6:3*. In the looking out of these men, what are we to look for? How are we to look, and how are we to proceed to know the proper man to fill a certain place? We must ask God to open our eyes, and anoint our eyes with the heavenly eye-salve that we may see the men whom God has already called. That is the true way of “looking out men.”

Nothing short of that can be the looking out of men. There must be men looked out from among us. God has them. He has prepared them. They are already prepared. He has told us so. Then what we are to do is to ask that our eyes shall be opened, that God shall anoint them with the heavenly eye-salve, so that we shall be able to see and know that there is the man whom God has called to that place, to that work.

It can be so. God does not do things in a corner, or under cover, but openly before the eyes of all. All whose eyes God shall anoint and open shall be able to see.

Position Gives No Authority

This also must be considered: that position, place, never gives authority. Authority qualifies for place—when God calls the man to a place.

I will say it again; it must be a watchword for everyone in this Conference. Position never gives authority. Whomsoever God has called to be the president of the General Conference the next term—when he shall have been chosen, and shall stand before us here elected—will have no more authority than he has right now: and we do not yet know who he is.

Place, position, never bestows authority. No authority is derived from place. But authority that a man already has from God, which God has put upon him, will qualify a man for the place to which God calls him; and if he has not that authority before he enters the place, he has not the authority when he is in the place.

The view that place gives authority is precisely the principle of papal infallibility. The pope is not infallible before he is elected. Nobody claims that. He is only a cardinal before he is elected; but as soon as he is elected, then he is infallible; then he is inspired by the Holy Ghost, because he holds his place. That is the papacy.

Christianity is that God clothes men with authority: and whether they have any place or position, or not, they have authority. Look at it: Jesus Christ was in this world, truly saying,

Matthew 28

¹⁸ All power [and that is “all authority” in the Revised Version] is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

And He had no place at all. He had no position at all. The Pharisees, the priests, the scribes, the lawyers, the hypocrites, had position; they had place; and they could lord it over Him, and summon Him before them, and sit in judgment upon Him. But where was their authority? They had none: and so He told the people:

Matthew 23

² The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat:

³ All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do,

—because, as they sat in Moses’ seat, they read the words that Moses had written. All right; that is the word of God;

³ ...but do not follow after their works: for they say, and do not.

With Moses in the seat, there was authority from the seat;

but with a scribe and a Pharisee in the seat, in the place of Moses, there was no authority except from God in the word which the man happened to read, and which, because of his hypocrisy, was altogether independent of him and apart from him.

But it is said of Jesus:

Luke 4

²² [They all] wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.

And why? Oh,

Matthew 7

²⁹ He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Precisely. All that the scribes could speak was borrowed, and everybody could know that it was borrowed; for it was alone, so far as any connection that they had with it was concerned.

But when Jesus Christ spoke the same words that the Pharisees and scribes had said, everybody knew that what He said was not borrowed, but was substance; that it was of Himself: that this word lived in Him; that He Himself was but the expression of the word which He spoke; and when the word was spoken, it was with weight that impressively struck the ears, and rested upon the hearts of those who heard. It rested upon the hearts of those men with comfort, and brought them joy. And that is the grace with which God wishes to clothe everyone in this whole assembly and throughout the world.

Thus Jesus Christ had the authority. And the people knew it. And the Pharisees who did not have authority, grew so jealous of Him that they could not bear Him any longer. All the world has gone after Him, and so they must put Him out of the world to “save our place. If we do not we shall lose our place.”

John 11

⁴⁸ If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

But the man who is connected with the Head, the man who serves God, the man who lives in Jesus Christ, can never lose his place; for his place is with Jesus Christ under the wings of the Almighty, and he is safe.

The True Source of Authority

But where was Jesus' authority, when He did not have any position or any place? How could He have authority? Ah! it was where true authority always lies in the truth which He preached from God. All true and right authority of any man in the church comes to him only through the truth of God which he receives.

When we shall find a man in this world who has as much of the truth of God as had Christ, we shall have found a man who has all authority in heaven and earth, because he has all the truth in heaven and earth. The measure of truth that a man has, is the only measure of authority that he has wherever he is.

And if he is in the highest place of responsibility on this earth, and that is the presidency of the General Conference, if he has no truth, he has no authority. All the authority he can ever have in that place is simply from the truth that is in him, and which is a part of him. Therefore Jesus said:

Matthew 20

²⁵ The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

²⁶ But it shall not be so among you.

What do the princes of the world do? They exercise authority. God has never given to any man in His church authority to exercise authority. That is the difference between the

princes of the world and the princes of God; for we are princes of God.

- The princes of this world in places of authority, but without true authority, exercise authority.
- The princes of God having true authority, never exercise authority; being the authority of the truth of God, it exercises itself.

Therefore, there is no such thing as dominion among the princes of God. There is no lordship. There is none of that kingly spirit which was described to us. There are no territorial boundaries among the princes of God,—that this is “my” Conference. It is God’s Conference. It is not my territory. It is God’s.

The princes of this world who have no real authority, are they who exercise authority. The princes of God have true authority, but exercise no authority. The princes of God have authority, and that is enough to satisfy them, and God takes care of the rest, so that no one is greatest; but only one is Master, and all of us are brethren.

Then, let us see that we be organized from the Head. Let us see that our authority shall come from God; and that we never exercise authority. Yet speak with all authority, because the authority is in the truth which we speak. Only there lies our authority. Let us now read again the passage that we have studied:

Ephesians 4

⁷ But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

⁸ Wherefore He says, when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

¹¹ And He gave some apostles and some prophets, some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ;

¹³ Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowl-

edge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

¹⁴ That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

Remember that we were called today to put away childish things, to be no more children, tossed to and fro, not knowing where we are, not knowing whether we are on solid ground. God wants us to build upon the foundation, the truth, which makes men free, and which we know is the truth. Then will not we fear though the earth be moved out of her place, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.

¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ:

¹⁶ From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

What man, what set of men, can select a worker here and another there, and fitly join them together? Well has it been expressed that this work of conducting the cause of God is the most delicate in the universe, because it deals with minds. How can we fitly join together living souls in spirit, with the life of God? Only God can do that. Only Christ, the Head, can do that.

He will use us in joining us together, knitting,—not weaving, but knitting—us together. In weaving, the threads are held side by side, and across, that they shall hold; but in knitting it is only one thread, in and in, in and in, each stitch holding to all the others. That is what God proposes to do with us. We are joined—knitted—together, and compacted by that which every joint supplies, so making increase of the body the church, unto the building up of itself in love: building up itself from the Head.

That is organization. That is reorganization. Come, brethren, let us be organized; let us be reorganized.

22. Reorganization

Advent Review, May 6, 13, 20, 1902⁹

REORGANIZATION has been begun. It is going on; and we are in it. But what really is it? In what does this reorganization consist? Let us study it.

This reorganization began in the General Conference a year ago. The General Conference pushed back to the union conferences all that was possible of the work that was formerly done by the General Conference.

But it does not stop there. That is only the first step toward reorganization; for the union conferences just as truly push back to the State conferences all that can possibly be done by the State conferences.

And it does not stop there; the State conferences must push back to the churches all that can possibly be done by the churches. And it does not stop there; the churches must push back to each individual all that can possibly be done by each individual. And it does not stop there; the individual must push back to God all that can be done by God.

Self-Government

This briefly sketches the course which reorganization takes, and discovers the point at which it culminates. And the principle of reorganization is seen to be simply the principle of self-government. The General Conference used to conduct practically the whole thing. That was not self-government. Now, when that is all thrown off, and is distributed, by the steps here stated, back to the individual, and the individual alone with God, that is self-government.

And self-government is an essential of the third angel's message. It is an essential of the gospel. You cannot have the

⁹ From a talk at the recent session of the Lake Union Conference. Chicago, Ill., March 28, 1902.

gospel without it. That you may see how entirely self-government is an essential of the third angel's message, you need but to recall that instance, yes, and that illustration, in the book of *Acts*, where:

Acts 24

²⁴ When Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jew-ess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

And Paul, in presenting to him the faith in Christ,

²⁵ ...reasoned of righteousness, self-government, and judgment to come.

That word translated “temperance” is simply self-government, or self-control; and self-control is but self-government. So then, “the faith in Christ” consists of righteousness, self-government, and judgment to come. That is what it consisted of in that day.

Now it consists of a little variation—righteousness, self-government, and judgment come; for the message of the everlasting gospel now is:

Revelation 14

⁷ ...the hour of His judgment *is* come:

¹² ...here are they that keep the commandments of God [that is, righteousness], and the faith of Jesus [that is self-government].

That is exactly what Paul preached—righteousness (that is, the keeping of the commandments of God, the life of God manifested in the flesh) and self-government (that is of the faith in Christ). And Paul spoke of *judgment then to come*; now it is *judgment come*. Thus self-government is an essential of the everlasting gospel, which is the third angel's message today.

Since, then, reorganization consists of self-government, let us study that principle of self-government. Self-government is

the government of self; and there are two sides to that in this world; there are two phases in which we may look at it.

Man is in Bondage to Sin

First of all, let us ask why self needs to be governed. I think no one will have any difficulty in telling why he himself needs to be governed. And if any one should have any difficulty, the Scripture will make it clear, so that he will have no difficulty.

Jesus said:

Mark 7

²¹ From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

²² Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:

²³ All these things come from within, and defile the man.

And in the 3rd chapter of *Romans* we have the same truth somewhat more fully stated:

Romans 3

⁹ Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

¹⁰ As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

¹¹ There is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God.

¹² They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no, not one.

¹³ Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

¹⁴ Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

¹⁵ Their feet are swift to shed blood:

¹⁶ Destruction and misery are in their ways:

¹⁷ And the way of peace have they not known:

¹⁸ There is no fear of God before their eyes.

That is why it is that we, that is why it is that mankind, need to be governed; they are so bad.

But now, look at it. To talk to such a crowd as that of self-

government; to call those people, such as you and I are, to self-government,—can we call such as these really to govern themselves? How are they going to do it, when the very impulse, the very inception of all things that come forth from the heart, out of which are the issues of life itself, are evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, and so on?

I read that “they are all under sin.” All are under the dominion, the power, the rulership of sin. They are “all in subjection to sin.” And how fully this is so can be seen by:

Romans 7

²⁴ Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

Romans 6

⁶ Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.

Why is it a body of death? Because it is a body of sin. How much of me does it take to compose my body as I stand here? The whole of me, to the finger tips. Yes; that is the body. And what is it? “The body of sin.” That expression again, “They are all in subjection to sin.” *Romans* 3:9. And,

Romans 6

¹⁶ Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

We are in subjection to what? To sin. And here comes to us the call to govern ourselves! And this message, this third angel’s message, which is righteousness and self-government, in view of the judgment present, and going on day by day as we walk about,—this message is to all the world, calling upon men to govern themselves.

Then, what is the first step to self-government? To get rid of sin, that is all. This is described fully for us, you will remember, in the 7th of *Romans*:

Romans 7

¹³ Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

We are in subjection to sin, and that thing is spoken of as itself exceeding, intensely, sinful. But what is sin? The transgression of the law of God; lawlessness. Men are in subject to sin, that thing which itself is lawlessness. And that sin to which we are in subjection is declared itself to be intensely sinful.

¹⁴ We know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

¹⁵ For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

That is the experience of every man in the world, until he finds the better one.

¹⁶ If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

¹⁷ Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me.

²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

²² For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

There is the description of mankind as we are in ourselves.

Sin Must Be Destroyed

Now, is mankind governing itself?

[Voices]: “No.”

Another question: Can mankind govern itself?

[Voices]: “No.”

Why? Because mankind is already governed. Then, since mankind is already governed, and governed in the very worst possible way, let us ask the same question again, What is the first essential to self-government?

[Voices]: “Get rid of the governor that one has.”

Assuredly! He must get rid of that governor that is governing him to evil. This is stated in other words:

²⁵ With the mind I myself serve the law of God.

When the law of God is served at all, it is with the mind. But in men’s minds as they are, the law of God is not served. Then, in the mind is the seat of this whole thing—whether for right or for wrong. And,

Romans 8

⁷ The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

Then there is this other governor, this other government, this power that is governing man against his better wishes, against his better self, against his entire sense of right. This power that is governing him is a power that is not merely at enmity, but is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, and cannot be subject to the law of God. That power therefore is not self-governing.

Let me state that again: Here am I, a body of sin, governed by a power that is not subject to the law of God, and that is not self-governing. You said that the only way to reach self-governing is to get rid of that thing, get rid of that self, get rid of that power. But how can I get rid of that self and that power by myself?

[Voices]: “I can’t do it.”

What is the only way in which any human being could ever by himself become free from that thing? There is a way, and I

want you to see it.

[Voice]: "He must die."

Precisely! Here is a call for us to govern ourselves, and we are governed by this power of lawlessness. The first thing for us to do is to get rid of that power. How can we ever by ourselves get away from that power? It is the power of sin, and has overwhelmed the whole man.

Do you not see that the only possible way for me, solely by myself, to get away from that thing is to get out of existence? for my existence is that. The body is the body of what? Sin. And out of the heart, where the real man lives, all these wicked things come that defile the man. The man is made up of that, and the only possible way for the man ever to get away from it is to get out of existence.

I want you to see what is involved in self-government, brethren. When you see what is involved in that, then you will understand what reorganization means. Then it is certainly true that out of existence is the only way that a man can, solely by himself, ever get away from that power. But God does not want the man to get entirely out of existence; God wants us still to exist. But there is no way for the man by himself to go out of existence and still exist.

Out of existence is annihilation; and that is the only end to that system of things; and yet that is the only way to self-government. And we are called to self-government. Now, let me ask you, Shall we go back, retrace our steps from the point which we have reached, or shall we go on?

[Voices]: "Go on."

Then shall we say that annihilation of self is the only way to self-government?

[Voices]: "Yes!"

How many of you say Yes?

[Voices]: “Amen!”

Good! We are well on the right way, then. Now, brethren, that is true. Never compromise on that a hairbreadth, and never dodge it. Stand right there—that annihilation of self is the only way to self-government for men in this world. And when you wed yourselves to that, you will never flinch, nor complain, nor gall under anything that tends to annihilate self.

[Voice]: “Are you going to tell us how to annihilate self, and we still survive?”

We are coming to how that is done. Now, note: We have found that self of itself cannot do that, because we ourselves are finite. A finite person cannot undo himself and yet remain. For a finite one to annihilate self is only complete undoing forever. But there is a way to do it and survive.

Think! In the nature of things we are compelled to look back of ourselves, and beyond ourselves, to find that power that is governing us for the bad. Is not that so?

[Voice]: “Yes.”

For we have found that we are obliged, by sin that dwells in us, to do the thing that we hate, to go against our true wishes. We are held in captivity to that which we hate.

The Power of God is Needed

Since we each are drawn by our own heart’s experience beyond ourselves, to find the power that is governing us against ourselves, then is it not only the plainest A B C of common sense that we should be willing to be drawn beyond ourselves to find the power that will enable us to govern ourselves; and that will govern ourselves?

We have found that this wicked power that rules us is anar-

chy, sin. But is sin a personality? Is sin itself a person? No; sin comes from a person. The thing does not end at sin itself. It goes a step further back to him—not to it—by whom sin came. We all know who that is. Then, in searching for the source of the power by which men are held and ruled to lawlessness, we are drawn directly beyond ourselves to the originator of sin, who is Satan. And upon that I say that it is only the plainest A B C of common sense, that men should be willing to be drawn beyond themselves in search of the power that will govern themselves in righteousness.

And since in the search for the power that rules men to lawlessness, we are brought not merely to power in the abstract, but to power in a person; so in the search for power that will rule man to righteousness, we are also brought not merely to power in the abstract, but power in a Person; in a Person who is the origin of righteousness. And that Person is—let us all say it together—God in Jesus Christ.

The only way, then, to self-government is to reach beyond ourselves toward righteousness, to find the power of righteousness reigning in us, to govern ourselves and hold us in the way of righteousness. And that leads inevitably to a Person who is the source of righteousness, and that is God. Then where alone does self-government lie? In God, in Jesus Christ. Now, do not forget that. It is literally true. Self-government for man lies alone in God, as man, in Jesus Christ in the flesh.

Therefore, self-government is not simply a divine principle. It is that, and it is more than that; it is a divine attribute. As certainly then as ever you or I, or any other man under heaven or in heaven, shall ever attain to self-government, it must be by being a partaker of the divine nature; that there shall abide in us the divine attribute of self-government from divinity himself. There are no two ways about that; and there is no stopping short of it.

You can see that by a thought. Who alone in this universe

has the power, of himself, perfectly to govern himself, without any reference to any other person or thing? Only God. Then do you not see that it is settled and manifested to the whole universe, both in principle and in practice, that there is nobody in this universe who is of himself capable of perfectly governing himself—nobody but God? Then do you not see that truly self-government is a divine attribute, not simply a principle? It is divinity itself. And the only way that you and I can expect self-government, unto which by the third angel's message we are called, is by constantly partaking of the divine nature, by having God manifest in our flesh.

Reorganization, we have found, pushes back power from the General Conference to the union conferences, and does not stop at the union conferences, nor at the State conferences, nor at the churches, nor at the individual; it stops only at God and in God. And that is where it belongs.

Then you can see that, in a word, reorganization in the cause of God, in the third angel's message, means that God alone shall be all and in all to every soul that has named the name of Christ. And so it is written:

1 Corinthians 11

³ I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ;...and the head of Christ is God.

The Purpose of Man

Now let us look at self-government from the other side. Let us begin with the beginning, with man with God, and look at it from that side. God made the man, and put him in the garden—not to manage himself, nor to run things himself, apart from God; for we read,

Isaiah 43

⁷ I have created him for my glory.

John 16

¹⁴ He shall glorify me.

Man is created to glorify God. Now what is it to glorify God? Jesus has defined that thing, and made it perfectly plain:

John 16

¹³ When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself,

—not that He shall not talk about Himself, but He shall not set Himself forth and speak from Himself apart from God,

¹³ ...but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come.

¹⁴ He shall glorify me.

The Holy Spirit is sent into the world to glorify Christ. In whatever way it is that the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ, in that we have the illustration and the example of how we are to glorify God. There is given the divine example as to how to glorify God. He tells us:

¹⁴ He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.

¹⁵ All things that the Father has are mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.

Then the Holy Spirit receives that which is Christ's, shows it to us, causes us to see Christ. And what also is in that? The Father. Then the Holy Spirit is sent into this world to glorify God in Jesus Christ—and so are you and I. We are sent to glorify God; we are created to glorify God.

Then as certainly as the Holy Spirit glorifies God in Christ by taking the things that are God's in Christ and causing us to see them, so man, created to glorify God, was created to receive the things of God, and cause all others to see them. Then man was made to make God manifest. And this was to be, and is to be, at the man's own choice.

The Secret of Self-Government

Here comes in now the secret of self-government in himself.

When God made the man, He put him in the garden of Eden, and put there all the trees pleasing to the eye and good for food, and also the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And the man had perfect free access to all. Man had just as free access to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as to any other tree in the garden.

The Lord told him not to eat of it, that is true; but He did not set a fence around it, He did not shut it away from the man. Then when God fixed things that way, and made the man to glorify God, to have God appear in the man, is it not plain that He made the man to have God appear, at the man's own choice?

Man was left perfectly free to choose God's way, and to have God appear in him; or to refuse God's way, and choose another way. Then where does self-government lie? In the choice. Do not forget that. The principle, the idea, of self-government lies in the freedom of choice. The power of self-government lies in God in Jesus Christ.

As to who shall govern him depends upon the man's choice, whether it shall be the power of sin, which is the annihilation of all government, or whether it shall be the power of righteousness, which is the essence of all government. Whether it shall be self-government or annihilation for man depends upon the power with which the man allies himself by his choice.

The Origin of the Carnal Mind

A little further: the man was made to stand with God, and to govern himself by the power of God, at his own choice. And the man was just as free to choose some other governor, and to attempt to govern himself in some other way. And he did choose the other way. Yet when he chose that other way, it was Satan's way that the man chose.

Adam did choose that other way. The choice was his, but

the way was Satan's. He chose the way of Satan; he accepted the word of Satan. In accepting that word of Satan's,—words express thoughts,—he accepted the thought of Satan. That thought was an expression of the mind which produced the thought.

When Adam accepted that thought, he partook of the mind which produced the thought that was expressed in the word that he accepted. And that word, that thought, that mind, was Satan's. And that is how it is that the natural mind, the carnal mind, is:

Romans 8

⁷ ...enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

And that is why it is that even God cannot make that mind subject to His law. It is Satan's mind, and that mind is confirmed, and absolutely hardened against God, in the way of sin and self.

Was not Satan invited to return from his wrong course? He refused; and when he refused, he simply, with those who chose with him to refuse, confirmed himself in a darkness of sin that is simply impenetrable. There is no ray of light from God that can ever penetrate the realm of sin where Satan and his angels have chosen to abide.

That being so, you see that the natural mind is the very mind of Satan, which has confirmed itself against God, against all government, against all righteousness, and abides in the confirmed enmity against God which Lucifer and his company chose for themselves. That is why it is that this mind cannot be subject to the law of God.

Then that being so, what is essential in order that we shall become ourselves subject to the law of God? Another mind. But in order to have another mind, which is subject to the law of God, what is essential as to this mind that is enmity against

God, which is not subject to the law of God, and cannot be subject to the law of God? Nothing short of annihilation.

God's Government is Freedom

In reading of this false government, which is anarchy, we read two or three expressions which show us that we are enslaved, enslaved to sin, and in captivity to the law of sin. There is the difference: God's service, God's government, is absolute freedom; the other government, which is anarchy, is absolute slavery.

God made the man to choose. He made the man to be happy with God and in God, at the man's own choice alone. Now in order for that to be, in order for you and me to be happy all the time, even with God, we must be free to choose all the time to be happy with God. Then it comes to this, that God will not hold you and me this minute to the choice which we made the previous minute to serve Him. You and I choose this minute to serve God. We are just as free the next minute to choose not to serve Him. And when we, being free that next minute to choose not to serve God, instead of choosing not to serve Him, just as freely of our own choice choose to serve God, and we do that each moment, moment by moment as the breath we take,—that is freedom. That is perfect freedom.

Then also you see that the man who lives that way can always do just what he pleases. He is perfectly free to do just as he pleases; and the only thing that pleases him, the only thing with which he is or can be at all pleased, is the service of God. And he chooses that, just as he gathers his breath, just as gladly as he gathers his breath, just as he takes in the air by which he is surrounded. Just as he takes that into his lungs, so gladly he gathers up his choice, and throws it on the side of God. That is perfect freedom.

[Question]: "Why should he not be free from the consciousness and the fact of sin?"

Thank God, he should be free from it. There is no reason why he should not be.

Romans 8

¹ There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

That is, free from sin and sinning. That is God, and that is God's way, the way of perfect freedom. Now the Lord will not take even His way with us, without our choice. And Satan cannot take his way with us without our choice. But when a man has once chosen,—there is the mischief with him,—he will hold him, he will hold the soul in bondage to that choice forever; and nothing but the power of God can ever break off the bondage that Satan puts upon a soul by means of that one single choice.

Satan cannot do anything with you and me without our choice, and he will spend a lifetime to get you and me to choose only once. That is all he wants. And when you and I have chosen the things of Satan only once, then he puts on the clamps; he binds about and confirms that bondage, that slavery, which we have chosen, and of his own will he will never let up nor loosen that power, to all eternity.

But, thank the Lord, there is One who has come in, who can break off that cruel power of sin and Satan, and who will say to all around, Loose this soul, and let him go—as He did of Lazarus, who was bound hand and foot. Think of it. The record is not read closely many times.

Lazarus was there in the grave. They rolled away the stone. Then Jesus said,

John 11

⁴³ Lazarus, come forth.

And the record is, Lazarus came forth, “bound hand and foot” with the graveclothes. And after Lazarus had come forth,—I do not know how, we cannot tell how, except that it was by the power of God, we know that much,—when Lazarus had come forth by the power of God, “bound hand and foot” with the graveclothes, then it was that Jesus said,

⁴⁴ Loose him, and let him go.

And that is the very power that goes with you and me in the preaching of this gospel of reorganization, which is the gospel of Jesus Christ, the third angel’s message.

To any soul in this world, bound hand and foot with the bondage and the ligaments of Satan all round about, there is a power that goes with you and me, a power which by the gospel of Jesus Christ is given to you and me, to say to that man, “Come forth,” and he will come forth. Though bound hand and foot, he will come forth, for that power of the gospel can cause him to come forth.

And then that same blessed word which brings the power can say to all, to Satan with all his crowd, “Loose him, and let him go.” And there he stands a new man, loosed from his bonds, and free in God through Christ Jesus our Lord. That is self-government, thank the Lord.

The Mind of Jesus Christ

Now one more thing that goes with that. I want you to see how it all comes. Jesus Christ bought this right to loose men from the power of Satan. He put Himself where we are, just as we are, and by human experience—divine-human, of course—He worked it out, and in that way He bought the right. He Himself became subject to all that flesh is heir to. God made Him to be sin.

In all things like as we are, He met this governor, this anarchist, in his own territory, on his own ground, and put Himself, finally, dead, into the power of him that had the power of

death itself. And being there, dead, He broke the power of him that had the power of death. And when He, dead, can break the power of him who had the power of death, what can He not do since He is alive forevermore?

The mind that men naturally have, the carnal, which is not subject to the law of God, is the mind of Satan. You said that this mind has to be annihilated before we can be brought into right relation to God, and stand subject to the law of God. All right, then. Here is the word that says it:

Philippians 2

⁵ Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus;

⁶ Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery [a thing to be seized upon, and held fast] to be equal with God;

⁷ But made Himself of no reputation [“emptied Himself,” Revised Version; “annihilated Himself,” the French Version].

And that is precisely correct. He emptied Himself, He annihilated Himself,

⁷ ...and took upon Him the form of a servant,...

⁸ And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Then you see the only way to self-government is annihilation of self. Jesus Christ set the example; He showed the way. Divinity can empty self, and still abide. Divinity can do it; infinity can do it; the finite cannot do it. We cannot comprehend it, because we are finite; but the Infinite can comprehend it, and can accomplish it. Yea, He has accomplished it.

Well then, let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who annihilated Himself. Then what does that say to you and me? Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus, who annihilated Himself. Very good.

And when He emptied Himself, when He annihilated Himself, who appeared? God—man on one side, and God on the

other side, in the man. Then when you and I today choose the mind of Jesus Christ, which annihilates self, who will appear? God, God manifest in the flesh—God on the one side, and the man, clothed and in his right mind, on the other side; and these two, God and the man, made one in Christ Jesus the Lord. As it is written:

Ephesians 2

¹⁴ He is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition,...

¹⁵ Having abolished [annihilated] in His flesh the enmity,...for to make in Himself of twain [God and man] one new man, so making peace.

Glory to God: that is true, and that is the only true self-government; and this is the only way to it. God on the one side, and a man on the other, made one in Christ Jesus,—that is the ideal man, the divine-ideal man, the man of God, the God-man. This is accomplished through letting in the mind that is in Christ, which empties, annihilates self.

When that mind is in us, self is emptied, self is annihilated, and the man, the true man, whom God created and set in this world to be better than he has always been, to be the expression of the mind of God,—that true man will appear.

In man there is a true self, and there is the false self. The true self always empties self; the false self always exalts self. Think! when the prodigal son was off there herding the swine, and was so hungry that he was willing to pick up the husks from which the swine had sucked the juice, and see if he could not wring out some more, he “came to himself.” Aha! The divine word is,

Luke 15

¹⁷ He came to himself.

Always there is the true man in a man. There is a true self in a man,—the personality, the individuality, that God has created every man to be, to glorify Him; for every soul that ever

came into this world is in the design of God. And the divine destiny that God has set for every soul that ever comes into this universe, is that he shall be conformed to the image of God's Son.

There is a divine design in and for each soul. And in that lies man's better self, the true self. But this other, the false, the selfish self, has taken the precedence. This other, the false, the selfish self, which is of Satan, has usurped the throne in man, and is reigning there against the man's better self always, compelling the better self to drag along in the bondage and slavery of the evil self.

But, thank the Lord, men can be brought to the point where they will come to themselves, to their real, their better selves. Do not forget that when that man, sitting there watching the swine, "came to himself," the first thing that he said was,

Luke 15

¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father.

Do not forget that the Father is the One whom the true man, that better self in man, will always recognize instantly as soon as ever he awakes, and opens his eyes, and comes "to himself." So God sends you and me with the message of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ to bring men to themselves.

And in the doing of this, by whatever means of ministration it may be that we can bring a man face to face with himself, and get him to come to himself,—Oh, we can always be sure that when that blessed moment comes, there is in his heart that blessed word,

"I will arise and go to my Father."

So then, let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who is the manifestation of that true self that annihilates that other selfish self.

Selfishness Brings Self-Destruction

Now I want you to see the end of all this: that annihilation is what must come anyway for that which is evil. As we were studying a while ago that subject of this so-called government which is not government at all, but only lawlessness, one brother spoke of it as anarchy. There is much professional anarchy abroad nowadays. Men are boasting of anarchy. What is it? Opposition to government; destruction of government. And so they start out to destroy government by killing the man in position, the president, or the king, or whoever he may be. But all nations have made provision for another one to take the position of ruler as soon as one ruler has passed away.

Well; then, this man starting out to destroy government, begins by killing the head man of the government. Another one instantly succeeds, and there is government still. Then the anarchist must kill him. But another one instantly succeeds. Where will it stop? He must kill the whole of mankind. Then he himself is left. Here he is, himself, alone. And he is opposed to government. Then, in order to be logical, he must repudiate government of himself; and to carry out his “principle” he must destroy himself. And he is the last one. He destroys himself. And that is annihilation.

And that is what anarchy means. And that is just what opposition to government means. And by this it is perfectly plain that opposition to government is simply, and in the last analysis, opposition to self-government. And so the whole story is simply self-government or annihilation. And that is the story for the whole universe. I want you to see that.

Look: go back to the beginning. It was Lucifer who started this scheme of government by himself, without God. Just think of this. Lucifer started on that track. What he intended is shown on the cross; for on the cross it was demonstrated that in his purpose in the beginning there was wrapped up

the thought that he must be in the place of God, with God out of existence. We all know that he wanted to be like the Most High.

Isaiah 14

¹³ I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north;

¹⁴ ...I will be like the Most High.

But he intended to be like the Most High, not by sitting there alongside of the Most High; but he would be like the Most High, in the place of the Most High. And it was not intended either that the Most High should step down and occupy an inferior place; but that the Most High should simply be set aside utterly, be put out of existence. The cross of Christ demonstrates this; for this is what Satan did on the cross. Thus the cross was in the depths of eternity, as well as on Calvary.

Now, suppose that Lucifer had had his way yonder in the beginning of this course of his. Conceive God out of existence, and Lucifer reigning supreme in the place of God. How would he exist? He is not self-existent; he argues it, of course; but it is not so. God is the sole source of his existence. Then when he had put God out of existence to exalt himself, he would have simply put himself out of existence. And that would have been annihilation, the annihilation of the universe.

Then don't you see that self—the self that chooses self and exalts self—means nothing at all but annihilation? Then the question is, for you and me and everybody else in this world, Shall we choose that self shall be annihilated, and we find our true selves, and our true place, and true self-government, in God? or shall we refuse to have self-annihilated and then be ourselves annihilated? Which shall we choose?

Since we are wrapped up in evil, it is annihilation anyhow. If we do not choose it, we get it anyway. Ah, it is more than that; if we do not choose annihilation of self, we do choose

annihilation of ourselves; for not to choose, is to choose. No man can get away from choice as long as his intelligence abides. And to refuse to choose is to choose to refuse to choose; and that is to choose. You see you cannot escape it. Then here we are.

Choose You Today

What is your choice—self annihilation, or annihilation of self? That is the thing. Ah, we know the way:

“Let this mind be in you that was in Christ, who annihilated Himself, and took upon him the form of a servant.”

And do not forget that this is in it, brethren. Today as you and I choose the mind of Christ that annihilates self, bear in mind that each of us takes upon him “the form of a servant.”

Let us thus humble ourselves, become obedient unto death, the death of Christ (*Philippians* 2:8); crucified with Christ, nevertheless living, yet not we, but Christ living in us, and the life which we now live, live by the faith of Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us. *Galatians* 2:20.

He upon the throne, He in His rightful place, we in our right mind, come to our right self, choosing that the rightful One shall be upon His throne, and be the governor in our government, at our own free choice, constantly, freely chosen,—that is self-government, self-government with God—the choice ours, the power His; and the only governor, God, all and in all everywhere and forever.

23. What does it Mean to be a Church Member?

General Conference Bulletin Articles, March 29, 1903

Ephesians 5

²⁵ Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it,

²⁶ That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word,

²⁷ That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

THAT, as says the Word, is the church that Christ will present to Himself when He comes. He loved that church, the church, and gave Himself for it; and whosoever will be of that church when it shall be the glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, must love the church, and give himself for it.

Loving the Church as Christ Loved It

That is the church by whom God will give His last message to this world “in this generation.” But He cannot have that church by whom He can give that message, until He shall find a people who will love the church and give themselves for it.

This is in the philosophy of things, as well; for it is written:

Philippians 2

⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.

And when that mind in Him led Him to love the church, and to give Himself for it, what will that mind do in any other person? I need dwell no longer upon that.

The church is the body of Christ in the world. It is Christ manifested in the world; it is Christ Himself incarnate in the world. And that church, being His body, being Himself manifested, to love that church and give myself for it, is nothing

less, and cannot be anything more, than to love Him and give myself for Him.

We Join the Church by Joining Christ

Membership in that church then, comes not by belonging to the church in order to belong to Christ, but by belonging to Christ in order to belong to the church. And the difference between these two things is the difference between Christianity and the mystery of iniquity. The difference between these two things is the difference between the mystery of God and the mystery of iniquity.

The mystery of iniquity exalts the form, the name, the idea, of the church, and then calls, and sweeps, and forces, all the world into that church, in order that it may be what the mystery of iniquity designs,—not for salvation, for salvation is not in it; not for righteousness, for righteousness is not in it. The people are the same as before, though they bear a different name. They conform to different forms of things than they did before; but in character, in life, in all that they ever were, they are the same as though they were not members of the church at all.

But the church, the church of Christ, is Himself manifested. Therefore to belong to this church we must belong first to Him. And membership in this church depends altogether upon our membership of Him. And being in this church depends altogether upon our being in Him. Then when we come into the church by coming into Him, and be in the church by being in Him, that makes a new people. That changes the individual into another man. That makes him a Christian, such as is Christ, Christ manifest.

Then we need to consider ourselves daily, each one for himself, and ask:

“Am I a member of the church?”

Not because I am enrolled on the books of the church. Not, Am I a member of the church because I have joined the church, and that is my dependence? But:

“Am I a member of the church because my name is in the book of life?”

“Am I a member of the church because I have given myself to Christ, and belong to Him, and live and move and have my being in Him?”

Such as these are the only members of the church that there are on this earth. It matters not how much we have our names on the church book, nor how long we have been members of the church by joining what is an idea of the church in form, a collection of individuals. It matters not how much we do that, nor how long it be done, we will never be members of the church that way.

And though it should be that opportunity or circumstances prevent your name from being on any book on earth, or in any collection of individuals on the earth, yet if you are joined to Him, and live in Him, you are a member of the church, though you be the only soul on earth. That is the only true membership of the church of Christ, and that is the only way to membership in the church of Christ.

Loving the Church, and Giving Ourselves to It

Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it, in order that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word; in order that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. *Ephesians* 5:26-27.

Therefore this same mind must be in every one, in order that we should be Christians. The only thing for us to do is to love the church, and give ourselves for it, that we may be sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the

Word, that we may be presented to Him, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. We are familiar with the thought that Christ “loved me, and gave Himself for me.” *Galatians 2:20*. And we read in that, with other Scriptures to the same purpose, that, in loving me, and giving Himself for me, He loved me and gave Himself to me.

It is the same with the church. He loved the church, and gave Himself for the church; and in loving the church, and giving Himself for the church, He has loved the church, and given Himself to the church. Then when I from Him, with His mind, and by Him, love the church, and give myself for it, I love the church, and give myself to it, so that I literally belong to the church.

A few words upon that. It is a common expression:

“Such and such person belongs to the church.”

“I belong to the church.”

The question for us to ask nowadays is,

“Do I belong to the church, or do I belong to the world?”

“Do I belong to myself or to the world; or am I possessed, owned, and held by the church, so that I literally belong to the church?”

“Have I surrendered myself to the church? to Christ?”

Not Numbers, But Real Membership

That is the kind of church that Christ left when He went away, or at least, that He had in a few days afterward, when He bestowed the Holy Spirit. That is the kind of church, in other words, that He sent into the world to begin His great work on the earth. And that church of that kind, few in numbers, reached the world with Christ’s message in that generation, that was half gone when they began.

It is not a question of numbers, nor of the size of the world, nor anything of that kind that is for us to consider today in giving this message to the world. The one thing for us to consider is,

“Do the Seventh-day Adventists all belong to the church?”

That one question settled, with the seventy-five thousand Seventh-day Adventists today, that these seventy-five thousand, each, individually, for himself, belongs to the church,—the easiest problem that could ever occur on the earth would be to give the third angel’s message in this generation.

There were one hundred and twenty Christians to begin with that day when Pentecost fell. There are now enrolled not less than 75,000 Seventh-day Adventists. The world is not as much bigger today than it was when the apostles began from Pentecost, as the numbers of Seventh-day Adventists are more than the number then.

Then when that little company could preach the gospel to the world so that the Scripture could say “to every creature under heaven” (*Colossians* 1:23), in the generation that was then half gone, because they belonged to the church, so today, it is perfectly easy for this number to reach the world in the rest of this generation, if only we shall all belong to the church.

Am I Giving All of Myself to the Church?

There is abundant means. Seventh-day Adventists have plenty of money, but it does not all belong to the church. That is the trouble. There is enough money among Seventh-day Adventists today to give an impetus to this message that would reach the world in the rest of this generation, if only that money can belong to the church. There are enough facilities, there is enough talent, there is enough ability, all the supplies that are ever needed, or ever shall be needed, if only those facilities, this talent, those faculties, shall belong to the

church.

And it is a question worth asking,

“If my money belongs to the world, do I belong to the church?”

If my talents, my abilities are put into the work of the world, as of the world, and not into the work of the church, as of the church, then the question is worth considering,

“Do I belong to the church myself?”

That turns our attention to the question, How much does it take to compose me? How much is there of a man? Could you have a man here, and his faculties yonder, his abilities in another place, and the fruit of his faculty, the fruit of his abilities, the results of his life and endeavor, in yet another place? Could that be, and the man be here,—all of him? No, sir. All my faculties, all the fruit of my life, must be where I am, if I myself am to be there. We cannot escape that. Then do I belong to the church? Do I? That is the question. Do these 75,000 Seventh-day Adventists belong to the church? Do we? That is the question.

To illustrate: Suppose that I have my name on the church book, belonging to the church. I am a school-teacher, and I spend all my time, all my endeavor, all my ability, and all my faculty as a school-teacher in the world's school-teaching; and, teaching in the world's school, in the world's way, in the world's education, it is worth asking,

“Do I belong to the church?”

“Am I loving the church and giving myself for it?”

Whatever I may profess, my faculties, my life, what I am in the ability which God has given me, I am giving it to the world, for the world's work, and to the world's purposes. That is so. Then am I loving the church and giving myself for it?

Do I belong to the church?

Suppose I am a physician, and I give my ability, my talent, my faculties, my life, and my endeavor to the world's way of what is called medicine, the world's way of treating disease. I stand as a member of the church, as belonging to the church, and I am to be sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the Word of God. And in that Word of God there is given to the church the divine, the true system of medical treatment, the true philosophy and treatments with regard to health, disease, right living, and all these things.

I belong to the church to be sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by that Word. Instead of doing what that Word gives to me, to which I am committed as belonging to the church, I take what the world gives, and devote to the world that which I get from the world, and I belong to the church. Do I?

I belong to the church for the purpose of being sanctified and cleansed with the washing of water by the Word of God to the church. There is in that Word, and that Word itself is, a system of education. That is the true and is the only true education. I say I belong to the church, but I am satisfied with the world's education, with the world's system of education, with the world's philosophy of education, and I devote my life to that. I want to know, Do I really belong to the church? It is precisely so also as to medical or any other profession.

I am a man of other affairs in the world, whether it be business, or farming, or carpenter work; I mean the everyday, commercial, business world. I stand as belonging to the church, and in the efforts which I put forth of thought, or endeavor, the blessing of God upon it all, increase comes. I put it in the worldly bank, I am not a speculator: I belong to the church. But here is the means God has given to me as a member of the church, and I put it into the worldly bank; I loan it to worldly men to be used in worldly business, instead of in

the work of the church, to which I belong. Then it is a fair question for me to ask, Do I belong to the church?

These references are enough to illustrate. And now there is not one here of these delegates who cannot look all over this land and see thousands upon thousands of Seventh-day Adventists who stand in a position as belonging to the church, which leaves a wide-open question for each one to ask,

“Do I belong to the church?”

And everyone here knows that if all the Seventh-day Adventists in the United States, from this day and forward, would really belong to the church, you yourself will confess that there is no question at all but that this message could be given to the world in this generation. You can all say amen to that. You know that it is so. Then you see, brethren, the problem is not difficult. It is just this question to be decided, by each one, for himself:

“Do I belong to the church?”

And now shall not I, finding myself, my faculties, or my means wrapped up in the work of the world, used in behalf of the world, or engaged in the world’s work,—shall not I, will not you, whirl it away from there, and put it into the church’s work, enlist it in the cause of the church in the earth, to which you belong?

A Full Consecration

Let that be done, and you know that spiritually it would shake this world out of its place. Think of it! If all the Seventh-day Adventists in the United States would really consider this, and love the church, give themselves, with their children, for the church, and to the church, how would our school work stand? It would stand where it ought. And such consecration as that would bring such power from heaven that the teaching would be easy. The lack of teachers would not be such as it is

now.

And so, with all the rest, if all the Seventh-day Adventists in the land would turn their families unto Christian education, unto the education that becomes the church, and that the world is calling for the church to give, and for the want of which, and because of the lack of which, the world itself is saying that the church in education is a distinctly diminishing quantity,—if this were done, the world could easily be reached in this generation.

It is time that there should be one church in the world that would arise and be, not a diminishing quantity in education, but be the whole thing in education. If the Seventh-day Adventists would really give themselves to the church, loving it, and giving themselves for it, with all their talents, and all their means, and all their powers, then the whole problem would be solved. The world's facilities are abundant.

In Brother Daniell's discourse last night that was presented to us all, Brother Conradi today showed how the fields are open and all ready unto the harvest. The prophecies, so abundant, showing that now is the time, have been presented.

Oh, let this people present ourselves to Christ today, loving the church and giving ourselves for it! Let this people, I say, present ourselves to Christ as His church, to love that church, to give ourselves for it, and to give ourselves to it, with all our effort and all the fruit of our effort of whatsoever kind. Then, oh, it will be as it was before; this will be a holy church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

The Church is the Pillar of Truth in the World

The church is the pillar and the ground, the support and the stay, of the truth in the world. The only means by which this world can ever obtain truth is by the church.

It may be that the church, like the church of Israel and Judah, will not of itself voluntarily spread that truth abroad to

the world. The people may, like Israel and Judah, shut themselves within themselves, and turn the truth of God away, put other things in its place, and shut themselves away from the world, and thus fail to give it to the world.

But if that must be so, then that church will be scattered, as was Israel and as was Judah, among the nations of the heathen; and there in oppression and in bondage, the nations will find the truth through the church.

So, whichever way it may be, the only way that the nations can get the truth is from the church. The only way that God's truth can reach the nations is through the church; therefore this is how it is that the church of Christ, which is the body of Christ, is the pillar and the ground, the support and the stay, of the truth in the world. It is that which keeps alive the truth in the earth.

How, then, can the world obtain the truth from me, as of the church, when all my efforts are enlisted and spent in the world's occupation and in the world's philosophy of occupation? Can that be done? No, sir. The world cannot see the church in me in that condition of things. In order for the truth to reach the world by me, who am of the church, it is essential that I shall do the work as the work of the church.

If I am a farmer, I farm as of the church. If I am a teacher, I am a teacher as of the church, a representative of the church, and I do my work as the work of the church. Therefore this calls that every one of us who professes to belong to the church, shall so really belong to the church that everything in our lives, in our actions, everything that comes into the course of our lives, shall be distinctly of the church, shall relate to the church, and we will hold it up to the glory of God as of the church.

Then, oh, then, that church will be so filled with the truth, and will be so sanctified by the truth with which she is filled, that the glory of God which is in that truth will shine forth,

and the world will see her, that glorious church. The glory of the Lord shall be seen upon you, and the word will be fulfilled that she shall arise and shine, for her light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon her. *Isaiah* 60:1-3. You know that it is so.

Finishing the Mystery of God

Now, all this is only to have said, in other words, that in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as He has declared to His servants the prophets. That mystery of God finished is the gospel preached to all the world, that the end may come. That mystery of God finished in the world is the work of God finished in preaching the gospel to the nations.

And it is more than that, along with that. The mystery of God is God manifest in the flesh. The finished mystery of God is the completion, the perfection, of the manifestation of God in the flesh, in the believers in Jesus who belong to the church.

Thus there are two places occupied in the finishing of the mystery of God. One place is the world itself, to which the gospel is to be preached; the other place is the lives of the believers of the truth.

We might preach and proclaim in words to the ends of the earth, to every soul on earth in our generation, so that phase of the work would be completed, and would be finished; yet if the manifestation of God in the lives of those who preach that is not completed also, we could preach that thing ten thousand years, and the end would never come.

It is not simply that the gospel shall be preached to all the world, and fill all the world; but it is that when that is done, there shall be a people ready to meet Him at the end. Without the finishing of that manifestation of God in the flesh of each believer, there can be no finishing of the mystery of God.

That mystery finished, God manifest in the flesh,—mark it,—means that only God is to be seen in every act of life of the believer; so that in his life God is manifest. Only that is the finishing of the mystery of God, in the way that it counts. And you know that if that way were open, and God were to take possession and fill the lives of the 75,000 professed believers today, it would be the easiest thing in the world to reach all the nations, so that the end should come.

Again: You know that the mystery of God is:

Colossians 1

²⁷ ...Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Then the finished mystery of God is the finishing of the growth, the manifestation of Christ in the believers, so that we shall stand in this world in the image of Jesus Christ, reflecting only Him, that when the believers shall be seen, only Christ will be seen. Everything that is said, everything that is done, every tone of the voice, all that we are, will tell only of Christ. Only that is the finishing of the mystery of God in truth, in the way that it counts. And that is what has to come, before the end can come. That is the church that He presents to Himself.

But more; the gift of the grace of God and of His Spirit is to the church,

Ephesians 4

¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building of the body of Christ, [the building up of the church, till we all come, do not forget it,]

¹³ Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

—that we shall stand in this world as Christ stood when He was here. Only that is the finishing of the mystery of God.

But this is not difficult. It need not take long, because Chris-

tianity is creation, not evolution,—Christianity is creation, not evolution. God speaks, and it is so. It takes not a long series of ages to develop, to evolve. No.

Ephesians 2

¹⁰ We are His workmanship, created in Christ unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

All that is needed is surrender. All that is needed to put this denomination, this whole collection of people, so *into the church*, and to make us so *of the church* that the work shall be finished in this generation, is unconditional surrender to Jesus Christ, and that surrender everlastingly maintained.

The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

And this finishing of the mystery of God is only, in another way, the story of the cleansing of the sanctuary. When the angel talked on the subject of the twenty-three hundred days, he did it differently from the way that I used to present it, and from the way that I have heard many others talk. When the angel of God came to talk to Daniel on the subject of the two thousand and three hundred days, he began thus:

Daniel 9

²⁴ Seventy weeks are determined upon your people and upon your holy city.

They will begin at the...

²⁵ ...going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem,

and will continue...

²⁵ ...sixty-nine weeks, unto the Messiah the Prince;

—and then, after that, eighteen hundred and ten and one-half years, which will bring it to 1844, and then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. That is in it, but that is not the angel's sermon here.

Listen: This is what the angel said, and this is what he preached in the twenty-three hundred days:

Daniel 9

24 Seventy weeks are determined upon your people and upon your holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.

Any preaching of the sanctuary, any study of the sanctuary, any proclamation of the sanctuary,

- that does not preach and proclaim the finishing of transgression in the life of him who preaches it;
- that does not mean, and manifest itself in, the making an end of sins in his life;
- that does not include the making reconciliation of iniquity in him who gives the message;
- that does not bring everlasting righteousness into the life of him who is preaching;

—is not preaching the message of the cleansing of the sanctuary at all. The messenger leaves out the very thing that the angel of God, in presenting it, makes the substance of the whole story.

Yet brethren are in this audience today who know of men who could run the gamut of the twenty-three hundred days, giving by rote every chapter and every verse, yet who did not know in their lives the finishing of transgression, that did not know the making an end of their sins, who knew no reconciliation for their own iniquity, and had no everlasting righteousness brought in to keep them back from sinning. You know that that is so.

Then that kind of preaching of the sanctuary and of its cleansing will never bring the cleansing of the sanctuary, and will never bring us to the end. No, sir.

There is a cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven. That is true. And while that is going on in heaven, and there is the making an end of sins there, and a reconciliation of iniquity there, and finishing of transgression there, and all that, yet if that is not also done in the saints and believers on the earth, then that cleansing of the sanctuary can never end. We never could, in that case, come to the end of this world.

So the cleansing of the church of the saints on earth must keep equal pace, must be exactly in proportion with the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven, or that church will not be up to date.

Now let me put it the other way; Though I preach the finishing of transgression in the lives of individuals; and though I preach the making an end of sins, and the making of reconciliation for iniquity, and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness, in the life of the individual; and yet do not preach with it the sanctuary and its cleansing, that is not the third angel's message. That great day cannot come till the sanctuary is cleansed.

But the sanctuary cannot be cleansed until transgression is finished in your life and mine; till an end of sins is made in your life and mine; and reconciliation made for the sins that have been committed; and then, oh, then, in place of it all, everlasting righteousness brought in, to hold us steady in the path of righteousness.

You know what difficulties we have had of keeping righteousness in the life. We love it; we give ourselves to it, in surrender; but this comes up, and that comes up, and the other, and we grow feeble, and fail, and lose the power of that righteousness out of the life that alone can make it everlasting righteousness.

Oh, then, in this Seventh-day Adventist Church, among these people who stand as belonging to the church, there is need of such a cleansing of the sanctuary, such an idea of the

cleansing of the sanctuary as will finish transgression in the life of every Seventh-day Adventist, will make an end of sins there, and will make reconciliation for all the sins that have ever been there, and bring in, oh, to bring in everlasting righteousness,—a righteousness that comes to stay, a righteousness that comes to abide, a righteousness that comes to rule, everlastingly, and to keep us unto that everlasting inheritance, and take us to everlasting mansions!

Your hearts and minds witness that only that can be any true cleansing of the sanctuary. And your hearts and minds will witness also to this, that if there can be such consecration, such surrender, as that; if there can be the receiving of such cleansing as that; and belonging to the church, indeed as this is; the giving of this message, the finishing of this work, with delay no longer, can be accomplished in the generation that remains.

And, brethren, your hearts will testify, also, that without these things we can talk, and talk, and talk, about it, and it all be true; but we can talk it all, and it will not finish in this generation.

Then here we are. Now shall we not, oh, shall we not, truly give ourselves to belong, literally to belong, to the church?—loving the church, giving ourselves for it, giving ourselves to it, that thus we may be cleansed in this day of the cleansing of the sanctuary, with the washing of water by the Word; that Christ may present it to Himself, as He has been longing, longing, all these years to do,

Ephesians 5

²⁷ ...a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish.

24. Christian Loyalty – I

Medical Missionary, March 27, 1907

CHRISTIANITY in all that in itself it is, contemplates only a Person. It has its origin only in a Person. It comes to men only from a Person. It is given to men only by a Person. It is sustained and maintained in believers only by a Person.

Christian loyalty, therefore, is and can be only loyalty to that Person. The loyalty of Christians can never be to anybody, and much less to any thing, other than just that one Person. And that Person is God—God, in Christ, through and by the Holy Spirit.

The Father

God is a person—a living, intelligent, person: a person who thinks, who loves, who pities, who speaks, who is good, who is true, who is faithful, who enters into covenant with men, and who keeps covenant and mercy with men forever.

The Son

And Christ Jesus is a person. In this personal Christ the personal God is manifested to the world and made personally known to believing men. Christ, was a person before He came into the world; yea, He was a person before ever the world was. He was of the person of God before ever the world was; and as of the person of God, He “was the Word,” and He spoke the word that made the world and all the worlds.

This same Person who was before the world, and who made the world and made man, came into the world and to man. He was a person in the world and with mankind. In this same person He left the world and ascended to heaven and to the personal God of heaven.

In this same Person, and as this same Person glorified, He is at the right hand of the throne of the personal God in Heaven.

And in this same Person, and as this same Person glorified, He is soon coming again in all the glory to glorify and take to Himself and to the personal God of glory, all who are His by a personal faith upon their own personal choice.

The Holy Spirit

And the Holy Spirit is a person. This great truth is not recognized, indeed it is not believed, by more than a very few even of Christians. For everybody knows that almost invariably, with very, very few exceptions, the Holy Spirit is referred to and spoken of by Christians as “it.”

But the word “it” never applies to a person. The word “it,” in the very genius of our language, refers and applies only to things, never to persons; to things of inanimate substance, as a stone, a horse, a tree; or to things of concept, or experience, as space, height, breadth, peace, joy, grief, an impression, an influence.

But the Holy Spirit is none of these: the Holy Spirit is not an influence; nor an impression, nor peace, nor joy, nor any thing. The Holy Spirit gives peace, and gives joy, assuages in grief, makes an impression, exerts an influence; but the Holy Spirit is none of these things, nor any other thing.

No, eternally no! The Holy Spirit is a Person, eternally a divine Person. And He must be always recognized and spoken of as a Person, or He is not truly recognized or spoken of at all.

See how plain and emphatic the Scriptures set forth this truth that the Holy Spirit is only a Person: and to aid the reader to see this truth, we will print in capital letters *Italic*, the words that designate the Holy Spirit:

John 14

¹⁶ I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that *HE* may abide with you forever;

¹⁷ Even the Spirit of truth; *WHOM* the world cannot receive

because it [the world] sees *HIM* not, neither knows *HIM*; but you know *HIM*; for *HE* dwells with you, and shall be in you.

²⁶ The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, *WHOM* the Father will send in my name, *HE* shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 15

²⁶ When the Comforter is come, *WHOM* I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which [*WHO*, Revised Version and others] proceeds from the Father, *HE* shall testify of me.

John 16

⁷ If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you;

⁸ And when *HE* is come, *HE* will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

¹² I have yet many things to say unto you, but you can not bear them now.

¹³ Howbeit, when *HE*, the Spirit of Truth is come, *HE* will guide you into all truth; for *HE* shall not speak for *HIMSELF*; but whatsoever *HE* shall hear, that shall *HE* speak; and *HE* will show you things to come.

¹⁴ *HE* shall glorify me; for *HE* shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.

¹⁵ All things that the Father has are mine; therefore, said I, that *HE* shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.

Thus in the short space of a few lines the Lord Jesus speaks twenty-four times of the Holy Spirit as a person; and speaks of Him in no other term than that which signifies in Greek, literally, “that person there.”

Yet this is not peculiar to the New Testament. David said,

Samuel 23

² The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and *HIS* word was in my tongue.

Note that this latter word introduces another element of personality—“the Spirit of the Lord spoke.” This is also stated

of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. Read it:

Acts 8

²⁹ Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join yourself to this chariot.

Acts 13

² The Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

Hebrews 3

⁷ As the Holy Ghost says.

Acts 28

²⁵ Well spoke the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet.

Thus the Scriptures make perfectly plain the truth that the Holy Spirit is, none other than a living, speaking, divine, and eternal person. Exactly as Christ is a person and as God is a person. Indeed Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit as proceeding from the Father, just as He speaks of Himself as proceeding from the Father. Of Himself Jesus says:

John 8

⁴ I proceeded forth and came from God.

Of the Holy Spirit, Jesus says that:

John 15

²⁶ [He] proceeds from the Father.

Therefore to be consistent those people who persist in speaking of the Holy Spirit as “it,” should also speak of Christ as “it,” and of God as “it.” But as certainly as anyone speaks of God as *HE* and of Christ as *HE*, he must also speak of the Holy Spirit as *HE*.

25. Christian Loyalty – II

Medical Missionary, April 3, 1907

IN the preceding article it was made plain that whether it be to God, to Christ, or to the Holy Spirit, the Christian's relationship is only to *a person*. Christian loyalty, therefore, can never be of any other character than loyalty to that divine Person.

Among Christians there can never be any such thing as parties or divisions. This is true not only in the nature of the case, but also in the word of Inspiration. In the earliest times of Christianity when such a thing appeared it was so met by the Spirit of Inspiration as to annihilate forever all possibility of it among all who would be Christians indeed.

Christian Loyalty is to Christ

At Corinth there appeared a tendency to personal preferences, to parties, and partisanship. One said, "I am of Paul;" another, "I am of Apollos;" another, "I of Cephas." But notice how the thing was met:

1 Corinthians 1

¹³ Was Paul crucified for you?

That one all-penetrating question reveals forever the truth that Christian loyalty can never be to any person but the One who was crucified for us. And any person who should ever ask or expect the loyalty of Christians to any person other than the crucified One, would in that very thing show disloyalty to Him; would in that very thing, so far as in him lay, destroy all Christian loyalty.

Putting Things in the Place of Christ

And when this is true concerning all persons, how much more must it be true of things.

No Christian can ever be loyal to a "cause"¹⁰, for the suffi-

¹⁰ **Editors note:** evidently, Jones means "loyalty to a cause" that is being put in the place of Christ, since "loyalty to the cause of Christ" is loyalty to

cient reason that no “cause” was ever crucified for anybody, no “cause” ever created anybody, no “cause” ever made intercession for anybody “with groanings which cannot be uttered.” *Romans* 8:26.

No Christian can be loyal even to “the church;” and for the same all-sufficient reason that no church was ever crucified for anybody, never created anybody, and never made intercession for anybody “with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

Yet there has been much made of “loyalty to the Church,” and “loyalty to the Cause.” Indeed, there has been more than one system that would “compass sea and land to make one proselyte” (*Matthew* 23:15) to a “cause” or to “the church,” or to a certain order or system; and in the doing of it violate every principle of loyalty to Christ, to God and to the Holy Spirit.

It is impossible to be otherwise. For, as already shown, loyalty to any person other than God, in Christ, under the Holy Spirit, or to anything, is in itself plain disloyalty to the divine Person who was crucified for us, who created us, and who makes intercession for us.

And when such is the situation and course in the very beginning that all this is forgotten or ignored, it naturally enough follows that in manifesting loyalty to another person or to some “cause” or order or system, “anything to win,” anything that will make the “cause” prevail, can be counted perfectly legitimate.

National Loyalty Put Above Christ

The Jews, in loyalty to their “cause” and to make their cause

Christ. See Article 20, “[What does it Mean to be a Church Member?](#)” where Jones shows that a true church member, loves the church and gives himself for it, as Christ did. Also: “He is most fit to carry responsibilities and command who most resembles God in character,—in goodness, mercy, and *staunch loyalty to the cause and work of God.*” (Ellen White, *Christian Leadership*, p. 12.)

to prevail, could blaspheme the Holy Spirit, repudiate God, and crucify the Lord Jesus. From the beginning to the end of the great apostasy, in loyalty to “the Church” those who professed to be the very chief and exemplary Christians could violate every principle of Christianity, could do everything that dishonors Christ, and could persecute to the death those who were Christians indeed.

Church Loyalty Put Above Christ

In the Reformation there was renewed in the world loyalty to God, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit—loyalty to the Divine Person. But ere long this was forgotten for only a “cause,” and Protestantism, and this even as an “ism,” was espoused. Then in loyalty to the “cause,” Protestantism, so far as it had opportunity; went over the same ground as Catholicism before it; and each party, each sect in turn, went over the same ground as the one before it—always loyal to some thing, to some “ism” instead of to the divine Person. And the whole of history has abundantly shown, as has been well expressed that men “will fight to the death and persecute without pity” in “loyalty” or a “cause,” who could not be persuaded to entertain a single serious thought of loyalty to the crucified and, sanctifying Person.

Persecution of True Loyalty

On the other hand, through all the period of that dismal history there has been a bright train of blessed individuals who have been loyal, only to the divine Person, loving Him, walking with Him, living in Him. These have been the Christians, and only Christians, always. They have been persecuted, afflicted, tormented, cast out, and this because they would not fight and persecute and sin in behalf of some “cause,” or some party, or some “ism;” but to these always loyalty to the divine Person who created us, who was crucified by us, who intercedes for us, and who sanctifies and saves us, was the only true loyalty of any soul.

And such, and such only, is Christian loyalty everywhere and forever.

26. The Christian Way with the Faulty and Erring

Medical Missionary, May 8, 1907

IN the church which is the body of Christ, “the members have the same care one of another.” *1 Corinthians* 12:25. There is no exclusiveness among them. There is no slighting of one by any of the others. There is no envy or detraction of one that is honored or advanced.

1 Corinthians 12

²⁶ And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

Such only is the spirit that is manifested in the Church of Christ which is His body. And in His church this is the only spirit that is manifested toward the faulty and the erring. It is only according to this spirit that in the Scriptures directions are given for dealing with the faulty and the erring. It is only in this spirit that the Scripture directions can be followed. For the church of Christ is subject to Christ “in every thing.” *Ephesians* 5:24.

Accordingly it is written,

Galatians 6

¹ If a man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering yourself, lest you be also tempted.

The only thought or purpose toward the one that is “in a fault,” is the thought and purpose of restoring him—the bringing of him back and setting him in his true place, and this by the spiritual, and in the spirit of meekness and of Christian fellowship “considering yourself lest you also be tempted.”

Further, the Scripture directions in this matter contemplate only that the individuals and the church shall go to the utmost

limit in the Christian effort to restore the faulty and erring one. And so it is written,

Matthew 18

¹⁵ If your brother trespass against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone; if he shall hear you, you have gained your brother.

The only purpose of going to him and telling him his fault, is to gain him, to restore him; and if he hear you “you have gained him.”

¹⁶ But if he will not hear you, then take with you one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

If he will not hear you, and so you fail to gain him, when you speak to him alone, then try again, with the presence of one or two more that may witness and aid the endeavor to gain him. And if he neglect to hear them, even then do not cease the endeavor to gain him.

¹⁷ If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church.

Then the church in its membership is still to endeavor to gain him from his fault and his error. And it is only when he still refuses to listen to the efforts of the whole church—only then ceases the special, Christian, brotherly effort to gain him and restore him.

¹⁷ ...But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican.

He has then refused all endeavors individually and collectively of the whole brotherhood of the church proceeding upon the word of God and in the Spirit of Christ, and thus has separated himself from the fellowship of the brotherhood and has put himself decisively on the ground of those outside of the Christian fellowship, and the church, having done all that can be done, now let him be just as are the others who are outside the Christian fellowship—let him be as a heathen man

and a publican.

And note, the direction is that he is now to be considered only as a heathen and publican, to whom the gospel is ever to be preached for his conversion and salvation, as really as though he had never been of the Christian fellowship at all. The following excellent words, written by another, beautifully cover the whole ground:

If he will not hear them, then, and not until then, the matter is to be brought before the whole body of lecturers. Let the members of the church, as representatives of Christ, unite in prayer and loving entreaty that the offender may be restored. The Holy Spirit will speak through his servants, pleading with the wanderer to return to God. Paul, the apostle, speaking by inspiration, says, "As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead be you reconciled to God."

He who rejects this united overture, has broken the tie that binds him to Christ and thus has severed himself from the fellowship of the Church. Henceforth, said Jesus, "let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican." But he is not to be regarded as cut off from the mercy of God. Let him not be despised or neglected by his former brethren, but be treated with tenderness and compassion, as one of the lost sheep that Christ is still seeking to bring to His fold.¹¹

This order of procedure is the only one recognized in the Scriptures in dealing with the faulty and the erring in the church. In the instruction to Timothy it is clearly referred to in the words:

1 Timothy 5

¹⁹ Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

And this is so important that it is made the subject of one of the most solemn charges in all the Bible:

¹¹ Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 441.

²¹ I charge you before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that you observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

In the instructions to Titus also this order of procedure is recognized and required, in the words:

Titus 3

¹⁰ A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject;

¹¹ Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sins, being condemned of himself.

As already shown, when he has refused to hear the two or three, and then has refused to hear the whole church, when they have done all that they can to gain and restore him, then he has separated himself, and is condemned of himself; the church can do no more and “lets him be” in the position and the separation in which, against all the efforts of the church, he has placed himself.

Again this order of procedure is recognized by Paul himself as governing himself. Concerning those who had sinned and had “not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they have committed,” he says:

2 Corinthians 13

¹ This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

Such is the order of procedure, and such is the only true order of procedure, and such is the “care” and the manifestation of the loving, honoring, and honorable “care” that the members of the church of Christ have “one of another.”

Only when this order of procedure is followed faithfully in the spirit and to the letter—only then is the action of either members or the church ratified in heaven. And since the church, as well as each individual Christian, must be “subject to Christ in everything” (*Ephesians* 5:24), any action taken by

any individual member, or by the church, other than strictly according to the order thus plainly laid down in the Scriptures, is utterly without the authority or the approval of heaven, and is only arbitrary, human, and anti-Christian.

It may be noticed that in this article nothing has been said about turning members out of the church, but only of efforts to gain, to restore, and to keep them in. The turning of them out, will be considered next.

27. Turning People Out of the Church

Medical Missionary, May 15, 1907

LAST week, in the study of the Scriptures, we found that in the church of Christ, in dealing with any who are in fault, the only procedure prescribed, is for the gaining and restoring of them and the keeping of them in the church if possible.

We found that in the New Testament there is no provision made for turning people out of the church, and that there is no procedure to be undertaken in the spirit or with the design of turning persons out of the church, but only for gaining and restoring them and keeping them in; and that every effort is to be exhausted to accomplish this.

And when the one who is in the fault refuses and stands out against all these efforts, then, of his own choice and by his own course, he is out of the church. Recall the words in the quotation given:

“He who rejects this united overture has...severed himself from the fellowship of the church;¹²”

—and also the words of Scripture:

Titus 3

¹¹ He that is such is subverted and sins, being condemned of himself.

However, while there is not in the New Testament any provision made for turning people out of church, there is in the New Testament a plain account of the thing. And here it is:

2 John

⁹ I wrote unto the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, receives us not.

¹⁰ Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words; and not con-

¹² Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 441.

tent therewith, neither does he himself receive the brethren, and forbids them that would and casts them out of the church.

This shows that the spirit and working that turns people out of church, is altogether different from that of the New Testament, which exhausts every effort “in the spirit of meekness” to “gain” to “restore,” and to keep in the church those who have been “overtaken in a fault.” *1 Corinthians* 9:19-22; *Galatians* 6:1.

First, it springs from the love of having the preeminence; and by this of itself, and at the one first step, the man who has it puts himself in the place of Christ. For in the church of Christ, and with every Christian, Christ...

Colossians 1

¹⁸ ...is the head of the body, the church,...that in all things he might have the preeminence.

In the church of Christ and with all Christians there is no such thing as eminence; even much less is there any such thing as pre-eminence; for there,

Matthew 23

⁸ One is your Master, even Christ, and all you are brethren,

—and each one is servant to all. Whosoever therefore would love to have only eminence among Christians, has another spirit than that of Christ; but when anyone loves to have the pre-eminence, that is at once to put himself in the place of Christ Himself, and is of the very spirit of anti-Christ. For whenever anyone puts himself in the place of Christ he is certain to act unlike Christ; and that is anti-Christ.

Second: The next step was exactly in accord with his putting himself in the place of Christ—he took it upon himself to decide just what the church should receive or not receive. A letter was written “to the church;” but Diotrephes would not allow the church to receive it. This letter was written by John,

a chosen apostle of the Lord Jesus; and was written to a church of the Lord Jesus. It was therefore the word of Christ to his own Church. But Diotrephes would not himself receive the letter, and would not let the church receive it; and repudiated even Christ's apostle who wrote the letter, and prated against him with malicious words.

Third: He would not even receive the brethren by whom the letter was sent. And when some of the brethren of the church had the mind and heart to receive those brethren, Diotrephes forbade them. And when some of the members of the church disregarded his command, and received those brethren, then he cast them out of the church.

Such is the procedure, and that is the only kind of procedure, by which people are turned out of the church. But it is not Christian procedure; it is papal procedure, and that alone. All that the papacy has ever been is revealed in this account of the procedure of Diotrephes—the love of preeminence, in which he put himself in the place of Christ, and opposed and exalted himself above Christ and above His word; usurped the authority over Christ's servants; and assumed, and presumed to exercise, the satanic prerogative of severing from Christ's body His own members, and casting them out.

Thus in that procedure by Diotrephes there is in the beginning of that long course of apostasy that made the man of sin, the mystery of iniquity, in all that it had ever been or ever can be. For, all the indications are that this affair of Diotrephes occurred at Ephesus. And to the elders of the church at Ephesus Paul had already said, years before,

Acts 20

³⁰ Of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them;

²⁹ ...grievous wolves,...not sparing the flock.

And Ephesus is the name chosen by the Lord Jesus Himself as representative of the first of the Seven Churches—that one

that had left her first love.

This apostasy exemplified in Diotrephes continued. He was followed by others who loved to have the preeminence, and the number of these multiplied; for such is the spirit of the carnal mind and of the natural heart. These who thus exalted themselves to the preeminence, assumed to themselves only the title of bishop, while the others in the same office precisely must be designated as only presbyters. And it was only a few years before these self-exalted “bishops” and their supporters actually taught the following blasphemous stuff:

“It is manifest that we should look upon the bishop, even as we would upon the Lord Himself.”

“He who does anything without the knowledge of the bishop, does in reality serve the devil.”

A few years more and they had got far enough along to teach the following of the same sort:

“The church is founded upon the bishops, and every act of the church is controlled by these same rulers.”

“Whence you ought to know that the bishop is in the church and the church in the bishop, and if any one is not with the bishop, that he is not in the church.”

But, as we have seen, in the church where Diotrephes was, there were some Christians who disregarded his preeminence and would not recognize his commands. There were likewise in all the churches true Christians who disregarded the preeminence of these self-exalted bishops, and would not obey their wicked commands, but would honor and obey Christ instead. And, like the Christian in the church where Diotrephes was, these too were “cast out of the church” and denounced of heresy, apostasy, and of causing diversion. The following is an example of this:

Neither have heresies arisen, nor have schisms originated, from any other source than from this, that God’s priest is not

obeyed; nor do they consider that there is one person for the time, priest in the church, and for the time judge in the stead of Christ; whom if, according to divine teaching, the whole fraternity should obey, no one would stir up anything against the college of priests;...no one would rend the church by a division of the unity of Christ.¹³

Then just because these were thus denounced and cast out of the church, and were thus counted as outside “the pale of unity,”—of the bishops—the churches were warned against them as heretics and not to be listened to. They might be teaching in perfect Christian faithfulness the very truth of Christ, even just as they had taught it before they disobeyed the bishops and were denounced as heretics, yet that could not be recognized now; and so it was flatly declared that it mattered not what they might teach, and that no one need even to ask “what” any of these might be teaching; so long as he teaches out of the “pale of unity.”

And this “pale of unity” was nothing else than the arbitrary assumption and presumption of the monarchical and despotic “bishops” who loved to have the preeminence, and would cast out of the church every one who would not recognize and bow to it.

¹³ St. Cyprian, Epistle LIV.

28. The Right of Individuality and of Conscience

Medical Missionary, May 29, 1907

IN the preceding article we studied the principles and the practice of the Church as illustrated in the Scripture instance of Diotrephes and the historical development of Diotrephes' procedure in the making of the papacy.

There is another phase of that scripture account of Diotrephes that should be noticed. That is, the case as it relates to the membership of the Church, the domination of which was seized by Diotrephes. And that this may be studied to the best advantage, we set down here again the verses of Scripture that tell it:

3 John 1

⁹ I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, receives us not.

¹⁰ Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither does he himself receive the brethren, and forbids them that would, and casts them out of the church.

From the plain scripture record it is evident that not all of the members of that Church disregarded the arrogance and commands of Diotrephes. It is evident that some and apparently the majority, did yield to the will of Diotrephes.

For if the whole church had disregarded his will and commands, it could not be said that he cast them out of the church; and even if the majority had disregarded him, it could then hardly be said that he "casts them out of the church" for that would be, in effect, casting out the church itself, and not the casting of certain ones out of the church. Therefore, by the text, it seems that the majority of the church submitted to the arrogance and commands of Diotrephes.

Yet it is perfectly plain that there were some who would not submit to this, but did disregard it; and to the extent that they were cast out of the church by him. And they were willing to be cast out of the church by him, rather than to submit to him in the position and authority which he had assumed.

Now it stands on the very face of the whole narrative that Diotrephes was wholly wrong.

1. He loved to “have the preeminence among them;” which, as we have seen, was at once to put himself in the place and position of Christ.
2. He refused to allow the Word of Christ through His apostle to come to the church.
3. He prated against the apostle “with malicious words.”
4. He refused to receive Christian brethren.
5. He assumed authority to command Christ’s servants and forbid them to receive other Christian brethren.
6. And when some disregarded his assumption, he cast them out of the church.

In every one of these things Diotrephes was wrong; and those who refused to recognize or submit to him in those things, were in the right and did right.

All this is plain. Therefore it is equally plain that those members of the church that submitted to Diotrephes in the course which he took, did wrong and committed themselves to the wrong thing. And in addition to this, by so doing—they put their endorsement upon the course of Diotrephes as the right thing and thus encouraged and supported him in that wrong course.

The issue that was there made by Diotrephes was the straight and plain issue of whether the brethren of the church should be loyal to Christ or loyal to Diotrephes. It was the straight and plain issue that for any member of that Church to be loyal to Christ was to be openly disloyal to Diotrephes; and

to be loyal to Diotrephes was to be openly disloyal to Christ. And further the issue was so clear that even to submit to Diotrephes, not out of chosen loyalty, but only from policy, this itself was disloyalty to Christ.

But those who were loyal to Christ were by Diotrephes cast out of the church. Yet since these were loyal to Christ, when they were cast out of the church that was dominated by Diotrephes they were not by any means nor in any sense out of the Church of Christ—they were only out of the Church of Diotrephes. And to be out of that church was a good deal better than to be in it. And those who were out of it were a good deal better off than were those who were in it.

Since by Diotrephes' procedure that church could be composed only of those who were submissive to him, for all others must be cast out; and since his whole position and course was anti-Christian, then that church was plainly a church of anti-Christ instead of a church of Christ, and the only true place for Christians was outside of it. And indeed, Christians could not be in it for he cast them out.

By the fact that some submitted to Diotrephes while others would not, it is perfectly plain that there was division in that church. But who made the division? Beyond question a breach was made in the church. But who was responsible for that breach? Can it be laid to the charge of those who were in the right, who did the right thing, and who were loyal to Christ?

No: the division, the breach,—the whole difficulty from beginning to end—was caused wholly by Diotrephes himself. He had assumed—usurped—position and authority that in no wise belonged to him, but only to Christ. Then in that position he chose to pursue a course that was the opposite of all the whole Spirit, and Word, and way, of Christ.

Then when some would not consent nor submit to this, he would not permit any such thing as any right of dissent from his will and dictation; he would not recognize any such thing

as the relationship and allegiance of the individual person to Christ direct; he would not allow any right of individual conscience and choice; all of which belongs by divine right forever to every Christian everywhere; yet none of this whatever would Diotrephes allow—he cast them out of the Church.

Diotrephes, therefore, and Diotrephes alone, was wholly responsible for the division and breach that was in that church. He made the division, he made the breach, himself alone.

No Christian can ever be rightly charged with any responsibility for any division, or breach, or difficulty of any kind whatever, that arises because of his being a Christian, or because of his acting on Christian principle, or because of his standing loyal to Christ above all.

Ah! and just here there was raised that subtle and arrogant—that Diotrephesian—question: Who shall decide just when and whether the individual church member is acting really on Christian principle, and is in reality standing loyal to Christ? Might he not mistake just what is Christian principle? and just what is loyalty to Christ? Therefore, should not he allow in favor of Diotrephes, the official, the weight of authority, safety, and certainty?

But the official himself is only an individual; and that would be nothing else than one individual;—Diotrephes, deciding for another individual—the private church member. It would also be nothing else than one individual's consenting that another individual should decide for him. And that would be nothing else than the one individual's surrendering to the other individual, his own individuality, so that that other individual would then be deciding for both himself and the other.

But what guarantee would there be that Diotrephes could decide for himself and the other man, any more safely or certainly than the other man could decide for himself. Any such guarantee could be only because of his being an official and occupying a position. The guarantee, then, would attach not

to the individual—Diotrephes—but to the office, to the position, to the chair! And there you have the whole principle of papal infallibility in an instant.

Again: the official is himself only an individual. And if the individual church-member is not capable of deciding for himself, then is not the individual official equally incapable of deciding for himself—even as an official? If the individual church-member must have the individual official to decide for him, then who shall decide for the individual official? Must there not be some higher and more official official to decide for this one? and so on back—how far?

Yet somewhere in that course you must come at last to the farthest one back: to the highest possible and most official of all officials, who decides for himself and the other man. But wherever this limit shall be set, and this final official found, when he is found, he is found to be nothing else than simply an individual, and an individual deciding for himself.

Thus in this Diotrephesian course, there is no escape from finally an individual who decides for himself. And with this, there is no escape from the danger and possibility of that individual's mistaking just what is Christian principle and exactly what is loyalty to Christ. But that is only where you started.

And there stands the original question, How can there be any more safety and certainty in one individual's deciding for himself and the other man too, than in the other man's deciding for himself; especially when the one has to decide for himself anyhow?

And when you land at last where the individual of your own choosing does decide for himself, why not accept the truth and principle of the thing, and land there at first, and recognize freely before God, and as from God, the divine right of individuality and of conscience everywhere and always?

But it may be asked, Does it not equally involve the claim of

infallibility—the infallibility of the private individual, when the private individual claims the right and the capability of deciding for himself in disregard of the will and command of Diotrephes?

Not at all. Because the private individual is not depending upon any figment of office or position, nor is he even depending upon himself, to decide it; but upon the Holy Spirit and the promise of Christ that the Spirit will guide him into all truth. And the infallibility is in the Holy Spirit where it justly and only belongs.

Still the query may be raised, Might he not mistake even the way of the Spirit? Yes, even that is possible. But still beyond that he has ever the sure promise of Christ that the Holy Spirit...

John 16

¹³ ...will guide you into all truth.

That is to say, the Holy Spirit is able to guide a man even out of his mistakes as to the guidance of the Spirit. And He will do this for every one who trusts Him; for He is divine, and there alone is infallibility. And the divine Spirit of promise is infinitely more capable of showing to a man his mistake, and of guiding him out of it, than ten thousand Diotrepheses could possibly be.

It comes, then, simply to this, that the Holy Spirit is the sole source of appeal and of judgment among Christians. And whosoever among Christians takes upon him to judge or to decide for another, usurps the place of the Holy Spirit, and asserts for himself the divine prerogative of infallibility.

Therefore, in all matters of difference between individual Christians, even though it be between a “preeminent” official and a private member of the church, there must be recognized the right of individuality and of conscience before God; each and all must, in the fear and honor of God, bow to that right

of individuality and conscience; and in brotherly love and mutual forbearance, each commit the other and the whole matter to the Holy Spirit, trusting His infallible guidance, judgment, and decision. Thus there will ever be maintained,

Ephesians 4

³ ...the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace;

For:

John 16

¹³ He will guide you into all truth.

All this will always be perfectly plain and easy to every Christian, to every one who will honor the Holy Spirit in the place that is His in the Church. But to Diotrephes, never:

- Diotrephes must have “the preeminence;”
- Diotrephes must go beyond his office;
- Diotrephes must usurp authority;
- Diotrephes must ascend the throne;
- Diotrephes must take the seat of judgment and decision;
- Diotrephes must pronounce the decree; and to all this all must bow or be cast out of the church.

And there is no middle ground. Everywhere, always, and with all in the church, it is the Holy Spirit or Diotrephes; in other words, Christianity or the Papacy.

29. Authority of the Church

Medical Missionary, July 24 & 31, 1907

THE great historian of the Reformation, writing of the famous protest from which comes the word Protestant—the protest of the Reformers that was made at Spire—says:

This protest opposes two abuses of man in matters of faith: the first is the *intrusion of the civil magistrate*; and the second, the *arbitrary authority of the Church*. Instead of these abuses, Protestantism sets the power of conscience above the magistrate; and the authority of the Word of God above the visible Church.

The first abuse in matters of faith, here mentioned—“the intrusion of the civil magistrate”—has been thoroughly discussed through all the subsequent times, so that the principle involved is generally well understood. But the second abuse here mentioned—“the arbitrary authority of the Church”—has not been nearly so much discussed, is not nearly so well understood, and is far less recognized.

Arbitrary Authority

The reason for this difference in the discussion and the understanding of these two abuses is that, whereas all denominations, in turn and together, have always been ready to discuss and oppose the first of these abuses, no denomination, as such, has ever been willing to discuss the second abuse; because each denomination in turn, and all together, has always been ready to exercise and enjoy this very abuse. Therefore the discussion of this has always fallen to individual persons, who, in the very doing of it, were distinguished and denounced as “heretics, schismatics,” etc., etc.

Then when the “heresy” had proved successful and had gained a standing—in short, had developed a denomination—it in turn fell into the same old train, and asserted and exercised

arbitrary authority, instead of any longer discussing and disputing it.

It is therefore perfectly proper, and always timely, to discuss this great abuse in matters of faith,—the arbitrary authority of the Church; for no greater nor more lasting abuse has ever been inflicted upon the world. In order to study this intelligently, let us first understand the terms:

The word “authority” is defined as:

“The right to command and to enforce obedience; the right to act by virtue of office, station, or relation.”

The word “arbitrary” means:

“Not regulated by fixed rule or law; subject to individual will or judgment; exercised according to one’s will or caprice.”

The synonyms of the word “arbitrary” are:

“Capricious, unlimited, irresponsible, uncontrolled, tyrannical, domineering, imperious, despotic, absolute in power.”

First as to authority itself:

What “authority,” what “right to command and enforce obedience,” has the Church?

Is the series of God’s commands left unfinished in His word, and has the Church “authority” to complete it?

Is God’s revelation as in His Word incomplete, and has the Church “authority” to perfect it? (*Revelation 22:18-19.*)

In short,

Is Christianity a religion of the Word of God, the Bible, only? Or is it a religion of the Bible and tradition?

Is it of Christ alone or is it of Christ and the Church? That is to say, Is it of Christ or is it of the papacy?

Servants Only

All of this is clearly and abundantly answered in the Scriptures. And in the answer, the first item is that by the Lord Jesus Himself the Church is positively forbidden any exercise of authority. Here are the words:

Matthew 20

²⁵ You know that the princes of the Gentiles exercised dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

²⁶ But it shall not be so among you.

Now when “authority” is “the right to command,” and when the Church is thus by Christ positively forbidden any exercise of authority, then it stands fixed plainly by the Word of God that the Church is forbidden by Christ all exercise of any right to command or to act by virtue of office, station, or relation.

The reason for this is equally plain:

²⁶ It shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

²⁷ And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant;

²⁸ Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

The Church is not in the world to rule, but to minister: not to command but to serve: even as her divine Lord came into the world not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and this to the extent of giving His very life that men might be ransomed from the thralldom of sin.

It is not in the province of the Church to exercise authority “by virtue of any office, station, or relation;” because the office, station and relation of the Church is only that of servant.

It is never in the province of a servant to reign—so long as he is in the place and position of a servant. And the place and position of servant is exactly that of the children of God and

disciples of Christ—who compose the Church—so long as they are in this world. Free, and freely chosen, service, loving service, it is true; but none the less it is service:

Galatians 5

¹³ You have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh: but by love serve one another.

Or, as the *Revised Version* states: “Through love be servants one to another.” It is not only utterly incongruous therefore, but actually mischievous, for a servant to assume to rule, to command,—to exercise authority. For of the “three things” on account of which “the earth is disquieted,” and of the “four which it can not bear,” the very first is “a servant when he reigns.” *Proverbs 30:21-22*.

And hasn't the history of the Church from Diotrephes to this day, demonstrated this divine truth in most wearisome detail? For in all the history of the world what has more disquieted the earth, and what has been harder for it to bear, than the reign of the church, wherever and just to the extent that her reign has been asserted?

Christ is the Only Master

Again, under the Word of God, there is no “fixed rule or law” for the exercise of authority either in or by the Church, nor is there any room for her to act by virtue of office, station, or relation, because in the Church of Christ all are equal; there are no masters, nor is there place for any.

Matthew 23

⁸ Be not called Rabbi; for one is your master, even Christ, and all you are brethren.

¹⁰ Neither be called Masters; for one is your Master, even Christ.

¹¹ But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

¹² And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

Therefore:

Romans 14

⁴ Who are you that judges another man's servant? To his own master he stands or falls.

In the presence and under the Word of Christ, the one Commander, what authority has one Christian to command, or to legislate for, another? Absolutely none whatever. And when no one Christian has any authority whatever to command, or to legislate, for another, then what possible authority can any number of these have to command or legislate for another?

Of Christ it is written:

Isaiah 55

⁴ Behold I have given Him for a witness to the people, a Leader and Commander to the people.

Ephesians 5

²³ Christ is the Head of the Church,...

Ephesians 1

²³ ...which is His body.

In the head, not in the body, is the place of intelligence, judgment, and will. It is in the Head, not in the body, which is the Church, where is the seat of authority, and it is the Head, not the body, who issues commands in the things of religion.

Again, Christ is "the mighty God" (*Isaiah* 9:6), the supreme king and the sole sovereign, in and to the Church, and in and over...

Ephesians 1

²² ...all things to the Church.

On the other hand,

Ephesians 5

²⁴ The Church is subject unto Christ...in all things.

The Church, then, is subject, not sovereign. It is hers to

obey, not to command: to obey Christ, not to command men. By the plain word of Christ, then, as well as by the situation and relation of the Church itself, the Church is specifically forbidden to exercise authority,—forbidden to exercise any right to command. It therefore follows that any exercise of dominion, or of authority, by the Church, upon or over anybody, is in itself “arbitrary authority.”

For, as we have seen, “arbitrary” is “not regulated by fixed rule or law; subject to individual will or judgment.” And when there is not only neither fixed rule nor law regulating the exercise of authority by the Church, but there is the positive prohibition of it, then any exercise of authority by the church is absolutely without any fixed rule or law from the Lord, and therefore can be only the assertion of authority by the will or caprice or at the instance of some individual or collection of individuals, and so is arbitrary only.

Authority Exercised by Christ

While there is no such thing as any authority of any church, there is authority in the Church of Christ. This authority is in Christ’s Church because He, by His divine Spirit, is in His Church. The authority in the Church, therefore, is the authority of the living God, in the living Christ, by the living Spirit, through the living Word of Truth.

Matthew 28

¹⁸ All authority is given unto me in Heaven and in earth.

¹⁹ Go therefore, and teach all nations...

²⁰ ...and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

Ephesians 2

²² In whom you also are built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Thus, and thus only, is there any authority even in the Church. And this authority in the Church, never, in any way,

becomes the authority of the Church; but is always the authority solely of Him who is the Head and Life of the Church, who dwells in the Church by His divine Spirit, and to whom alone is given all authority in heaven and earth. It is He alone who exercises this authority that is given to Him alone and that is His own. See *Acts* 3:12-13; 4:10; 5:3-6, 9-11; 13:2-4; 16:6-10.

Therefore, in the Church, position, office, or place, never gives any authority. The Lord Jesus, the Creator of the worlds, the Author of life, and the Fountain of revelation, when He came to this world came only to His own; yet He had no position, office, nor place.

He was held aloof, ostracized, denounced, and cast out by those who held all the positions, offices, and places, in the Church of his time. The Pharisees, the priests, the scribes, the lawyers, the hypocrites, had position, office, and place. They were all ambitious for the highest place. They held position and office, and could lord it over Him, and summon Him, and demand of Him, and sit in judgment on Him.

All this they could do because of position and office in the Church; but where was their authority to do any of it? Simply nowhere at all. It was all only arrogance, usurpation, and arbitrariness. Therefore Jesus told the people:

Matthew 23

² The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

³ All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do.

Because, as they sat in Moses' seat they read to the people the word of God which Moses had written. That was the word of God and by whomsoever it might be spoken or read it was authoritative and to be obeyed. But,

³ ...do not after their works; for they say and do not.

With Moses in the seat there was authority from the seat;

because God was with Moses, and God's Spirit was in him. But with a Pharisee or a scribe of that time in Moses' seat, there was no authority from the seat nor otherwise except only in the Word which the man might read to the people, and which, because of his hypocrisy and selfish ambition, was altogether apart from him.

But as to Jesus, who had no position, office, nor place, they all...

Luke 4

²² ...wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.

And why? Ah:

Matthew 7

²⁹ He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

All that the scribes could speak was borrowed, and everybody could know that it was borrowed; it was empty and alone so far as concerned any connection of their lives or spirits with it.

But when Jesus spoke even the same words that the scribes and Pharisees had spoken, everybody knew that what He said was not borrowed, but was of His very soul; was not empty, but was very substance; they knew that that word lived in Him, that His spirit and the Spirit of the Word were one, and that He Himself was the veritable expression of the word which He spoke. When the word of the Scriptures was read or spoken by Him, there was in it a weight and meaning that caused it to fall impressively upon the ears and hearts of all who heard.

Thus though Jesus had neither position, nor office, nor any place, He had authority; and the people recognized it. And the scribes, the Pharisees, the priests, and the lawyers, who had position, office, and place, also recognized it, and grew so jeal-

ous of Him that they could not endure Him any longer lest they lose their place; “all the world is gone after Him” (*John* 12:19), we must get rid of Him to save our place.

John 11

⁴⁸ If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

But where lay Jesus’ authority, when He had no position, nor office, nor any place? It lay just where true authority always lies—in the truth which He preached from God, and the sincerity and purity of mind and heart with which He received and preached that truth.

Authority Comes With Truth

All true and right authority of any man in the Church comes to him only in the truth of God which he receives. If it were possible to find a man in this world who had as much of the truth of God as had Christ, in him we should find one who had all power in Heaven and earth, because of his having all the truth in Heaven and earth.

The measure of truth that a man has is the only measure of true authority that he has, wherever he may be. And if he be in the highest place of responsibility in any church in the world, if he has no truth, he has no authority.

Therefore Jesus said:

Matthew 20

²⁵ The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

²⁶ But it shall not be so among you.

God has never given to any man in His Church authority to exercise authority. That is the difference between the princes of this world and the princes of God; for Christians are princes of God. God calls and sends His princes to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, elders, deacons, etc.

He clothes them with authority in giving to them His own truth and His own call and commission to speak it, and His own personal presence by His own Spirit. He sends them to speak with all the authority of the conviction of the divine truth, of the heavenly commission, and of His personal presence. *Acts 18:9-10; 2 Timothy 4:1-2.*

But the “exercise” of authority rests wholly with Him whose alone the authority is, and who is ever with the one whom He sends. *John 8:29; 20:21-22.*

- The princes of this world in places of authority, but without true authority, exercise authority.
- The princes of God having true authority never exercise authority. That belongs—and the princes of God are ever happy to leave it just where it belongs—to Him to whom it is given, and whose only it is.

Again let it be said that position, office, or place never gives authority. Authority that a man *already has from God* will qualify him for the place or position to which God calls him. And if he has not that authority before he enters the place, he has not the authority when he is in the place.

30. Prophets and Prophecy in the New Testament

Medical Missionary, October 9, 1907

PROPHETS and prophesying belong in the New Testament Church. The prophet *Joel* foretold it, and Pentecost introduced it in the Christian Church. For of Pentecost Peter said:

Acts 2

¹⁶ But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ And it shall come to pass in the last days, says 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;

¹⁸ And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.

And of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Church, it is written:

Ephesians 4

¹¹ And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

¹² For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12

⁸ For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom;...

¹⁰ To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy;...

²⁸ And God has set some in the church, first apostles secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles,...

And:

1 Thessalonians 5

²⁰ Despise not prophesying.

Of these gifts, the gift of prophesying is chiefly to be desired. And so it is written:

1 Corinthians 14

¹ Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that you may prophesy.

⁵ I would that you all spake with tongues, but rather that you prophesied: for greater is he that prophesies than he that speaks with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

⁴ He that speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself; but he that prophesies edifies the church.

All may prophesy. For it is written:

⁵ I would that you all spake with tongues; but rather that you prophesied.

²⁴ If all prophesy, and there come in one that believes not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all:

²⁵ And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.

³¹ For you may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.

The inspired definition of prophesying is given. Thus:

³ He that prophesies speaks unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

Note, however, that this is not a mere casual speaking in social meeting, nor is it even the preaching of a sermon. Prophesying is a gift of the Spirit; therefore it is the speaking to men “unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort,” by the gift, the power, the inspiration, of the Holy Spirit.

This speaking by the gift and inspiration of the Spirit, could also be manifested in the foretelling of events as we shall see. Such is the truth and the definition, by the Scriptures, as to prophesying, in the New Testament and in the New Testament Church.

The first definite mention of prophets in the New Testament Church, that is after Pentecost, is in:

Acts 11

²⁷ In these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.

²⁸ And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world; which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.

The next is in:

Acts 13

¹ Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

The next is in:

Acts 15

³² And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

Judas and Silas were the “chosen men” selected by “the apostles and elders with the whole church” at Jerusalem to carry to Antioch the letter that was sent from them to Antioch. When the letter had been read to the brethren at Antioch,

³¹ ...they rejoiced for the consolation.

³² And Judas and Silas, being prophets themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

The next is in *Acts* 21:4, where, though neither the word prophet nor prophesying is used, it is plainly a manifestation of the gift of prophecy. Paul and his company came to Tyre:

Acts 21

⁴ And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days; who said to Paul through the Spirit that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

Paul, however, continued his journey toward Jerusalem.

The next is in *Acts* 21:9-11. When Paul and his company

came to Caesarea, to the house of Philip the evangelist, it is written:

Acts 21

⁹ The same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

¹⁰ And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus.

¹¹ And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said: Thus says the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

And this came to pass as we read in the same chapter, verse 27, and onward in the following chapters.

Those are all the instances that are recorded in which the gift of prophecy was actually manifested among the disciples in the New Testament Church, excepting, of course, in the writings of the apostles in their epistles and in the book of *Revelation*, and when baptized with the Holy Ghost as in *Acts* 19:6.

This is not in any sense to imply that these are by any means all the instances of the manifestation of the gift; it is only to state the fact that those instances are all that are recorded.

These, however, were written for our learning. What, then, is given in these things for us to learn?

First, as already given, the definition of "prophesying," in the plain words of Scripture:

1 Corinthians 14

³ He that prophesies speaks unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

That, being the definition and instruction of the Spirit of inspiration Himself, can never be denied, nor qualified, nor

modified.

Second: That the gift to prophesy is chiefly to be desired, and that all may have this gift:

1 Corinthians 14

¹ Desire spiritual gifts; but rather that you may prophesy.

³¹ For you may all prophesy.

And:

²⁴ If all prophesy, he that comes in will report that God is in you of a truth.

Third: That this speaking by the gift and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, “unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort” may also be manifested in the foretelling of events, as the Spirit may will and by whom He may choose. For in the instances recorded, both these phases of the manifestation of the gift are clearly indicated.

In Agabus the gift was clearly manifested in the foretelling of events. Also in the disciples at Tyre, the gift partook of this characteristic; for, though the record does not say that they told Paul what would befall him at Jerusalem, as did Agabus, they did tell him...

Acts 21

⁴ ...through the Spirit that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

Thus, though it was not a revelation of just what would come, it was a revelation that there was something to be avoided, though just what it was might not be specified.

The other instances are evidently manifestations of the gift “unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort.” For though Philip had four daughters “which did prophesy,” and though Paul and his company were at Philip’s house “many days” where these daughters were, yet none of them said anything to Paul about the danger before him, or what would be done with him at Jerusalem. Nothing of this was told till:

Acts 21

¹⁰ There came down from Judea a certain prophet named Agabus.

But “when he was come,” then the thing was foretold.

Likewise in the cases of Judas and Silas it is evidently this manifestation of the gift “unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort,” and not in the foretelling of events. For it is plainly stated that when they delivered the letter at Antioch,

Acts 15

³² They exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

In addition to this indication we have the fact that Silas accompanied Paul in his preaching through Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece even to Corinth, through many remarkable vicissitudes and notable crisis, yet in all the story there is not even a hint that in a single instance there was manifested by Silas the gift of prophecy in foretelling any event. Yet Silas was a prophet.

There is not only no hint that he did foretell, or foreknow, but there are plain indications that he did not do so. For Silas was with Paul in Asia Minor where, forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia and the Spirit suffered them not to go into Bithynia, they came down to Troas and did not know what next to do. Yet they were not told by Silas the prophet what next they should do, but “a vision appeared to Paul in the night” in which there stood a man of Macedonia saying,

Acts 16

⁹ Come over and help us.

¹⁰ And after he had seen the vision, we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us to spread the gospel unto them.

Again: Silas was with Paul at Corinth. Yet though he was a

prophet, it was not by him that the Lord told Paul to stay in Corinth. But,

Acts 18

⁹ Then spoke the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not your peace;

¹⁰ For I am with you, and no man shall set on you to hurt you: for I have much people in this city.

Now if Silas had the gift of prophecy, in the sense of foreknowing and foretelling, then when he was the personal and chosen traveling companion and fellow worker of Paul, why should it not have been known and told by him what they should do when they came to Troas, and that Paul should stay in Corinth, instead of these things having to be made known to Paul by the Lord Himself in visions in the night.

These facts certainly indicate that Judas and Silas and Philip's daughters were prophets in the sense of speaking "unto men edification, and exhortation, and comfort," and not in the sense of foreknowing and foretelling events; while Agabus and the disciples at Tyre had the gift in the sense of foreknowing and foretelling.

Fourth: There is another item that is plainly for our consideration and learning. Judas and Silas were prophets. We first meet them as "chief men among the brethren at Jerusalem" in the meeting that discussed the question of circumcision about which Paul and Barnabas came up from Antioch to Jerusalem. They were "chosen" by the "apostles and elders with the whole church" in that meeting to go to Antioch and tell "by mouth" as also to carry the letter in which was written the message sent by that assembly to the brethren at Antioch.

At that time two meetings were held in Jerusalem by the church and the apostles and elders, with the brethren from Antioch. At both these meetings the question was discussed, and at the second meeting there was "much disputing." And these two men who were prophets were there, and were...

Acts 15

²² ...chief men among the brethren.

And yet the question at issue, the question that had caused “no small dissension and disputation” at Antioch, and over which there was “much disputing” in the meeting at Jerusalem,—this question was not settled in that meeting by those prophets nor by anything that they said or did. They are not even mentioned in any connection with the question or with the meeting, till the matter is all settled and the word is to be sent to Antioch. And even then they are not mentioned as prophets till they have come to Antioch, where, as “being prophets themselves” they “exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.”

Again: After those meetings in Jerusalem, at which that question was settled, Peter and “certain who came from James” (*Galatians* 2:12), at Antioch, strongly believed the same old issue and showed that with them it was not yet settled. And:

Acts 13

¹ There were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets.

Yet neither then did any prophet deliver any revelation to decide the matter or to settle the question. No; Paul withstood Peter to the face and spoke openly before them all “the truth of the gospel”; and the Holy Spirit Himself settled the question. *Galatians* 2:14.

Fifth: There is yet another thing in the record that is for our consideration and learning. The disciples at Tyre:

Acts 21

⁴ ...said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

But Paul went on the way to Jerusalem. As he was on the way he came to the house of Philip at Caesarea, where the

prophet Agabus met him and told him how the Jews at Jerusalem would bind him and deliver him to the Gentiles.

From these revelations of the Spirit, those who were of Paul's company, as well as the brethren at Caesarea, understood that it was the mind of the Spirit that Paul should not go to Jerusalem. They therefore all "besought him not to go up to Jerusalem," yet he would not listen to this, but exclaimed,

Acts 21

¹³ What mean you to weep and to break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

¹⁴ And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

It is not for any man to say whether Paul did right or did wrong, in that matter. With any question of the right or wrong of it we can have nothing at all to do. But the record and the facts are for our learning. Therefore:

- a) It is plain and certain that the disciples at Tyre did say to Paul, and did say it "through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem."
- b) It is plain and certain that the prophet Agabus did say to him, "Thus says the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle."
- c) It is plain and certain that all who were with him understood that it was the mind and counsel of the Holy Spirit that he should not go to Jerusalem, and therefore they besought him not to go.
- d) It is plain and certain that he would not be thus persuaded, and did go straight on to Jerusalem.
- e) And it is equally plain and certain that after all this neither the Christians nor the prophets separated from Paul, nor ostracized him, nor denounced him, nor whispered against him, as one who "didn't believe the testimonies," or as one who "disregarded the counsel of the

Lord,” nor anything of the kind. No. They simply said, “The will of the Lord be done,” and left it there, with Paul and the Lord. Nor yet did the Lord separate from him, nor denounce him, nor require his children to separate from him. Neither did the Holy Spirit turn against him and discredit him among his brethren and try to break him down and destroy his life’s work.

No, no, no. But when he would not be persuaded, but would go up to Jerusalem, the brethren went with him, and the Holy Spirit and the Lord went with him. And when all came upon him, against which the brethren had tried their best to persuade him, still, at least, some of the brethren, and the Holy Spirit, and the Lord Jesus, and the Heavenly Father, remained with him, and comforted him, and strengthened him and preserved him and delivered him.

It is true that afterward, whether for this cause or some other equally groundless, all those that were in Asia turned away from him. And at nearly the very last, at one time, no man stood with him, but all men forsook him. But they had far better all have stood with him through all to the very end; for the Lord stood with him and strengthened him, and delivered him from every evil work, and preserved him unto His Heavenly kingdom. *2 Timothy* 1:15; 4:16-18.

Thus in the New Testament Church the gift of prophecy was and is to be manifested both in “men’s speaking unto edification, and exhortation, and comfort,” and in men’s foreknowing and foretelling.

In the first phase, it is chiefly to be desired by all believers, and all may have the gift and all may prophesy. In the second phase, not all could be prophets, but only such as God should choose and set in the church. *1 Corinthians* 12:28, 29, 17, 18.

