

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

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TWELVE MARKS OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

The church of the first century was a spiritual kingdom set up in the world by The Son of God in fulfillment of the Jewish economy and in opposition to all other religions of the earth; and this militant kingdom of Emanuel, notwithstanding the combined secular powers of the world, progressed to such an extent that, in about seventy years after the crucifixion of Christ, it pervaded portions of every province of the Roman Empire. In it is an aggressive principle against sin, though purely of love to mankind, that will never cease its action until time shall be no more.

Many errors had crept into the church from time to time in different parts of the world; but that system of discipline which had been established by Christ and his Apostles had proved effectual in removing these errors in faith and practice. “The Apostolic age is the fountain head of the Christian church, as an organized society separate and distinct from the Jewish synagogue. It is preeminently the age of The Holy Spirit—the age of inspiration and of legislation for all subsequent ages. Here springs, in its original freshness and purity, the living water of the new creation. Christianity comes down from heaven as a supernatural fact, yet long predicted and prepared for, and adapted to the deepest wants of human nature. Signs and wonders are extraordinary demonstrations of The Spirit, for the conversion of the unbelieving Jews and heathens, attend its entrance into this world of sin. It takes up its permanent abode with our fallen race, to transform it gradually, without war and bloodshed, by a quiet leaven-like process, into a kingdom of truth and righteousness. In virtue of this original purity, vigor and beauty, and the permanent success of primitive Christianity, the canonical authority of the new testament, the single but inexhaustible volume of its literature, and the character of the Apostles, those inspired organs of The Holy Spirit, those humanly-untaught teachers of mankind, the Apostolic Age has an incomparable interest and importance in the history of the church. It is the immovable ground-work of the whole. It holds up the highest standard of doctrine and discipline.”—*P. Schaff*.

The church of the first century forms the standard and example for the church of all future ages. Should there now exist on earth a body of professed Christians who occupy the same ground in faith and practice as that of the church of the first century, they are RIGHT; and if any should be found

occupying a different position than they are WRONG. The true church of Christ and false or merely nominal churches are to be distinguished by a comparison with apostolic standard.

TWELVE MARKS OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

1. The First Mark

1. The apostolic church consisted only of those persons who had been convicted of sin by The Holy Spirit, and who had given signs of repentance towards God, and faith in The Lord Jesus Christ as The Son of God. Their faith was the faith of God's elect (Titus 1:1), a steadfast and earnest adherence to the doctrine of the Apostles and prophets (Acts 2:42; Eph. 2:20; Jude 3), including the total depravity of the human race in consequence of the fall of our first parents, the special eternal election of God's people to everlasting life, the particular redemption purchased by the blood of Christ for all of his people, the effectual calling and the final perseverance of the saints to glory. In all spiritual matters Christ was their Head, King and Lawgiver, as He spoke either personally or by His Spirit in the writers of the old and new testaments scriptures. One word of their Lord and Master was worth more than all the words of uninspired men. They chose to obey God rather than man. The Jewish and heathen doctrine of salvation by human works they utterly refused, while they heartily embraced as their hope the Christian and Bible doctrine of a free and full salvation by the sovereign grace of God. In other words, this FIRST AND CHIEF MARK of the apostolic church was a *regenerated and converted* church membership, who had been born of The Spirit of God, who had a vital, revealed, experimental religion, who were quickened, the circumcised in heart, the new creation, saints, beloved of The Lord, children of God, the saved, added to the church by The Lord, the elect vessels of mercy, who worshipped God in The Spirit, living stones built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should show forth the praises of Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvelous light.

This mark utterly excludes the unregenerate world and unconscious infants from membership in the apostolic church. As Noah was a spiritual child of God, and all the human race since the flood are his descendants, infant membership, if fully carried out, would sweep the whole world into the church. Three of the evangelists inform us that some little children were brought to Jesus, who blessed them, though they were unbaptized; and who, though this was the occasion above all others for it, said *not one word about their baptism* or their admittance into His visible church. He uttered those forever precious and memorable words, "*Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of*

such is the kingdom of God.” Mark says that He was “*much displeased*” when his disciples rebuked those who brought the children to Him. Bible Baptist have always believed that all children who die in infancy are regenerated by the almighty grace of God and go directly home to the loving arms of Jesus; and these with the adult believers compose more than one-half of the human race. As “Jesus is the same, yesterday, today and forever” (Heb. 13:8), it must still be “*much displeasing*” to Him that little children should not be suffered, but forbidden, to come to Him for any reason whatsoever, whether the lack of water-baptism or anything else. The language of Christ in Mark 16:16, “He that believeth not shall be damned,” shows with perfect clearness that not want of water baptism, but want of faith, is the cause of damnation; and the grace of faith is “the gift of God” (Eph. 1:19; 2:8; Gal. 5:22; Phil. 1:29; Heb. 12:2), it is as easy for Omnipotence to bestow it upon a dying infant as it is upon a living adult. The practice of infant baptism (or infant church membership) is a weak, thoroughly antisciptural, idolatrous superstition, which most probably arose in North Africa in the third century^[1] from the false idea of the magical, regenerating, saving power of water, and which did not become general until the fifth century, thus securing its triumph in the Dark Ages about the same time with the establishment of the papacy; and it is worthy of the Dark Continent and the Dark Ages. “It originated from that inborn human principle of self-righteousness which supposes it so necessary for man to do something to secure his acceptance with God that even the infant, who can not comply with the condition itself, must do it by substitute.” It is a vain human tradition which makes utterly void the commandments of God—those commandments requiring baptism *after* repentance and faith, as fitly symbolical of those internal graces; while the human tradition requires the baptism of unconscious, impenitent, and unbelieving infancy. It is solemn mockery, substituting for the indispensable faith of the recipient the utterly unscriptural proxy-faith of humanly invented sponsors, god-parents and sureties. It is a cruel falsehood and deception, pretending that the unconscious infant is regenerated and grafted into the body of Christ church, and depriving him of the comforts of believers baptism should he ever believe. It is the quintessence of ecclesiastical corruption that would break down all distinction between the church and the world. It is the chief prop and pillar of Catholicism, sacerdotalism, and sacramentalism, totally subversive of the fundamental principle of Protestantism and the spiritual religion of the New Testament. “Romanist deny its biblical authority, and rest its validity upon the authority of the church; and they justly insist, therefore, that Protestants, in practicing the rite, abandon the great principle that the bible is the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice, and revert to the authority of tradition. The German reformers conceded its lack of New Testament authority. The profound and scholarly and impartial German theologians are emphatic in denying that it has either precept or example in scripture.” It is absolutely certain that there is no command and no plain case of infant baptism in the

bible. This is almost universally conceded. Hundreds of the most learned Pedobaptist scholars frankly admit the fact. Nearly all the standard Pedobaptist historians admit that infant baptism was unknown in the first two centuries after Christ. The last commission which Christ gave to his apostles (Matthew 28:19 & Mark 16:16) authorized them to baptize only disciples or believers. The term “infants” does not occur in the commission. Christ, and not water baptism, is the only God and Savior, both of infants and adults. He calls children, not to baptismal waters at all, but to Himself. In case of the baptism of families, there is never any mention of infants, and the context or some other scripture nearly always shows that all those who were baptized, believed, or rejoiced, or devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints, and therefore could not have been infants; there is no proof that there were any infants in any of those families; and if there had been infants in them, we know that the apostolic commission did not authorize their baptism, so that, as the ablest scholars admit, we know, without any special statement, that infants were excluded from such baptisms. The word rendered “holy” in 1 Corinthians 7:14 plainly means legitimate. As for baptism being a substitute for circumcision, there is no such statement in the bible, but a powerful array of arguments against it. The old covenant was national and temporal; the new covenant is personal and spiritual. “None were circumcised until they were born; so none should be baptized until after they are spiritually born. The natural seed of Abraham were entitled to circumcision; only his spiritual seed, or believers are entitled to baptism. Abraham’s servants were circumcised; it has never been pretended that servants of believers are entitled to baptism, unless such servants themselves believe. Only males were circumcised; both male and female are baptized. Ishmael, though circumcised, was excluded from Canaan; all baptized believers will enter the heavenly Canaan. The right of a child to circumcision did not depend upon the faith of the parents. It was not preformed in the name of God or any other being. The subject of circumcision was debtor to do the whole law. No sponsors were required in circumcision. The apostles baptized Jewish converts who had been circumcised. Jewish Christians continued for many years to circumcise their children. Paul, to satisfy the Jews, even circumcised Timothy who had already been baptized. A dispute arose about circumcising Gentile converts (Acts 15), which could not have taken place if it had been understood that baptism came in the room of circumcision.”

The Apostles neither at this council at Jerusalem, nor on any other occasion, manifest any knowledge of the substitution of baptism for circumcision. The basing of infant baptism upon circumcision has been abandoned by many of the ablest Pedobaptist scholars of Europe and America. And infant baptism itself is, in all Protestant countries, falling rapidly into disuse as an unscriptural and senseless formality. It is estimated that one twelfth of the infants born in the United States are baptized (or,

rather, *rhantized*). A most terrible and all sufficient argument against infant baptism (and its historical and logical equivalent, baptismal regeneration) is its inconceivably horrible implication that all infants who die unbaptized, even though they die unborn, even though they be elected by God The Father, redeemed by God The Son, and regenerated by God The Holy Spirit, are, for want of a drop or two of natural water applied to them, consigned to everlasting torment or privation of happiness. No man who believes the bible can believe this diabolical doctrine. This horrid Catholic dogma, surpassing in monstrosity nearly all the errors of “heretical sects,” has been well denominated “the entering wedge of tradition which, if driven home, will split Protestantism into fragments.”

In the words of the two Languages of Germany, distinguished Pedobaptist scholars: “All attempts to make out infant baptism from the New Testament fail. It is utterly opposed to the spirit of the apostolic age and to fundamental principles of the New Testament. Would the Protestant church fulfil and attain to its final destiny, the baptism of newborn children must be abolished. It can not, on any point of view, be justified by the holy scriptures.” Mr. Alexander Carson, a most scholarly, profound, and conscientious Presbyterian minister of Ireland (1776-1844), declared after long and earnest investigation: “*I found I must either give up the Bible or give up infant baptism.*” He preferred to give up infant baptism, though with it he had to give up honors, riches, and friends; and he became a Baptist, and wrote one of the fullest and ablest works extant on “Mode and Subjects of Baptism.” Out of about 400 millions of so-called Christians in the world, less than 4 millions—less than one in a hundred—insist upon the First and Most important mark of the Apostolic church—a spiritual and regenerated church membership. What a lamentable falling away from the truth is this.

2. The second mark of the apostolic church was the baptism, the immersion of believers in water, in the name of The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost. Those giving credible evidence of a living personal faith in the Triune Jehovah were taken by the ministry, or by persons authorized by the church, and dipped, plunged, overwhelmed, or inundated in water, in the name of The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost. Thus were those already born of The Spirit born symbolically of the water and initiated into the membership of the visible church, entitled to all her privileges and exposed to all her persecutions. Thus was it clearly and beautifully and divinely indicated that they were thoroughly identified with Christ, made a part of His mystical body, “buried with Him in baptism, and risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead,” “quickened together with Christ from the death of trespasses and sins, fully and freely forgiven and washed from their sins by the blood of The lamb” (Col. 2:12-14; Rom. 6:4-5; Titus 3:5-7; Eph. 5:25-27). Thus were powerfully and comprehensively symbolized the central, vital truths of the gospel—regeneration by the

purifying power of The Spirit of God and redemption by the atoning blood of The Son of God, and the identity, as shown by the words of the administrator, of The Father with The Spirit and Son—and the personal faith of the baptized in those truths. Thus does this one divine ordinance impressively preach the entire substance of the gospel of Christ. It was instituted and commanded by Christ, and practiced by the Apostles, and is to be observed by the church in all its primitive fullness and beauty down to the end of time.

The highly important apostolically established connection between the believer and the sufferings and triumph of Christ symbolized in the ordinance of baptism—ininitely more important than the temporal union of husband and wife—has been rationalistically and audaciously dissolved by the substitution of sprinkling, or pouring for baptism by the Roman Catholic society and her Protestant daughters. In all human literature there is not another word whose meaning *is more certain*, and yet *more disputed*, than the Greek word BAPTIZO. The history of this word presents the strongest demonstration of the willful and obstinate blindness and perversity of the carnal mind. Just as mankind had at first from Adam a natural knowledge of the true God, but soon willfully departed from that knowledge, as shown by Paul in the first chapter of Romans, and greedily plunged into idolatry and vileness, and were given over by God to a reprobate mind; so the true meaning of *baptizo*, as all lexicography and church history prove, was perfectly well known to the world for more than thirteen centuries after Christ, but, for the last few hundred years, the meaning of this word has been most unblushingly and industriously perverted, not so much by Romanist, as by Protestant theologians, for the purpose of suiting carnal ideas of human expediency, convenience and decency. “The Romanist (as also the Romanizing Protestant) bases the change from baptism to sprinkling, not on an altered view of the original form of the rite, but on the authority of his ‘church’ to alter rites and ceremonies; “but, as Protestants generally claim to adhere strictly to the Bible, *they* seek, in order to justify their change of the ordinance of baptism, to explain away the *ineradicable ground-idea of the word baptizo, and make it the most general term imaginable for the application of water in any form*. This religious error, because of the headway which it has made in English-speaking countries, is embodied in the latest Unabridged Dictionaries of Webster and Worcester. A later and higher authority on etymology than either of these works is Walter W. Skeat’s “Etymological Dictionary of the English Language,” in which the only meaning of baptism is “*a dipping*,” baptist, “*a dipper*,” baptize, “*to dip*.” The derivation of all these English words is from the Greek word *baptizo*, for the meaning of which word we must of course consult the Greek Lexicon. Now every respectable Greek scholar in England and America will admit that there is *only one standard Greek English Lexicon published in Europe or America, and that is the seventh edition of*

Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon, published in 1883. It unquestionably represents the latest and highest combined scholarship of Europe and America. This Lexicon is now before the present writer, and gives absolutely *but one meaning of baptizo*, “to dip in or under water.” with several subordinate but like meaning applications, as follows: “of ships, to ship or disable them; (metaphorically) of the crowds who flocked into Jerusalem at the time of the siege; to be drenched (metaphorically), soaked in wine, over head and ears in debt, drowned with questions or getting into deep water; to draw wine by dipping the cup in the bowl; to baptize; (in the middle-voice) to dip one’s self, to get one’s self baptized.” Here it is seen that dipping or immersion is the essential meaning of the word, The meaning “bathe” given in the sixth edition, is omitted, because found to be erroneous. The meaning “repeatedly” (“to dip repeatedly”), given in the second edition, is omitted because erroneous—the word *baptizo*, from *bapto*, to dip, being frequentative in form, but not in meaning, having an active or causative meaning, to make or cause another to dip; by a common tendency in language the strong form of a word gradually takes the place of a weak form, with no essential difference in meaning. The meanings “pour, steep, wet,” given in the first edition, published in 1843, were *abandoned* and *expunged* as *untenable* within a year and a half after their publication. The compilers of this standard Greek-English Lexicon are Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, both of them being deans, clergymen and “Doctors of Divinity” in the Established (or Episcopal) “Church of England;” not their sympathy for the Baptists, but their knowledge and reputation as scholars, have compelled them to give *baptizo* its only proper meaning of *dipping* or *immersion*. “Immersion, as the proper significance of *baptizo* and the original form of the rite, has been affirmed through all the Christian ages, and is still affirmed by the highest scholarship of Christendom, Oriental, Roman Catholic and Protestant.” The Greek Catholic “Church,” which certainly ought to understand the meaning of the Greek word *baptizo*, has always immersed and still immerses, even in the severe climates of Russia and Siberia, all its members, both infants and adults, and uncompromisingly declares that every other form of the rite is essentially invalid. Contrary to Ephesians 4:5, triple or trine immersion is practiced by the Greek “Church,” and was the usage of the most Christendom from the end of the second to the end of the twelfth century. The Roman Catholic “Church” at first allowed sprinkling or pouring only in the case of sick persons (*clinici*)—the first recorded instance being the case of Novatian, of Rome, about A.D. 250; but the sprinkling of well persons “gradually came in,” says the Encyclopedia Britannica (ninth edition), “in spite of the opposition of councils and hostile decrees. The Roman Catholic Council of Ravenna, in A.D. 1311, was *the first council* of the ‘Church’ which legalized baptism by sprinkling, by leaving it to the choice of the officiating minister.” The first pope that sanctioned sprinkling for baptism was Stephen II., A.D. 753. In England and Scotland

immersion was the ordinary practice till after the “Reformation.” “What principality tended to confirm the practice of affusion or sprinkling,” says the Encyclopedia Britannica, “was that several of our Protestant divines, flying into Germany and Switzerland during the bloody reign of Queen Mary, and coming home when Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, brought back with them a great zeal for the Protestant churches beyond the sea, where they had been received and sheltered. And having observed that at Geneva, and some other places, baptism was administered by sprinkling, they thought that they could not do the Church of England a greater service than by introducing a practice dictated by so great an oracle as Calvin.” It is proper here to state that Calvin, in his *Institutes*, says: “The word baptize signifies to *immerse*; and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.” In his commentary on Acts 8:38, Calvin says that “the church granted liberty to herself to change the rites somewhat.” In 1643 the Westminster (Presbyterian) “Assembly of Divines,” through the influence of John Lightfoot, voted for sprinkling instead of immersion by a majority of *one*—24 voting for immersion and 25 for sprinkling. In 1644 the English Parliament sanctioned their decision, and decreed that sprinkling should be the legal mode of administering the ordinance. The independents, or Congregationalists, adopted sprinkling from the Presbyterians; and the Methodists, in the eighteenth century, from the Episcopalians. John Wesley says: “The ancient manner of baptizing was by immersion.” The “form” of baptism was regarded by all these Protestants bodies as *non-essential*, as though the term “baptism” was an indefinite one for the application of water in general, which it is perfectly certain that it is not; or as though man has the right or power to change an ordinance of Christ, which he has no more right or power to do than he has to change the course of nature.

As God is unchangeable, so is “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever,” and his ordinances, like those of God in nature, are unchangeable. It was a terrible sin visited by a terrible punishment, for a man to presume to alter an ordinance of God under the old dispensation (Lev 10; Num 16; 1 Sam 13; 2 Sam 6);” the ordinances of the new testament, though fewer in number, are not of less solemnity and authority, nor is there any scriptural evidence that they may be altered by man.” He who instituted these ordinances can alone change or abrogate them. No theories or traditions or precepts of men are to allowed to make void or modify the commandments of God. By an examination of the ancient and modern versions of the new testament, we find that when the word *baptizo* is not simply transferred, but translated, the translators employ a word which signifies to immerse, except in a few modern versions. They never translate *baptizo* by “sprinkle” or “pour.” AS Mr. T.J. Conant says: “Translation decides the controversy, and ends it; for only one translation can be given the word *baptizo*.” In his exhaustive work entitled “*Baptizein*,” this able New York scholar examines 175

instances of the use of *baptizo* through the entire period of the existence of Greek literature, and finds that “the ground-idea expressed by this word is to put into or under water or other penetrable substance, so as to entirely immerse or submerge; that this act is always expressed in the literal application of the word, and is the basis of its metaphorical uses; that *from the earliest age of Greek literature down to its close, not an example has been found in which the word has any other meaning.*” Now, as the word *baptizo* invariably involves the idea of immersion, and never means pouring or sprinkling, it is as obvious as the noon-day sun in a cloudless sky that *every objection to immersion, and every argument for pouring or sprinkling, as scriptural or apostolic baptism, sink into total insignificance—are indeed, annihilated;* and so in every case has the most recent and accurate scholarship found every such objection and every such argument to disappear.

Before proceeding to examine these objections and arguments, let us briefly inquire why Christ and his apostles did not use *some other word* from the copious Greek vocabulary to designate the ordinance of initiation into His church. “*Bapto* is found *three* times in the New Testament, and this also means to dip, but is never applied to baptism. Why not? Because, besides being sometimes intransitive, it also means to dye, and therefore with this word the ordinance might have been misunderstood. *Louo* is found six times in the New Testament, and means to wash, to wash the whole body, *to bathe*. If as some say, baptism means to wash, here was just the word to express it. But this word is never applied to the ordinance. *Nipto* is found seventeen times, and means *to wash extremities*, but is never applied to baptism. Why not, if a little water applied to the head may be baptism? *Rantizo* means to *sprinkle*, and is found in the New Testament *four* times. This would have been the very word used to designate baptism if, as some say, that ordinance is properly performed by sprinkling. But this word is in no instance so used. Why not? Because sprinkling is not baptism. *Cheo* means to *pour*, and is found eighteen times in various combinations, but is never applied to baptism. If baptism is pouring water on the candidate, why was not this word used some times to express it? *Katharizo* means to *purify*, to cleanse, and is found thirty times, but never applied to the ordinance of baptism. If, as some say, the ordinance signifies nothing but purification, this word would have expressed it. Christ and his Apostles *baptizo* to designate the ordinance of baptism, because baptism is essentially a dipping or immersion.”—*E. T. Hiscox*. A dipping in water is both a washing or cleansing and a temporary burying. The immediate immersion or uplifting of the body out of the water, which was always done by John and the Apostles, fitly symbolized both the birth of the Spirit and the resurrection with Christ to newness of life. Mr. E.D. Barclay, in his full, clear and interesting work entitled “A Comparative View of the Words Bathe, Wash, Dip, Sprinkle and Pour, of the English Bible, and of their Originals in the

Hebrew Septuagint (or Greek) Copies,” shows that while in the old testament the Hebrew has fifteen words, and the Greek thirty-one words, translated in the English “*pour;*” and the Hebrew two words, and the Greek sixteen words, translated in the English “*sprinkle;*” and the Hebrew four words, and the Greek eleven words, translated in English “*wash;*” and the Hebrew two words and the Greek two words, translated in the English “*bathe;*” no one of these twenty three Hebrew words and sixty Greek words is ever translated in the English Bible *dip*, or *immerse*, or *plunge*. In the Hebrew old testament two words, *tabal* and *machats*, and in the Greek old testament three words, *bapto*, *baptizo*, and *moluno*, are translated in the English old testament “*dip*” or “*plunge;*” *tabal* occurs sixteen times, and is translated fourteen times by *bapto*, once by *baptizo* (2 Kings 5:14), and once by *moluno* (Gen 37:31); *machats* occurs one time (Ps. 68:23), and is translated *bapto*; *tabal* is translated “*dip*” fifteen times and “*plunge*” one time (Job 9:31); *machats* in its one occurrence is translated “*dip,*” but is rendered by Gesenius, the ablest Hebrew lexicographer, “to shake, to move to and fro, to stir;” *moluno* is not defined by Liddell and Scott to *dip*, but, “to stain, sully, defile.” The passage in which *tabal* is translated by the Septuagint *baptizo* is in regard to Naaman, who “went down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God.” Mr. Barclays conclusion is that “the Hebrew Septuagint and English copies of the old testament, taken together, do not furnish the slightest authority for translating *baptizo* by either ‘sprinkle’ or ‘pour;’ but all three copies authorize ‘*dip*’ as the translation of this Greek verb.” He also shows that the closest and most searching examination of the old and new testaments, in the Hebrew, Greek and English, does not find a single instance of the sprinkling or pouring of unmixed water on any person or thing for any religious purpose whatever, and therefore such sprinkling or pouring is not by Divine but by purely human authority.” Jesus says of the unbelieving, tradition observing Jews: “In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:9). Jesus himself was, says Mark (1:10), “baptized (*eis*) into the Jordan.” John baptized in the Jordan and in other places where there was “*much water.*” “In the vast crowds attending Christ’s preaching, no allusion is made to the need of water; it is mentioned only where baptizing is referred to. ‘Much water’ certainly could not have been necessary for sprinkling or pouring, as it is not necessary for such a purpose now; “nor do men now go to rivers for sprinkling or pouring. Paul twice alludes to baptism as a burial (Rom. 6:4 Col.2:12). Where our English version has the words “baptize with water,” the Greek has “baptize (*en*) in water.” The Greek preposition *en* occurs, it is said 2,720 times; in about 2,500 places it is correctly rendered in; in over 20 other places, out of 2,720 does it necessarily mean *with*. “How clear and edifying is the testimony of The Holy Spirit to the method of our salvation in the Divine ordinance of baptism, properly performed! How is it that a vile sinner can escape the wrath of God, and obtain eternal life? How is it that Christ’s work is

available for him? Why, when even Christ paid our debt, we ourselves have paid our debt, for we are one with Christ. We have died with Christ, and have risen with Christ; Christ's death is our death; Christ burial is our burial; Christ's resurrection is our resurrection; Christ's sitting in heavenly places is our sitting in heavenly places."—*Alex Carson*. Baptism is not, as virtually represented by the prevailing Catholic and Protestant theories, a magical, material, mechanical, chemical or electrical means and instrument of grace and salvation; but it is simply and beautifully the divinely-ordained outward symbol or emblem of the inward spiritual cleansing of our guilty souls by the saving application which The Holy Spirit makes to us of the atoning blood of The Lord Jesus Christ. No ordinance of Christ must be put idolatrously in the place of Christ. The statements in the new testament about our being "sprinkled" and "washed with the blood of Christ" are allusions to the sprinklings and washings under the law; *they are no where called baptisms*. In the phrase "born of water," water is figuratively represented as the womb from which we come. Christ, after having been baptized "came up straightway out of the water" (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10). So the eunuch, who had "gone down into the water, came up out of the water" (Acts 8:38-39). Along each one of the three roads from Jerusalem to Gaza, modern travelers tell us that there are occasionally streams, or pools, or fountains, or wadies, containing amply enough water for immersion. As for a sufficiency of water in Jerusalem to immerse the 3,000 on the day of Pentecost, the city contained, besides a countless number of large and deep and private cisterns, six immense public pools, with shelving, descending sides, affording the most extensive bathing or swimming accommodations—the Mosaic law and the traditions of the Elders requiring a vast quantity of water for ceremonial ablutions. During none of its numerous sieges did the city suffer from the lack of water. It is not stated that the 3,000 were all actually baptized on the same day; but it could have been easily in a few hours by either the twelve Apostles or by the seventy disciples helping them. Immersion takes very little longer than sprinkling or pouring if the baptismal formula is repeated with each, as is always done. Allowing one minute for each immersion, which is sufficient, twelve could have immersed 3,000 in two hundred and fifty minutes, or four hours and ten minutes; Eighty-two persons could have immersed 3,000 in thirty seven minutes. As Peter began preaching about the third hour of the day (Acts 2:15) or nine o'clock in the forenoon, and it is not probable that he spoke more than two or three hours, but apparently much less time than this, there was abundance of time left for the baptism of 3,000 persons by twelve or eighty two administrators on the same day. The Philippian jailer (Acts 21:33) was immersed as the ablest commentators think, in a tank or pool or cistern in the court of the prison—such a reservoir as ancient houses usually had for the receiving the rain from the slightly inclined roof; or the immersion may have taken place in the neighboring river, Gangas, beside which, "prayer was wont to be made" (Acts 16:13) In Acts 9:18 it is

not said that Paul was baptized in the house of Judas, but he may have been, as “Damascus now abounds in water, and all the better houses either have a reservoir in their court, or stand beside a natural or artificial stream.” Paul’s remark in 1 Corinthians 10:1-2 “that our fathers were under the cloud, and passed through the sea, and were baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea,” shows that the Apostle Paul had in view, as an image of baptism, not a mere sprinkling or pouring, but a complete immersion or investment.

Peter’s comparison of baptism to the flood (1 Peter 3:20-22) is highly significant. “The ark in which Noah and his family were saved by water was God’s ordinance; it was made according to the pattern He gave to Noah, as baptism is His ordinance; and as the ark was the object of the scorn of men, so is the ordinance of baptism, rightly administered; and as the ark represented a burial when Noah and his family were shut up in it, so baptism; and when the fountains of the great deep were broken up below, and the windows of heaven were opened above, the ark, with those in it, were as it were covered with and immersed in water, and so was a figure of baptism by immersion; and as there were none but adult persons in the ark, who were saved by water in it, so none but adult persons are the proper subjects for water baptism; and though there were few who were in the ark, it was attended with a salutary effect to them—they were saved by water; so such as truly believe in Christ and are baptized shall be saved, and that by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which was typified by the coming of Noah and his family out of the ark, to which baptism, as the antitype, corresponds, being an emblem of the same.”—*John Gill*. In Mark 7:4 and Luke 11:38 the Greek verb rendered “wash” is *baptizo* (immerse); and this meaning of immersion exactly agrees with superstitious traditions of the Jewish Rabbis, as shown by Mr. Gill from the Talmud and the writings of Maimonides. “The Pharisees, upon touching the common people or their clothes, as they returned from market, or from any judicature, were obliged to immerse themselves in water before they ate; and Scaliger observes that the more superstitious of them, everyday before they sat down to meat, dipped the whole body. And not only cups, pots and brazen vessels were washed by dipping, but even beds, pillows and bolsters, unclean in a ceremonial sense, were washed in this way, according to the traditions of the Elders.” In regard to the doubtful statement in the Apocryphal book of Judith (12:7), the writer says that it was night when Judith “dipped” herself in the fountain of water. —An object that has only a few drops of water sprinkled or poured cannot be said to be washed. It was a rule with the Jews that where the law required the washing of the flesh or the clothes, the whole body must be dipped; for said they, “If any man dips himself all over except the tip of the little finger, he is still in his uncleanness” (*Maimonides*). —In Luke 12:50 Christ calls his own approaching sufferings “a baptism,” thus expressing their abundance, like deep waters and floods,

into which he was to be plunged, covered and overwhelmed (see Ps. 69:1-2; Isa. 43:2). —“The baptism in the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5-Greek), which Jesus promised his disciples, was fitly represented on the day of Pentecost by a complete immersion in the wind and fire, the emblem of The Spirit (Acts 2:2-4); the sound as of a rushing mighty wind filled all the house where they were sitting, and tongues as of fire sat upon each of them. They were thus surrounded by the wind and covered by the fire. The Spirit is not material, but spiritual; and we cannot understand the methods of His operation upon the soul in the new creation, any more than we can understand the methods in which God created the material universe out of nothing. The descriptive terms used in connection with the emblems of The Spirit are special accommodations to the particular emblem employed, and do not denote the mysterious manner of the communication of The Spirit. Natural things cannot explain the method in which The Spirit acts. The Spirit is not like water; but the effects of the two are similar. He is said to be poured, because He is supposed to dwell above, and His influences are like those of water; on the same principle on which God is said to have come down from Heaven, or to look down from Heaven, in accommodation to our ways of thinking and speaking. The ordinance of baptism was not intended to represent the mode of The Spirit’s communication. If baptism can be represented by pouring water out of a cup, it can just as scripturally be represented by the falling of water in rain, its springing out of the earth, its running in a stream, its distilling in dew, or by the drinking of water, or the anointing with oil, or the blowing of the wind, or the blazing of fire, or the flying of a dove, or the exhalation of breath. These various terms are adapted to each special emblem, and do not explain The Spirit’s mode of operation. Baptism, then, can not be either pouring or dipping for the sake of representing the manner of the conveyance of The Holy Spirit; for there is no such likeness. Pouring of The Spirit is a phrase, which is itself a figure, not to be represented by another figure. Baptism is a figure, not of the mode of The Spirit’s operation, to which there can be no likeness, but of the burial and resurrection of Christ, which may be represented by natural things, because it respects the objects of sense. Baptism or immersion in the Spirit does not represent the mode of The Spirit’s conveyance, but such complete subjection to The Spirit’s influence as an object immersed in a fluid experiences from the fluid.”—*Alex Carson*. —Not water-baptism, but the Holy Spirit, is the seal of the new covenant (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30). The salvation of the dying thief was no doubt meant to be one strong proof that water baptism is not a saving ordinance. — The erection of numerous large baptisteries, or great circular or octagonal buildings with immense cisterns in them for baptism, in Greek and Latin Christendom, from the fourth to the ninth centuries, proves the practice of immersion during that period. As for some of the cisterns being only about three feet deep, it was common at that time for the candidate alone to enter the water and kneel down, and for the minister, who stood outside, to bend the head of the candidate forward into the water; besides infant

baptism had then become common, and for the immersion of infants but little depth of water was required. Certainly these large cisterns were never intended for mere sprinkling or pouring. As for baptism being represented sometimes by pouring, in some old mosaics and frescoes and in the Roman catacombs, pouring was sometimes used by the Catholics in connection with immersion; the dates of the representations are quite uncertain; and it is known that additions have been made by modern hands. A deep and lasting impression was made some years ago upon my mind by the solemnity and emotion of a remark addressed to me by a humble, lovely and exemplary gentleman, now deceased, who had been a Presbyterian, but was then a Baptist minister, Mr. Thomas R. Owen, of Tarboro, N.C., well known to hundreds of the readers of these pages. He had visited my native town of Williamston, N.C., some years before the war, while a Presbyterian, and had preached; and now, being a Baptist, he had come again and preached. I heard him both times; and, after the last sermon I approached him, and alluded to his former visit. "*Ah! Then,*" said he, with deep earnestness and feeling—"*Ah! Then I was in darkness on the subject of baptism.*" More than three fourths of the professedly Christian worlds are still in darkness on that important subject. More than three hundred out of four hundred millions have abandoned the original and Divine ordinance of immersion, as instituted by The Lord Jesus Christ, and as practiced by the apostolic church, and have adopted in its stead a feeble human counterfeit. "There can be no question," says Mr. A. P. Stanley, late "Dean of Westminster Abbey," that the original form of baptism, the very meaning of the word, was complete immersion in the deep baptismal waters, and that for at least four centuries any other form was either unknown or unregarded, unless in the case of dangerous illness, as an exceptional, almost a monstrous case." In the early centuries baptism was an entire submersion in the deep water, a leap as into a rolling sea or the rushing river, where for the moment the waves close over the bather's head, and he emerges again as from a momentary grave. This was the part of the ceremony on which the Apostles laid so much stress. It seemed to them like a burial of the old former self and the rising up again of the new man. So St. Paul compared it to the Israelites passing through the roaring waves of the Red Sea, and St. Peter to the passing through the deep waters of the flood. Immersion followed, no doubt, the examples of the Apostles and of their Master. It has the sanction of the venerable churches of the early ages, and of the sacred countries of the East. Baptism by sprinkling was rejected by the whole ancient church (except in the rare case of death-beds or extreme necessity) as no baptism at all. The change from immersion to sprinkling has set aside the most apostolic expressions regarding baptism, and has altered the very meaning of the word." No wonder that, on this and many other accounts, Chevalier Bunsen should declare that Protestantism, as well as Catholicism, needs, in order to restore to primitive Christianity, a "*Second Grand Reconstructive Reformation.*"

The apostolic churches were Baptist Churches, because composed of baptized believers; and, even if no intervening links were discoverable, it would be absolutely certain that the churches of the Bible Baptist of the nineteenth century originated from, and are the only spiritual successors of, the apostolic churches. The learned Mosheim said of the Baptist of his day that “their origin was hidden in the remote depths of antiquity.” This was quite complimentary to them as coming from a Lutheran historian, of course, but not complimentary enough after all; for, although they originated in the remote depths of antiquity, their origin was not hidden at all. It was apparent and conspicuous as the noonday sun. Did that bright luminary of heaven cast his brilliant rays in the first century over Asia, Africa and Europe? So was the progress of these Primitive Baptist as clearly seen in, Palestine, Egypt, Arabia, Syria, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, Galatia, Cappadocia, Mysia, Macedonia, Greece, Italy, and the islands of the Sea. Nay, verily they were not hidden, but were as a city set on a hill which could not be hid.

3. The third mark of the apostolic church was that the members, being baptized believers, came frequently around The Table of The Lord, and commemorated the suffering and death of their precious Redeemer, by partaking of common bread to represent His body broken, and common wine to represent His blood shed for them. The two practices of Baptism and The Lords Supper, or Communion, were called ordinances of the church, and were strictly observed. Baptism represented the initiation into the Divine life by an identification with Christ in His death and burial and resurrection, and by the regenerating and cleansing efficacy of The Holy Spirit; while communion represented the continued support of the new internal heavenly life by spiritual food, even the body and blood of The Son of God, thus assimilating the children of God more and more to the perfect image of Christ. Life must not only be *begun*, but it must be *supported with proper food*; and the Christian life is *both spiritual in its origin and spiritual in its continuance, and all is of God*. Only those persons who made a credible profession of faith in Christ were baptized (that is, immersed in water in the name of The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost by the apostles; and only those persons thus believing and thus baptized were admitted by the apostles to the ordinance of The Lord’s Supper. Life cannot be supported before it is begun. The apostles, to whom Christ first gave the symbols of His broken body and shed blood, were themselves baptized believers, several of them having been previously disciples of John the Baptist. Christ’s commission to the apostles authorized them first to preach or teach or disciple, then to baptize, then to teach to observe all his commandments, one of these commandments being the ordinance of His Supper. On the day of Pentecost, accordingly, after Peter had preached the gospel, those “gladly receiving” it, were baptized; and “they continued steadfastly in the apostles’

doctrine and in fellowship, and in *breaking of bread*, and in prayers” (Acts 2:41-42). At Troas only the “disciples” came together to break bread (Acts 20:7). It was not upon the unbaptized or unbelievers, but upon “the church of God” (1 Cor. 1:2), that Paul enjoined the observance of the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-34); and he praised the brethren for keeping the ordinances as he had delivered them to them (1 Cor. 11:2). If “brethren” walked “disorderly,” the apostle commanded the church to “*withdraw*” from such (2 Thess. 3:6) and “not to eat or commune with a man called a brother, but really a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner” (1 Cor. 5:11). It was plainly implied that the church was to judge the qualifications or disqualifications of persons for the sacred ordinance of communion. As it was the Table of The Lord, none but those who were declared by Him to be qualified could be admitted to it. Persons who were *unregenerate*, therefore could not be permitted to commune; persons who, even if they were regenerate, had *not* been *baptized* (that is, immersed in the water in the name of The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost) could not be allowed to commune; persons who, even though regenerate and baptized, *walked disorderly*, could not be permitted to commune. These requirements, laid down by the Divine Head of the church, plainly exclude from the Lord’s Table infants, unrenewed adults, and even Christians, if only sprinkled or poured and not baptized, and even properly baptized Christians, if their conduct is unbecoming the gospel of Christ. In regard to these laws of exclusion, the church has no discretion; they were unchangeably instituted by her Divine Master, and are to be faithfully executed by her as long as she has existence on the shores of time. In the apostolic church only those who “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and in fellowship” communed (Acts 2:42); the cup and the bread were “the communion of the body of Christ”—the many members constituting “one bread and one body” (1 Cor. 10:16,17). The primitive church so heartily loved and fellowshiped one another that they had all things in common (Acts 2:44; John 13:34, 35; 1 Cor. 13:13; 1 John 3:14-18)—a blessed union of life and love that will be perfectly realized in glory, Christ (Ps. 17:15; Rom. 8:29; Eph. 3:19; 1 John 4:8). For communion and worship the apostolic church at first met “*daily*” (Acts 2:46), and afterwards *weekly*, on the first day of the week (John 20:19, 26; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2; Rev. 1:10). The churches were not told by Christ how often they were to observe this blessed ordinance, but, “as oft as they did it, to do it in remembrance of Him” (1 Cor. 11:25). Thus was the sacred Supper to be a symbolic and grateful commemoration of our adorable Redeemer, who laid down His precious life for us; an impressive personal profession of our personal faith in Him and His atonement for us; a symbol of church fellowship; and a prophecy of the marriage supper of the Lamb in Heaven (Matthew 26:29; Rev. 19:9). The Lord’s Supper is nowhere in the scriptures called a “sacrament or seal” of salvation, an effective “means of grace,” nor do the scriptures teach the gross material Catholic doctrine that the

bread and wine become the veritable body and blood of Christ (transubstantiation), or the almost equally gross Lutheran doctrine that the real body of Christ is in, with and under the bread and wine (consubstantiation). The verb “to be” sometimes in all languages means “to represent” or “symbolize,” as in Genesis 41:26-27; Exodus 12:11; Ezekiel 37:11; Daniel 7:24; Matthew 13:38-39; Revelation 1:20, 17:9, 12, 18. Christ calls Himself “the door” (John 10:9), “the good shepherd” (John 10:11), “the way, the truth, the life” (John 14:6), “the true vine,” and Paul calls Christ “that rock” (1 Cor. 10:4). And so when Christ says, “This is my body—this is my blood,” referring to the bread and wine in His Supper, He speaks, not literally, but figuratively, meaning, “this represents my body—this represents my blood.” The bread and wine are the blessed emblems and memorials of our once dying but ever-living and ever-loving Lord, who is now bodily absent from us, and whom we are thus to remember, and show His death till He come (1 Cor. 11:25-26). They are in no sense to be deified and idolized, as in the Catholic pretended sacrifice of the “Mass” which has become a chief element of Romish worship. The monstrous papal doctrine of the “Mass” is not only a contradiction of our senses and reason, but a contradiction of our faith, which assures us that the offering of the body of Christ was made once for all, by that one offering forever perfecting them that are sanctified, and that His glorified humanity is seated at the right hand of The Father upon His mediatorial throne (Heb. 10:10-14; 1:3; 7:24-27). The idolatrous doctrine of transubstantiation was first explicitly taught by Paschasius Radbert, A.D. 831 and was first decreed as an article of faith at the instance of Pope Innocent III., by the fourth “Lateran Council,” A.D. 1215. This was more than a Millennium too late for it to be a doctrine of the apostolic church. Neither the apostles nor any of their real spiritual successors or followers could tolerate for a moment the idea of “crucifying the Son of God afresh” (Heb. 6:6); only a man made, carnal, unbelieving, unfeeling, ambitious, covetous “priesthood” could ever have devised or sanctioned the gross heathenish idolatry of the “Mass,” which they pretend to be an efficacious sacrifice for the sins both of the living and the dead, and which they assiduously use for the purpose of replenishing their purses and perpetuating their power over a superstitious people. —The bread used by Christ was “*artos*”—a pure unleavened wheaten loaf (Ex. 12:8-20; Matthew 26:17; Ex. 29:3) and the wine was the “fruit of the vine,” the pure fermented juice of the grape. Unfermented juice of the grape is but a mass of leaven—it is *must*, and not wine; fermentation is the natural clarification of the juice. Paul exhorts the Corinthian church to “keep the feast”, not with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Cor. 5:8). Paul’s expression is figurative; and Christ seems to have used unleavened bread because it was on hand during the Passover. It is probable that the disciples in Acts 2:46 and 20:7 used common, that is leavened bread; this, however is not certain. The Greek Catholics used leavened, and the Roman Catholic unleavened bread, the latter being in the

form of small, thin, round wafers, introduced in the eleventh century, and bearing upon them either the initials of Christ or the initials I.H.S. (IESUS HOMINUM SALVATOR, Jesus the savior of men); the Greek loaf is stamped with the characters I C X C N I K A (*Iesous Christos Nika*, Jesus Christ Conquers). These are human devices of an idolatrous character, utterly unknown to the apostolic church. The Greek “Church” gives in a spoon the eucharistic bread and wine sopped together; beginning in the twelfth, and fully establishing the innovation in the thirteenth century, the Latin “Church” gives the wine to the priest only, on the pleas that the body (represented by the bread) contains the blood, and that there is danger of spilling the blood if passed from one communicant to another, and that the “church” only sanctioned that which had become a custom, and that the priest being, as they pretend, successors to the apostles, should drink the wine. But the Apostles, at the Last Supper, represented the whole church; and Christ, speaking of the wine, says, “Drink ye *all* of it” (Matthew 26:27); and Mark says “They all drank of it” (14:23); and, instead of the body containing the blood, the very *separation* of the two elements, the bread from the wine, the body from the blood, indicates the *death* of Christ. This withholding of the wine or cup from the “laity” or private members caused the Hussite War in Germany (A.D.1420-1433). Men thus make the commandments of God void by their traditions. —As infant baptism was introduced in the third century, so was infant communion; and the latter continued in the Latin “Church”; the Pedobaptist Protestant “Churches,” through professedly baptizing (but really rhantizing or sprinkling) infants, inconsistently withhold communion from infants—every argument for or against the one practice is equally valid for or against the other; there is no reason or scripture for either. Through the fascinating eloquence of Robert Hall (1764-1831), an Arminian “Baptist” preacher of England, the most of the English churches called Baptist practice open or general communion; but the “Strict Baptist” in England practice close communion. In America the Baptist who first settled here suffered so much from the persecutions inflicted upon them by other denominations that they were at first compelled to observe close communion; and those adhering to the scriptures and the apostolic precepts still practice, not a general or open, but a strict close communion.

4. The fourth mark of the apostolic church was the maintenance of strict discipline. Christ was the only perfect being that ever lived on the earth in human form. Neither the apostles or the apostolic churches attained perfection in the flesh (Phil. 3:12-14; 1 John 1:8), but all intelligent students of the bible and church history admit that the strict precepts of the Apostles were more faithfully observed by the apostolic than they have been by any succeeding churches. The church in the apostolic age, especially feeling herself to be the bride of Christ, the temple of The Holy Ghost, earnestly sought to

show her love for her Lord by keeping His holy commandments. In that glorious springtime of love, but little comparatively of the dust of the earth seemed to soil her shining garments; and but few cases of rigid discipline occurred or were recorded. The infidel historian Gibbon considers “the pure and austere morals of the early Christians” as among the causes of the rapid spread of their religion. To show the great importance of prompt and strict discipline, God Himself directly interposed in the case of the first offense in the apostolic church, and struck both the joint offenders, Ananias and Sapphira, with instant death (Acts 5:1-11). The offense was falsehood, hypocrisy, covetousness—an outward semblance of devoting all to God, and yet a real heart worship of mammon. Men “cannot serve both God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24). “If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15). This prompt and rigid act of Divine church discipline caused “great fear to come upon all the church and upon as many as heard these things” (Acts 5:11); and “of the rest durst no man join himself to them” (Verse 13). There can be no doubt that, after this, hypocrites were kept out of the church at Jerusalem for a considerable time. The second example of church discipline is mentioned as having occurred at Corinth (1 Cor. 5). A member of that church was guilty of incest, Corinth, being at that time the most licentious city in the world. But the general prevalence of this or any other vice is no sort of justification for it being tolerated and retained in the church; a little of the leaven of wickedness soon leavens the whole lump. When Paul, at Ephesus, heard with deep grief of this scandal, he wrote the Corinthian church, and as united in spirit with the church, though bodily absent, he, in the name of Jesus Christ, judged that such an offender should be “delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus” —that is, excluded from the church, given over to Satan, the god of this world, for the infliction of bodily affliction, and more the mortification of the sinner’s carnal nature, and for the ultimate repentance and restoration of the offender (1 Cor. 5:13; 2 Cor. 4:4; Job 2:4-7; Luke 13:16 & 22:31; 2 Cor. 12:7; 1 Peter 5:8; Matthew 5:29-30; 1 Cor. 11:30-32; Rom.8:13; 1 Peter 4:1-2). The church at Corinth, according to the Apostles solemn admonition, when they were met together, excluded the offender, and we learn that he afterwards repented and was restored to their fellowship (2 Cor. 2:1-10 & 7:8-12). Even the inspired Apostle did not exclude, but he simply called upon the church, which alone had the authority, to exclude or put away that wicked person from among them (1 Cor. 5:13). It is the church not merely the pastor or Deacons or any other body, to which Christ directs that a trespass shall be finally told (Matthew 18:15-20). Christ alone has the key of the house of David—He alone can open and shut (Isa. 22:22; Rev. 1:18 & 3:7). When the church acts by His Spirit, its course will be ratified in Heaven. The keys given to His Apostles relate, not to church discipline, the admission and exclusion of members, but to gospel doctrine—not whomsoever, but “whatsoever ye bind,” etc. (Matthew 16:19 & 18:18); the

doctrine of the Apostles, and not church discipline, is alluded to in John 20:23 (compare Mark 16:16), for none but God can forgive sins (Ex. 34:7; Isa. 43:25). In the conference at Jerusalem, the brethren took part with the Apostles and Elders in the deliberation and decision (Acts 15:23). The third recorded case of discipline in the apostolic church is that of Hymeneus and Philetus, doctrinal errorists, who withstood Paul's words and denied the resurrection of the body (2 Tim. 2:17-18), and who were "delivered unto Satan that they might learn [be disciplined by chastisement and suffering] not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1:20). A pervading spirit of genuine brotherly love, springing from genuine love and loyalty to Christ, is the best preventive of offenses in the church. Cherishing this spirit, the members should tenderly watch over one another, and, by mutual Christian encouragement, counsel, admonition, and reproof, provoke one another, not to wrath and evil, but to love and good works (Eph. 6:13; Heb. 10:24; Ps. 141:5; Gal. 6:1; Col. 3:12-14). The affectionate subjection of one to another was a marked feature of the simple, unworldly apostolic church. This mutual loving watch-care should be active; it was while the men or servants slept that the enemy sowed tares (Matthew 13:25). —Private or personal offenses are to be adjusted in strict accordance with Christ's directions in Matthew 18:15-17. Christ lays down four distinct steps, which are always to be taken in the order given by Him, and not in a reversed order. First: the aggrieved party, if the other does not, is to take the initiative in seeking a private interview with the supposed offender; if he fails to do so, he himself becomes an offender, as he has violated the law of Christ. The privacy of the interview is highly important; the object is, not altercation, but to gain an offending brother. Perhaps the offending brother is laboring under a mistake; the other brother may not have intended to offend him, and may not be conscience of having done so, or he may not have had an opportunity of explaining his conduct. A private interview conducted in a calm brotherly spirit may and should give full mutual satisfaction. If in such an interview the offense is denied, and there are no witnesses of the offense, the next step cannot be taken; for then the complaining party would become an offender, having published a charge which can not be proved. Absence of proof will leave him no recourse but in private admonition and the patient committal of the matter to Providence. Second: If the first step fails, and the offense can be proved, then one or two other disinterested and judicious members are to be chosen as witnesses and mediators, and the whole case is to be considered before them. They may be able to discover what is right between the members at variance, and the latter may be willing to yield to their decision. If the "one or two more" consider the offense as not real or as satisfactorily removed, the aggrieved party, though unsatisfied, can not take the third step; for the offender has "heard them," and the accuser ought to be satisfied with the judgment of the brethren selected by himself. Third: if the second step fails, the case, after due notification of the parties, is to be laid before the church, the proof adduced, and the opportunity given

for defense. Here the united wisdom and influence of the whole church is brought to bear to reconcile the difference and judge between parties. Fourth: If the party judged by the church to be in fault still refuses to make amends, it is evident that his heart is fully set in him to do evil, and must be excluded from the church; for his refusal to hear the body proves his contempt for the brethren, and they are therefore compelled to withdraw their fellowship from him. If this important law of the Great Head of the church were properly executed, long continued personal feuds, with their disastrous results, bitterness and factions, would be prevented. Differences between members in regard to worldly affairs are expressly forbidden by the inspired Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 6:1-11) to be carried before worldly courts, but must be referred to the judgment of the wise members of the church, the least esteemed of whom, if they have the Spirit of Christ, are better qualified to judge between brethren. Saints are finally to judge the wicked world and angels, and are certainly qualified to judge in small temporal matters. Christians should not contend before the ungodly, and thus bring reproach upon the cause of Christ. Besides, differences among men are often decided in worldly courts, not according to right and equity, but by legal quibbles and technicalities; whereas the children of God should always desire, in reference to their affairs, a judgment according to the equity and the Spirit of Christ. —In regard to moral or public offenses against the order, faith and purity of the church, such as neglect of church obligations, heresy, idolatry, immorality, intemperance, railing and extortion (1 Cor. 5:11; Titus 3:10; 2 Peter 2; Heb. 10:25), these may be divided into minor and gross public offenses. Minor public offenses, such as a member may be led, under strong and sudden temptation, to commit only once, and such as do not greatly scandalize the cause of Christ, are to be treated according to Paul's direction in Galatians 6:1; these erring members are to be restored by the spiritual in the spirit of sympathizing meekness, as all are liable thus to be tempted; in these cases the method of procedure laid down by Christ for personal offenses (Matthew 18:15-17) is in spirit to be observed (Titus 3:10). Christian tenderness may also here succeed in gaining a brother. But, in the case of gross, deliberate, habitual public offenses, or such as greatly scandalize the church, where the evidence is public and unmistakable, there should be, though in a spirit of sorrow and not of bitterness, a prompt absolute exclusion, as the Apostle divinely enjoined in regard to the Corinthian offender (1 Cor. 5); any steps taken to bring such an offender to repentance and restoration should be taken afterwards (2 Cor. 2:1-11). A confession and promise of reformation are not enough to be required of this class of offenders. They should, for the honor of Christ, be at once cut off; and, if they afterwards, by a godly conduct and conversation, bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and prove genuineness of their sorrow and reformation, then they may be restored (2 Cor. 7:8-12; Matthew 3:8; Acts 26:20). The rule in Luke 17:3-4, plainly applies only to personal or private offenses, which do not bring scandal upon the church—not to public or moral offenses which seriously

reproach the cause of Christ. The latter are offenses which the church can not forgive; but, when assured that God has forgiven the offender, she may then receive him back into membership. —In the apostolic church the Elders or presbyters are sometimes called Bishops or overseers or rulers of the flock, and therefore had the special responsibility of maintaining the discipline of the church (Acts 20:17 & 28; 1 Tim. 3:4-5 & 5:17; Heb. 13:7, 17, & 24). Against an Elder an accusation was not to be received but before two or three witnesses (1 Tim. 5:19), because his office is a very presumption in his favor, and because, as a minister, he is peculiarly exposed to malice. An Elder, to be efficient, must be “blameless” (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6-7). A tender, faithful, scriptural discipline, like that observed by the people of God in the apostolic age, is of the highest and most vital importance for the welfare of the church; the neglect of such discipline is the most potent cause of evil in the church. “The object of faithful church discipline is threefold. First: The glory of God, whose great and holy name is dishonored by the evil principles or evil practices of church members, and whose honor is vindicated by their prompt and proper correction. Second: The preservation of the church from corruption and destruction; the old leaven of wickedness must be purged out, to preserve the whole body from infection; evil communications corrupt good manners; lepers were to be put out of the camp, so as not to infect others, and so erroneous persons, whose words eat as a canker (2 Tim. 2:17), must be removed from the communion of gospel churches; a church of Christ is like a garden or vineyard, which if not cared for, will be overrun with thorns and nettles and weeds, but, by a proper and timely discipline, the weeds eradicated, and the withered branches are gathered and cast out. Third: The good of the offending parties, who, if real children of God, are, by proper discipline brought to shame and repentance for their sins, and an acknowledgment of them, when they are to be received again with all love and tenderness, and to be comforted, that they might not be swallowed up with over-much sorrow.”

5. The fifth Mark of the Apostolic Church was the independent or congregational polity or government of each local church, subject only to the Headship of Christ; all the local apostolic churches being united, by no outward bond of force, but by an inward bond of love. The Greek word rendered “church” in the New Testament is “*ekklesia*,” which is derived from the verb *ek-kaleo*, to call out, and denotes an assembly called out, a select body separated from the mass of the people. In ancient Greece the *ekklesia* in each State was the assembly of the free born, native, self-governing citizens, the highest legal body in the land, from which there was no appeal; slaves and foreigners were excluded from the *ekklesia*. In the Septuagint *ekklesia* is the usual rendering of the Hebrew word *kahal*, “the *congregation*” of Israel or of The Lord, from which were excluded the uncircumcised, the unclean and

the “mixed multitude.” Ekklesia occurs in the New Testament 115 times; twice referring to the Hebrew “congregation of The Lord,” three times referring to the Greek assembly, and 110 times referring to the Christian church. In 92 of these last cases the reference is to a special, local, visible society of Christians; in the remaining 18 cases the reference is to the entire body of the elect in Heaven and on earth, or what is sometimes called the invisible church (as in Eph. 5:25,29; Col. 1:18, 24; Heb. 13:23). The word is never used in the New Testament to designate a universal (or catholic) visible church, a national church (as the church of Judea or England), or a denominational church (as the church was not divided into different denominations in the Apostolic Age, and there was not then any great organization, like the Presbyterian Church, or the Methodist Church, including in it self a large number of local congregations). A visible church is always in scripture a local body; and every local church, acting by a majority of it’s members (in 2 Cor. 2:6 “*ton pleionon*” is literally, not “many,” but “*the more,*” *the majority*), *is invested by Christ with the exclusive and final power of receiving, disciplining, excluding and restoring it’s members, electing it’s officers, and transacting all other necessary business* (Rom. 14:1; Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:4-7 & 11-13; Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:16; Acts 1:15-26; 6:1-6; 1 Cor. 16:3; & 14:23). In this last passage the Greek verb “*cheirotoneo*” rendered “*ordained,*” means, according to Liddell and Scott, to stretch out the hand for the purpose of giving one’s vote in the Athenian ekklesia, to appoint an office in the church; the same word used in 2 Cor. 8:19; and, in accordance with the analogy of Acts 6:2-6, the word *cheirotoneo* in Acts 14:23 is explained by the latest and ablest German scholars to *denote the election of Elders in each church under the supervision of Paul and Barnabas*. Especially does the language of Christ in Matthew 18:15-18 demonstrate that *the church is the highest and last ecclesiastical authority on earth*; that there can be no appeal, under the law of Christ, from the decision of the church to a presbytery, or synod, or general assembly, or conference, or convention, or priesthood, or prelacy, or papacy, or Association, or any other earthly authority. After a church has excluded one of it’s members, and classed him with the heathens and publicans, it is not only thoroughly unscriptural, but also thoroughly absurd, to suppose that any man or set of men can, by any exercise of authority, put back such an offender in the fellowship of that church. With true repentance, confession and reformation the fellowship will be restored; but without these exercises gospel fellowship can never be restored. Each gospel church is a separate and independent republic, having Christ as it’s only Head and Lawgiver, and not subject, in any ecclesiastical matters, to any outside jurisdiction; such, according to the ablest scholars and historians, was not only every apostolic church in the first century, but also of the second century (see works of Gibbon, Mosheim, Neander, Coleman, Whately, Burton, Barrow, Schaff, etc.). The church is repeatedly declared in the New Testament to be the body of Christ (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 6:15; 10:17;

12:27; Eph. 1:23; 4:12; 5:23,30; Col. 1:18,24; 2:17); the only Head therefore, of this body, is Christ, who guides and controls and preserves the church as His body. Hierarchies and synods are unscriptural, tyrannous usurpations, which have, through the ages, inflicted grievous wrongs upon the people. It is openly and proudly claimed by the advocates of these ecclesiastical monarchies and oligarchies that these systems are *the fruit and product of the greatest worldly experience and wisdom*; very few scholars, among these advocates, even pretend now to base these systems upon the New Testament. The apostolic church, or church of the first century, they say, was “a strictly supernatural organization, a stranger in this world, standing with one foot in eternity, and longing for the second coming of her heavenly bridegroom; but afterwards, finding that Christ did not come, she, in her new constitution, planted foot firmly upon earth, yet thus became secularized and finally Romanized, and this necessitated a reformation on the basis of apostolic Christianity.” Bible Baptists believe that, not only in the first, but also in every succeeding century, God has had on earth faithful, spiritual, unworldly, un-Romanized apostolic churches, each one of which, in it’s divinely established individuality and independence, has presented an insurmountable and indestructible breakwater against the countless tides of error, strife, and corruption setting in from every quarter; and all of which have been united by no mechanical, outward, worldly, usurping and oppressive bond of force, but by an inward, heavenly, spiritual, emancipating, purifying and elevating bond of Divine love and peace and fellowship, such as The Lord Jesus Christ, their Ever-Living, Unchangeable and Omnipotent Head, in the last solemn moments of His suffering earthly ministry, tenderly enjoined upon them and earnestly besought His Father to grant them (John 13:34-35; 15:12-13; 17:20-23). Born and taught by God, being one body, and having one Spirit, even as they are called in one hope of their calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all, they, not in word only, but in deed and in truth, love one another, and endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (John 1:13; 6:45; Eph. 4:1-6; 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 John 2:27; 3:14-18; 4:7-21). They have always corresponded with each other by brotherly letters and messages, and have from time to time met in a general or associational way, not to lord it over God’s heritage, but to worship God, and to edify, exhort and confirm one another in the most holy faith once delivered to the saints (Acts chap. 13-15; Phil. 2:25; Heb. 10:23-25; 12:22-29; 1 Peter 5:3-5; Jude 3:20). Scriptural Associations are only general meetings of churches, or brethren from different churches, for the purpose of Divine worship and mutual edification; and, while no church should, either in a private or general way, maintain fellowship with a church which persists in heresy or disorder, yet there is not a particle of New Testament or apostolic authority for any such general meeting assuming the functions of an individual church, such as admitting, disciplining, or excluding members of a church, or electing or disciplining church

officers. It cannot be repeated too often that each gospel church is, according to Christ and His Apostles, the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth. While all gospel churches should always so live as to maintain peace and fellowship with each other, Christ nowhere in the New Testament gives the slightest authority for an organic union or consolidation of gospel churches. Such a union would be a fruitful source of corruption and oppression. The New Testament contains not a single example or intimation of the subordination of a church to any ecclesiastical authority outside of itself, whether popes, or diocesan bishops, or synods, or presbyteries, or general assemblies, or councils or associations, or conventions. The simple fact that the Apostles address their epistles, not to church officers or church judicatories, but to the churches of the called and faithful saints of God, proves both the right and responsibility of each church in respect to the management of its own affairs. The idea that the government of the apostolic church was presbyterial or by Elders, originated from the mistake of supposing that the Christian church was a copy of the Jewish synagogue. Bible scholars admit that neither synagogues nor the government of synagogues were of Divine institution, but that they began to be built and established after the Babylonian exile—after the close of the Old Testament canon. The only place in the Old Testament where the Authorized Version of the English Bible contains the word “synagogue” is Psalm 74:8; and the Hebrew word “*moed*” is here rendered by *Gesenius* and the best commentators, “tabernacle of the congregation” —or “holy place” —there being no allusion whatever to any organized body of people or any method of government. Christ and His Apostles use not synagogue, but *ekklisia*, an essentially different governed body to denote a Christian church. Only once in the New Testament did the Greek word “synagogue” used even to denote the place of a Christian assembly, and then by the most Judaic writer in the New Testament, James (2:2). The numerous passages already cited which prove that the church, subject only to Christ, was to govern itself, disprove that elders were to govern it. Elders, bishops or pastors are to lead (*hegeomai*), oversee or preside over (*episkopeo, proistemi*), care for (*epimeeleomai*), and shepherd (*poimaino*) the flock (Heb. 13:7,17,24; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 5:17; 3:5; John 21:15-17; 1 Peter 5:2) they are not to exercise the despotic authority of the Gentile and Jewish rulers (Mark 10:42-45—*archon*; compare Luke 8:41; 24:20; Acts 4:26), not to lord it (1 Peter 5:3—*katakurieuo*, exercise complete dominion over) God’s heritage. Even Christ Himself came not to ministered unto, but to minister (*diakoneo*, to serve: Mark 10:45); and His apostles are servants of the church for Jesus’ sake (2 Cor. 4:5). All His people are made by Him, kings and priest unto God (Rev. 1:5-6; 1 Peter 2:5,9); Christ alone is the High Priest of our profession (Heb. 3:1; 5:5-6)—He alone is the King of kings and Lord of lords. It would be disloyalty to Christ for any church to alienate from itself and delegate to any other persons or set of persons the rights and functions which Christ has committed to her; a gospel church can not have delegates, but

may have messengers. But the sisterhood relationship of churches involve sisterhood obligations. They are all members of the same mystical body of Christ, permeated by the same Divine Spirit, and should be sweetly constrained by the same heavenly love to maintain the strict faith and order of the gospel, to have tender regards for one another's feelings, and to keep the unity of The Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:1-6). In temporal things each church is subject, and should be quietly submissive, to worldly powers (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-25); but in spiritual things each church is subject only to Christ (Matthew 23:8-12; 17:5; John 13:13-14).

6. The Sixth Mark of the Apostolic Church was religious liberty, soul-freedom, a complete separation of church and state, the entire independence of each church from all state control so far as regarded the membership, ministry, organization, faith, worship and discipline of the church. Jesus declared to Pilate "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom was of this world, this would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews" (John 18:36). Peter and John answered the Jewish rulers: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, Judge ye" (Acts 4:19). Those made free by the Son of God are free indeed (John 8:36), and are to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free (Gal. 5:1). Those experiencing the glorious and righteous ministration of the Spirit of God have a Divine liberty from the unscriptural traditions and commandments of men (2 Cor. 3:5-11, 17, 18; Jer. 1:25; Matthew 15:3-9). The church is in *ekklesai*, an assembly of God's people called out from the world. The Jewish theocracy was unique—it was specially instituted and prophetically directed by God for a preliminary, typical and preparatory purpose; and, when that purpose was accomplished more than eighteen centuries ago, the Jewish church—state, in accordance with the original design and by the providence of God, passed forever away, and was perpetually superseded by a superior, personal, internal, spiritual dispensation (Jer. 31:31-34; John 3:1-8; 4:21-24; 16:7-14; Acts 2&7; 2 Cor. 3; Gal., Eph. and Heb). Like the ancient heathen, the modern governments exercise both political and religious powers; and the corrupt and ferocious natures of these governments are fitly indicated by the term "Beasts," applied to them in the apocalyptic language of scripture (Dan 7:3-27; 8:3-25; Rev. chap. 13&17). In the same manner the alliance of church and state in professedly Christian countries has always been productive of corruption and persecution. Worldly-minded religionists have thus sought to increase their influence, number, wealth, power and patronage. Ever since Constantine, the Roman Emperor, in A.D. 313, established "Christianity" by law, national establishments of religion have existed and still exist in Europe, and such an establishment is "A discrimination among religious beliefs, and assumption of infallibility, and a denial of religious liberty." The Roman Catholic "Church," ever since Pope Theodore I., in A.D 648,

assumed the title of “Sovereign pontiff,” has denounced as a blasphemous heresy the doctrine that the conscience is free, not to be forced by human legislation; and it is estimated that, in order to enforce conformity to her religious creed and ceremonial, she has murdered fifty million human beings, with every imaginable device of diabolical cruelty - thus shedding enough martyr blood to fill a stream ten feet wide, ten feet deep and twenty-five miles long. The Papal Syllabus of Errors, issued by Pope Pius IX. December 8, 1864, in article 24, still affirms the right of the Romish “Church” to avail herself of force or temporal power, and there can be no earthly doubt that she will use force and repeat the horrors of the Dark Ages when ever she regains the power to do so. In article 55 of the same syllabus she declares that the church and the state ought not to be separated. It is “One of the anomalies of history that Protestants, coming out of the Roman Catholic church and protesting against her tyrannies, should so readily copied and emulated her repressive measures. All the reformers adopted the theory and brought it into universal and oppressive practice that the state ought to legislate for the church. The Greek, the Lutheran the Reformed, the Presbyterian, the Congregational, the Episcopalian, and every other church, except the Baptist, organized previous to the eighteenth century, were organized and governed with this as a recognized and enforce principle, that state governments ought to support and regulate the church, and enact and exact penalties against all who disbelieved the state creed or neglected the state ritual. This was the universal teaching of statesmen and clergy; and is to this day, though with somewhat modified phases, in every country on the globe except the United States of America.” Doves and lambs and sheep are proverbially inoffensive, and do not make war upon other animal tribes; and so the people of God, who are in Scripture represented by these innocent creatures, do not persecute and destroy other people, but have always, since the ascension of Christ, been zealous advocates of religious of religious liberty. This fact is plainly seen in the history, especially of the Donatists, the Waldenses, and the Baptist. “The first published confession of faith asserting the right of all men to religious liberty was published by English Baptist in A.D. 1611; and in all Baptist documents since there has been no contradictory utterance.” Baptists have always advocated, not simply religious toleration, but religious freedom, and that too, not simply for themselves, but for all men. This is one of their fundamental and unchangeable principles, and has begun to be more or less recognized everywhere during the last hundred years, although previously denounced by statesmen as rebellion, and by theologians as abominable heresy. Bancroft, the historian of the United States, declares that the first instance, in the history of the world, of the establishment of a civil government whose cornerstone was absolute soul-liberty was the little Baptist colony of Rhode Island founded in A.D. 1636 by the Welsh Baptist, Roger Williams, who, flying from religious persecution in Massachusetts, bade adieu to wife and loved ones at home, and, in the middle of January, the coldest

month of a New England winter, betook himself to the wilderness, inhabited by wild beasts and savages, and was for fourteen weeks, he says, “sorely tossed, not knowing what bread or bed did mean.” The Baptist had opportunity to secure state patronage for themselves in Rhode Island in 1636, in Holland in 1819, and in Virginia and Georgia in 1785; but they emphatically refused to do so because they believed and maintained the great Apostolic principle that Christ’s kingdom is a spiritual and not a worldly one, and that the alliance of church and state is destructive to religious purity and liberty. By the influence of the Baptists, the first Amendment to the Constitution of the United States was adopted in 1789, forbidding Congress to make any law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. Even the very idea of the local independence of the state governments is believed to have been derived by Thomas Jefferson from a small Baptist church whose monthly meetings he attended for several months in succession about ten years before the American Revolution; Mr. Jefferson declared that their form of church government was the only form of true democracy then existing in the world. The Roman Catholic nobleman, Lord Baltimore, under whom Maryland was settled in 1633, was obliged, in consequence of the Protestant form of the English government, to tolerate Protestants in his colony; but the toleration was partial and poor—anti-Trinitarians, including Jews, Arians and Unitarians, were condemned to death, and respect for the Virgin Mary was encouraged by fines and whippings, confiscation and exile. The Episcopalian state glebe lands of Virginia were not ordered to be sold until 1802; and offensive religious discriminations were not removed from the laws of the Congregational State of Massachusetts until 1834; the Baptists and Quakers suffered dreadful persecutions from the established “churches” of these two states in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. President Washington declared that “the Baptists had been, throughout America, uniformly the firm friends to civil liberty;” just as Mr. Locke had said that “the Baptists were from the first the friends of just and true, equal and impartial liberty;” and as Sir Isaac Newton had said that “the Baptists were the only denomination of Christians that never symbolized (held the same faith with) Roman Catholics.” “In the code of laws established by the Baptists in Rhode Island,” says Judge Story, “we read for the first time since Christianity ascended the throne of the Caesars, the declaration that conscience should be free, and that men should not be punished for worshiping God in the way they were persuaded He requires.” In all the States and Territories of the United States there is now an entire separation of church and state, accompanied by universal liberty of conscience. This is a peculiar and inestimable boon, which we at present enjoy, and for which we should be devoutly thankful to the merciful providence of God. The time will come, no doubt, when the blessed privilege will be denied even to the people of this now free country (Dan. 7:25; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; Rev. 11:7-13; 13:11-18). The apostolic churches did not persecute human beings on any account,

much less for their religion; and the true successors of those churches have never engaged in persecution.

7. The seventh mark of the apostolic church was that, although there were a few exceptions, the members were generally poor, obscure, unlearned, afflicted, despised, and persecuted. John the Baptist, although greatest among those that are born of women, and filled with The Spirit from his birth, dwelt in the wilderness of Judea, was clothed with camel's hair and a leathern girdle, like the ancient prophets, and ate locusts and wild honey; and he was finally imprisoned and beheaded. The Lord Jesus Christ, though the Creator, upholder, and possessor of all things, yet, as The Son of man, was poorer than the foxes and birds, and had not where to lay His head; He lived nearly all His earthly life obscurely in an obscure province of the Roman Empire; He was unlearned in the wisdom of the schools; He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, despised and rejected of men, smitten of God, forsaken by nearly all His followers, and put to shameful and agonizing death on a Roman cross by the malice of His own Jewish country men. He told His apostles that He sent them forth as sheep among wolves; that, as the world had hated and persecuted Him, so it would hate and persecute them; that the time was coming that whosoever should kill them would think that he was doing God service. And it is generally believed that all the apostles, except John, were put to death. The most of them were illiterate fishermen, and no one except Paul was furnished with much human learning. To the poor cripple at the gate of the temple Peter said, "Silver and gold have I none." Paul worked with his own hands for his necessities. James says, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He has promised to them that love Him?" Paul says to the church in the wealthy city of Corinth: "ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise man after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble (are called); but God has chosen the foolish things of the world confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, and the base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence." The epistle to the Hebrews inspiringly rehearses the unworldly lives of the ancient heroes of faith. Abel was for his religion, slain by his own brother. Enoch walked with God, prophesied against an ungodly world, and passed to glory without dying. Noah preached righteousness in the midst of his corrupt generation, and he believed and feared God, and prepared an ark to the saving of his house. The patriarchs sojourned in tabernacles as strangers and pilgrims on this earth, and desire a better, even a heavenly country. Moses, when he was come to years, refuse to be called the son of Pharaohs daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach

of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, having respect unto the recompense of the reward. "Others," adds the inspired penman, "were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection; and others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were saw asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins, and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in desert and mountains, and dens and caves of the earth." This is the truthful picture of God's people during the most of the eighteen centuries since the apostolic age. Those living godly, with supreme reference to God, are hated by the world, and suffer persecution; like the prophets and apostles before them, they experience tribulation in the world, but peace in Christ, and they at last come out of great tribulation, and ascend in blood-washed robes to the paradise of God (2 Tim. 3:12; Matthew 5:10-12; John 16:33; Rev. 7:13-17). They have been persecuted in manifold ways and slain, in all lands, by Pagans, Papists, and Protestants. Comparatively few, and afflicted, and poor, and despised, they have trusted, not in man, but in The Lord, and, as represented by the sun-clothed woman in Revelation, when persecuted by the dragon, they have fled into the wilderness, prepared by God for them, and God's hidden ones have there been nourished by the Most High (Deut. 7:7; Matthew 7:14; Zeph. 3:12; Ps. 34:19; Isa. 48:10; 54:11; 2 Cor. 4:8-9,17-18; 6:9-10; Heb. 10:32-34; Jer. 17:5-8; Phil. 3:3-4; Rev. 12; Ps. 83:3; 1 Kings 17; Heb. 13:5-6). When put to death they prayed for their murderers (Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60); when driven by persecution to other countries, they have gone preaching the word to the people prepared by The Lord to hear it (Matthew 10:23; Acts 8; 13:44-52; & chap. 16-28). Among the persecuted people of God have been the Novatians, Donatists, Cathari, Paterines, Paulicians, Petrobrusians, Henericans, Arnoldists, Albigenses, Waldenses, Lollards, Mennonites and baptists, nearly all of whom were occasionally designated Anabaptist or re-baptizers by their enemies, because they disregarded infant or unregenerate baptism, and baptize all adults, whether previously baptized or not, who, upon a credible profession of faith, applied to them for the membership in their churches-thus insisting upon a spiritual or regenerated church membership, the First and most important mark of the apostolic church. The "wilderness" (*eremos*, desolate, lonely, solitary region) into which the people of God have often fled has been found in the wild forests and mountains of Asia, Europe, and America, especially the mountainous districts of the Alps, the Pyrenees and Wales. Like Lazarus, in the parable of Christ, they had evil things in this world, but comfort in the eternal world (Luke 16:25). As the poet has truly said;

**The path of sorrow, and that path alone
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.**

again:

Trials make the promise sweet

Trials give new life to prayer

Trials bring us to Christ feet

Lay us low, and keep us there.

8. The eighth mark of the apostolic church was the fraternal equality, the essential priesthood, of all the members, in accordance with which fact they chose to office among them those of their number whom they perceived to be already qualified thereunto by the Spirit of God—there being but two classes of officers, Bishops, or Elders, or Pastors, and Deacons; the fraternal equality of all the members involving the fraternal equality of the ministry. All the members were received upon credible profession of their being children of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, born of the same divine Spirit, branches of the same heavenly vine, members of the same mystical body, made by Christ kings and priest unto God, a royal priesthood, a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar nation, living stones built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ. Their right to choose their own officers has been shown under the fifth mark. The only classes of distinct and permanent officers in the church were Bishops and Deacons (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-3). The apostles were extraordinary foundation officers (Matthew 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:10-11; Eph. 2:20; Rev. 21:14), princes sitting upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Isa. 32:1; Matthew 19:28). The qualifications of an apostle were a special commission from Christ in person (Matthew 10:5; Gal. 1:1) an actual sight of Him in the body after the resurrection (Acts 1:22-23; 1 Cor. 9:1); the power to work miracles, and confer the ability upon others to work miracles (Matthew 10:8; Acts 8:14-17; 19:6); and the authority to teach with inspired infallibility (Matthew 16:19; 19:28; John 16:13; 20:23). In their carefully preserved writings they are their own successors; and both scripture and reason inform us that others, “who say they are apostles, are liars” (Rev. 2:2). Modern scholarship has thoroughly demonstrated to every candid mind the utter baselessness of all claims, whether papal or episcopal, scriptural or historical, to authoritative succession from the apostles. These claims are founded upon deplorable perversions of scripture and forgeries of history. Every spiritual, nay, every intelligent and unprejudiced mind, will be entirely convinced of the unscripturalness of such claims by a simple reference to the scriptures adduced to sustain them (Matthew 16:18-19; Luke 22:32; John 21:15-17; 20:21; Matthew 28:18-20; Rom. 10:15; 2 Cor. 5:20; 2 Tim 1:13-14; 2:2; Titus 1:5; 2 John 9-10; Jude 3; Rev. 1:20), especially after learning that nothing in this world is more certain, as admitted by all scholars of today, that the terms “Bishop” and “Presbyter” or “Elder” and “Pastor” are in the new

testament perfectly interchangeable or synonymous, designating but one class of church officers, the ministry of the word, without the slightest difference of order or rank; and that even the apostles called themselves “Elders” (Acts 20:17,28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim.3:1-13; 5:17-19; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3; 2 John 1; 3 John 1; 2 Tim 1:6 compared with 1 Tim.4:14). Liddell and Scott, in the seventh edition of their Greek English Lexicon, the very latest and the very highest, define “*presbuteros*, an Elder of the Jewish council, an Elder of the church, presbyter;” and they add, “Even the apostles call themselves by this name.” They define “*episcopos*” (of which the English word “Bishop” is a corruption), “one who watches over, an overseer, guardian, an ecclesiastical superintendent, in the apostolic age equal to *presbuteros*, but from Ignatius downward. a Bishop.” This absolutely settles the question in the mind of every scholar, no matter how much ignorance and bigotry and arrogance may rave; there is not a particle of apostolic authority for distinguishing the Bishop from the Elder, much less for elevating the Bishop over the Elder, and still less for elevating one Bishop, as the Bishop of Rome or Constantinople, over all other Bishops to the blasphemous position, distinctly predicted and denounced by Paul, of the sole and supreme and infallible vicegerency of God on earth (2 Thess. 2:3-4). The history of the ecclesiastical hierarchy has well been called “the history of triple abdication: first the community of believers committed their powers to the presbyters; then the corps of presbyters abdicated to the Bishop, and last, the Bishop to the pope (in the Vatican Council. A.D. 1870).” —Renan, as quoted approvingly by P. Schaff in the latter’s “History of The Apostolic Christianity.” “This subject,” adds Mr. Schaff, “may be regarded as finally settled among scholars.” “The episcopate,” says “Bishop” Lightfoot, one of the ripest Episcopalian scholars in England, “was formed, not out of the apostolic order by localization, but out of the presbyteral by elevation; and the title “Bishop”, which was originally common to all, came at length to be appropriated to the chief among them.” Clemens Romanus, or Clement of Rome, supposed to be referred to in Philippians 4:3, and to have lived from A.D. 30 to 100, and claimed by the Roman Catholics as one of their popes, is the only uninspired Christian writer of the first century whose undisputed writings have come down to us. He wrote a letter for the church at Rome to the church at Corinth, and urges the Corinthian brethren to peace, humility and love. He uses the terms Bishop and Elder as perfectly synonymous. The next so-called apostolic father is Ignatius, of Antioch, the dates of whose death ranges from A.D. 107 to 116. The latest scholarship admits only three of the epistles attributed to him to be genuine, those to Polycarp, to the Ephesians and to the Romans. He addresses Polycarp, not as a diocesan, but as a congregational Bishop, as the Bishop of the church of Smyrna; he exhorts the Ephesians to humility, meekness and mildness; and he tells the Romans that he does not command them like Peter and Paul, for they were apostles, but he is a condemned convict, as a slave. And so in other writers of the second century the

Bishop is simply the presiding officer among the presbyters of a church, the first among equals, the pastor of a single congregation. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage A.D. 248-258, was the father of diocesan episcopacy and of Romanism. He represented “the Bishops as the successors of the apostles, the chair of Peter as the center of episcopal unity, and the church at Rome the root of all (*radix et matrix ecclesiae Catholicae*, root and mother of the Catholic church, Epistle 45).” But Cyprian conceded only an ideal precedence to the Bishop of Rome, for he accused the Roman Bishop Stephen of error and abuse of power. The first “Ecumenical council” of Nice (A.D. 325), conferred on the Bishop of Rome no more authority than on the Bishops of Antioch or Alexandria. The canons of the Nicene council were forged at Rome in the interest of the papacy, and this forgery was condemned by the council of Chalcedon A.D. 451. The first pope, in the real sense of the word, was Leo I. (A.D. 440-461), who ambitiously and energetically sought to transform the “church” into an ecclesiastical monarchy, with himself as the head; and yet the twenty eighth canon of the council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451), acknowledged by Rome to be (Ecumenical, elevated by the Bishop of Constantinople to official equality with the pope. The vast forgery of the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals was made in the ninth century, and pretended that the popes from Clement I. (A.D. 91) to Damasus I. (A.D. 384) ruled over a church, which the clergy were disconnected with the state, and unconditionally subordinate to the pope. These documents, now admitted by even Roman Catholics to be fraudulent, were used by the popes and papal writers with great effect for six hundred years to establish and increase the power of the popes over the Bishops. The first half of the ninth century is known as the period of the “pornocracy,” during which the papal chair was filled by a succession of the most licentious reprobates. Hildebrand, or Gregory VII., who was pope A.D. 1073-1080, claimed to be lord over all the nations of the world, and to have the right to depose princes and absolve subjects from the oath of loyalty. Bonafice VIII. (1294-1303) issued in 1302 the famous bull “*Unam sanctam*,” which declared that “for every human creature it is a condition of salvation to submit to the Roman pontiff.” At the close of the fifteenth century, Innocent VIII. and Alexander VI. once more reached the deepest abyss of depravity. The council of Trent (A.D. 1545-1563) and the society of Jesuits have made the popes the absolute masters of the Catholic hierarchy and “church,” as shown by the pontificate of Pius IX. (1846-1878), who in 1854 decreed the doctrine of Immaculate Conception, or sinlessness, of the Virgin Mary; and, in 1864, by his Syllabus of Errors, sweepingly condemned all the principles of religious liberty and of modern civilization; and who was declared by the Vatican council, in 1870, to be infallible in all his official definitions of faith and morals. Thus “the worship of a woman is virtually substituted for the worship of Christ, and a man-god in Rome for the God-Man in heaven.” Heathen idolatry is no worse in principle. Such is the consistent development of what is known in the Protestant and Baptist churches as the

“masterpieces of Satan,” Which is based upon the glaring falsehoods that Christ set Peter over the other Apostles, that He made Peter His sole authoritative representative on earth, that Peter was Bishop of Rome, and that his pretended vicegerency was to be perpetuated in the succession of Roman Bishops. All pretended Protestants apostolic successions are derived entirely from Rome; and yet Rome excommunicates and anathematizes all persons who are outside her communion. The contradictions of Catholic historians in regard to the succession of the pretended popes of the first century are irreconcilable; the latest and highest criticism acknowledges that an impenetrable cloud hangs over the history of the church during the last thirty years of the first century. Thus Divine Providence purposely and forever destroyed all possibility of proving the thoroughly unscriptural and carnalizing theory of a material, mechanical succession from the Apostles—a theory which, in its ultimate horrible development by Rome, consigns to everlasting torments all human beings who are outside the pale of such succession.

Says the able and learned Presbyterian church historian, Prof. P. Schaff: “The most learned English divines before the period of the Restoration (1660), such as Cranmer, Jewel, Hooker, Field, Ussher, Hall, and Stillingfleet, did not hold the doctrine of the Divine and exclusive right of episcopacy, and they fully recognized the validity of presbyterian ordination. Cranmer’s three successors in the primacy (Parker, Grindal and Whitgift), like him, did not question the ordination of the Lutherans and Calvinists. Queen Victoria, when in Scotland, takes the communion from the hands of a Presbyterian parson. Archbishop Ussher, the greatest English divine of his age, who in eighteen years had mastered the whole mass of patristic literature, defended the episcopacy only as a presidency of one presbyter over his peers, and declared that when abroad he would take the holy communion from a Dutch Reformed or French minister as readily as from an Episcopalian clergyman at home.

The exclusive high church doctrine was first intimated by Bishop Bancroft, of London (in a sermon, 1589), then taught and rigidly enforced by Archbishop Laud (1633-1645), the most un-Protestant of English prelates, who made such a near approach to Rome that he was offered a cardinal’s hat, and this doctrine was apparently sanctioned in 1662 by the cruel act of Uniformity. Since the Synod of Dort (1619) Arminian and High-Church principles have spread rapidly in the church of England. The Anglo-Catholicism of the nineteenth century is simply a revival of Laud’s system, which un-churched all non-Episcopal churches, and regarded the Anglican church as an independent sister of the Latin and Greek communions. It is a contradiction of the standards of the body, the consensus of its fathers down to Hooker, and an utter misstatement of the historic position of the church of England.” Macaulay says that in 1688 “the Low and High church parties, among the laity, were not unevenly balanced, but that

the average of intellect and knowledge was higher among the Low church clergymen than among their order generally; that, though only one-tenth of the priesthood, there were among them as many men of distinguished eloquence and learning as could be found in the other nine-tenths.” Macaulay is the greatest English historian of the nineteenth century; and, though himself an Episcopalian, he declares, in regard to possession of the apostolic succession by the church of England, that it is utterly incapable of proof, that the transmission of ministerial orders is for 1500 years (before the reformation) “buried in utter darkness.” It has been well remarked that “the only apostolic succession that is worth anything is the succession of the apostolic truth (doctrine), of the gospel, as apostolic men proclaimed it.” Instead of devoting our attention to “fables and endless and unedifying genealogies” (1 Tim. 1:4; Titus 3:9), we do well to leave these vanities to those who have nothing better, and to obey the direction of Christ’s to go at once to the scriptures of Divine truth to inquire concerning the will of God and the way of salvation (John 5:39).-The priestly or sacerdotal idea of the ministry, with the power of meditating between God and man, of offering sacrifice to God (in the “mass”), and of pronouncing absolution from sin, is not found in any ecclesiastical writer until the third century, and is altogether inconsistent with the sole mediatorship and eternal priesthood of Christ, and the power of God alone to forgive sins (1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 8:1-6; 7:15-28; Ex. 34:7; Isa. 43:25; Matthew 6:12; Acts 5:31). The Apostles themselves never claimed these high Divine powers, which their pretended successors ambitiously and covetously claim. On the other hand, they were clothed, like their Divine Master, with humility; “they always paid tender regard to the rights feelings and freedom of all the saints; they recognized in every believer, even in a poor slave like Onesimus, a member of the same body with themselves, a partaker of their redemption, a beloved brother in Christ; they labored for the spiritual interests of churches with meekness and love and self-denial; Peter humbly calls himself a fellow-presbyter, and raises his prophetic warning against the hierarchical spirit which so easily takes hold of church officers and alienates them from the people (1 Peter 5:1-3).” In the last-named verse the Greek word rendered “heritage is *kleros*, from which is derived the English word clergy (compare the Septuagint in Num. 18:20 & Deut. 18:2); so that we have inspired authority for calling all God’s people “the clergy,” instead of limiting this title to a few proud lords. —The ordination of Elders and Deacons was the solemn setting apart, by the church through it’s Elders, of those members already called and qualified by God for those offices (Acts 6:1-6; 13:1-3; 1 Tim.1:6; Heb. 5:4); it was accompanied with prayer and the laying on of hands of the presbytery or Elders, and sometimes with fasting. Instead of the Spirit being communicated by the hands of the presbytery, the person ordained already had the Spirit before ordination, or else he was not qualified for the ceremony (Numbers 27:18,23; Acts 6:3-6; 13:2-3; 2 Tim 1:5-7 compared with Galatians 5:22; Heb. 5:4). The miracle working power of the Holy Ghost were

sometime conferred on private members at the same time with the laying on of the hands of the Apostles (Acts 8:17-18; 19:6); but this was essentially different from ministerial ordination.

There are six different Greek words used in connection with a sacred office, and translated “*ordain*” in the English New Testament (*pico* in Mark 3:14; *ginomai* in Acts 1:22; *cheirotouco* in Acts 14:23; *orizo* in Acts 17:31; *tithemi* in 1 Tim. 2:7; and *kathistemi* in Titus 1:5); only the last two of them. *tithemi* and *kathistemi*, are defined “*ordain*” by Liddell and Scott, the word “*command*” is given, under the same head, as the equivalent meaning of *tithemi*; *kathistemi* is rendered “*appoint*” in the new version in Titus 1:5, and so is *poieo* correctly rendered in Mark 3:14, as we have no record of Jesus putting His hands on His apostles to ordain them; nor can we suppose that, in Acts 17:31, Paul meant that God put His hands on Christ to ordain Him to the Judgeship of the world. The imposition of hands upon Deacons and Elders was but the solemn and expressive symbol of the designation of them to their sacred offices.—As for ordination to the office of Bishop in distinction from that of Elder, and allowing only such ordained Bishops to ordain, and having such ordained Bishops lay their hands (for confirmation) upon every baptized believer, there is absolutely no New Testament proof of any of these things; they are all the inventions and traditions of men, practiced from the third century by Catholic and similar communions.—“Elder” is a Jewish term applied to the ministry of the word, and denotes the gravity or dignity or wisdom of the office, and was especially used in the Jewish churches; “Bishop” is a Greek term applied to the same persons, and means overseer, and was especially used in the Greek churches; these officers are also called pastors or shepherds, as those who are to guide, feed and care for the flock. The scriptural obligations of the ministry of the word are to be ensamples or patterns to the church by their godly walk and conversation, to preach the gospel, to watch over the members, to preach, exhort, admonish, reprove and rebuke as needed, to preside in the meetings of the church and see that all things are done decently and in order, to administer the ordinances within the church (1 Peter 5:1-3; Titus 2:7; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 4:16; Matthew 28; 19-20; Mark 16: 15-16; 2 Tim 4:2; 1 Tim.5:17; Heb. 13:7,17,24; 1 Cor. 14:40). The qualifications of the ministry are given in 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9. Instead of one Bishop presiding over several churches, there was, it would seem, a plurality of Elders or Bishops in each of the apostolic churches, as at Jerusalem, at Ephesus, at Philippi, and at the ordination of Timothy (Acts 6:30; 14:23; 15:2,4,26; 16:4; 20:17,28; 21:18; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 4:14; Jam 5:14); But the distinction between teaching Elders and ruling Elders, observed by Presbyterian and some congregational and some Baptist churches can not be proved by the New Testament or from antiquity; it was invented by Calvin, not in the first or second, but in the third edition of his institutes (A.D. 1543). Very few Congregational or Baptist churches now retain the distinction; and many of the

ablest Presbyterian writers have abandoned the scriptural defense of it. Only three New Testament texts have been adduced in proof of this distinction (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:28; 1 Tim. 5:17—the chief stress has been laid upon the last text). If in Romans 12:6-8, ruling marks a distinct office, then there must be six different offices in the church, and prophecy, and ministry, teaching and exhortation are all distinct offices, and giving and showing mercy are offices in the church. So in 1 Corinthians 12:28, if “governments” form a distinct office, there must be eight distinct offices in the church. These two texts, therefore, prove nothing in regard to the distinction between teaching and ruling Elders. Now let us examine 1 Timothy 5:17. If, as has been proved, the terms Bishop and Elder are, in the New Testament, everywhere synonymous, and an essential qualification of a Bishop is “aptness to teach” (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9), all the Elders alluded to in 1 Timothy 5:17 are teaching Elders, and the distinction there drawn is not an official but a personal one—a distinction of service and not of rank; “the antithesis is not that of teaching and non teaching Elders, but that of those who rule well and teach zealously, and those who both rule and teach, indeed, but without any particular earnestness.” If the term Elder here does not mean a Bishop or preaching Elder, it is the only passage in the New Testament in which the term Elder has a different meaning. “If the apostles instituted the distinct office of ruling Elder, they have nowhere prescribed its qualifications. The words translated ‘double honor’ mean here, as shown by the next verse, not merely high esteem, but ample temporal maintenance; so that, if this passage does establish the office of ruling Elder, it enjoins that they who hold it shall receive ample pecuniary support; but the New Testament nowhere else enjoins pecuniary support for any church officers except those who preach the gospel. The word *malista*, translated ‘especially,’ does not mark distinct classes of persons, but introduces a specification of particular persons belonging to the same general class” (as in Acts 25:26; Gal. 6:10; Phil. 4:22; 1 Tim. 4:10; 5:8; 2 Tim 4:13; Titus 1:10; 2 Peter 2:10). The verb *kopiaio*, here rendered “labor,” is defined by Liddell and Scott, for this very passage, “work hard, toil.” Thus the apostle enjoins that the Elders that rule well must be counted worthy of ample maintenance, especially those of them who laboriously devote themselves to preaching.” A sermon on “The Eldership,” preached at Lexington, VA., by James B. Ramsey, and still approvingly issued by the “Presbyterian Publishing Company,” declares that “in all cases the preaching and ruling Elders are classed together and treated as one body of rulers,” and that “ruling Elders are also Bishops, Pastors, leaders, and watchers for souls,” and are “entitled to a degree, at least, of maintenance from the church, in proportion as the devote to it their time and energies.” The office was unknown in the “church” until the sixteenth century. It is plain, from Heb. 13:7, that in the apostolic church ruling Elders were also preaching Elders.— Besides Elders or Bishops, Deacons were elected to office in the apostolic church (Acts 6:1-6; Phil. 1:1). Their qualifications are laid down in Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Their duties

were to attend especially to the temporal interests of the church, to serve tables—the table of the Lord, of the pastor or minister, and of the poor (Acts 6:2; 1 Cor. 10:21; 9:9-14; Gal. 2:10). Deacons are not, like Bishops, required to be “apt to teach;” but, as they were to be “full of the holy Ghost and wisdom,” and to serve the Lord’s table, and the sacred feast was not to be eaten with the disorderly (1 Cor. 5:7-11), and the “wise” brethren were to “judge” between brethren at variance (1 Cor. 6:1-5), and the deacon, like the Bishop, must “rule his own house well” (1 Tim. 3:4-12), it would seem that deacons ought to exercise a special regard for the order and peace and spiritual health of the church. In this manner they can be valuable “helps” to the pastors (1 Cor. 12:28). Phillip was not only a deacon, but an “evangelist” (Acts 21:8), a traveling preacher of the gospel, like Timothy, and probably like Titus, Luke, Mark, Silas and Apollos (Acts 8:4-40; 2 Tim 4:5; Titus 1:5; 2 Cor. 8:18-19; Acts 20:6; 2 Tim 4:11; Acts 15:40; 18:24); more a founder or planter, than a pastor or waterer, of churches (1 Cor. 3:6)—rather the doer of a temporary work than the occupant of a settled office (2 Tim. 4:5). The term evangelist, as “an inspired writer of one of the four gospels,” was not used in the apostolic age, but this was a later custom. The offices of “Arch-Deacon” and “Sub-Deacon” are unscriptural, and were invented in the third century; the title and office of “Arch-Deacon were invented in the fourth century. As for deacons being a lower order of priests or of the ministry of the word, as in the Catholic and some Protestant communions, there is no scriptural authority for this or any other instance of hierarchy in the church of God, where all are brethren; the New testament writers are especially careful never to use the Greek verb *archo*, implying *despotic* rule, to the officer of a Christian church, but they uniformly apply this term to the rulers of the Jews and heathens. “It is certain,” says Mr. Stanley, “that in no instance before the beginning of the third century was the title or function of the Pagan or Jewish priesthood applied to Christian pastors.”

9. The ninth mark of the Apostolic church was the possession of a humble, God-called and God-qualified ministry. The qualifications laid down in the new Testament for a gospel minister are that he must be a regenerated, Christ-loving, God called and God qualified man—kind, gentle, humble, quiet, firm, virtuous, upright, just, sober, temperate, unselfish, not covetous, well-proved, exemplary, of good repute, sound in doctrine, able and apt to teach, and divinely impressed with the work of the ministry, not for ambitions or sordid ends, but for the good of men and the glory of God (Gal. 1; Eph. 3; 4:8-16; John 21:15-17; 16:13-15; Matthew 10:1-6; Rom.5:5; 2 Cor. 3:5-6; 1 Tim.3:1-7; 4:12-16; Titus 1:6-9; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Cor. 9:16).

“The human heart,” says Mr. Schaff, “craves not a learned, letter writing, literary Christ, but a wonder working, cross bearing, atoning Redeemer, risen, enthroned in Heaven, and ruling the world; furnishing

at the same time, to men and angels an unending theme for meditation, discourse and praise. So too, the Lord chose none of His Apostles, with the single exception of Paul, from the ranks of the learned; He did not train them to literary authorship, nor give them, throughout His earthly life, a single express command to labor in that way. Plain fishermen of Galilee, unskilled in the wisdom of this world, but filled with the Holy Spirit of truth and the powers of the world to come, were commissioned to preach the glad tidings of salvation to all nations in the strength and in the name of their glorified Master, who sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and has promised to be with them to the end of time.” “Christ Himself grew up quietly and unnoticed in a retired Galilean mountain village of proverbial insignificance, and in a lowly carpenter shop, far away from the city of Jerusalem, from schools and libraries. He was independent of human learning and literature, of schools and parties (John 7:15). He taught the world as one who owed nothing to the world. He came down from Heaven and spoke out of the fullness of His personal intercourse with the great Jehovah. He was no scholar, no artist, no orator; yet He was wiser than all sages, He spake as never man spake, and made an impression on His age and all ages after Him such as no man ever made or can make.” His leading or representative Apostles were Peter, John, and Paul. Peter and John were “unlearned and ignorant men” (Acts 4:13); the first adjective here, *agrammatos*, means “*without learning, unlettered, illiterate;*” the second adjective, *idiotes*, means, “*a private or common person, an unprofessional man or layman, an unskilled, ignorant, ill-informed man.*” Meyer, the most modern exegete, says that the two terms mean substantially the same thing—“the double designation being intended to express the idea very fully, destitute of all rabbinic culture, strangers to theological learning.” “The Apostles,” says Albert Barnes, “Had neither wealth, armies nor allies. With the exception of Paul, they were men without learning. They were taught only by The Holy Ghost; armed only with the power of God; victorious only because He was their captain; and the world acknowledged the presence of the messengers of the Highest, and the power of the Christian religion. Its success never has been and never can be accounted for by any other by any other supposition than that God attended it.” God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise,” declares the apostle Paul; “and God chose the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, and things which are not, to bring to naught things which are, that no flesh should glory in His presence” (1 Cor. 1:27-29). And the inspired Apostle declares also that he himself did not receive the gospel which he preached from man, neither was he taught it but by direct revelation from Jesus Christ; and that after this revelation of God’s Son in Him, he did not confer with flesh and blood, nor go up to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles before him (Gal. 1); and accordingly, he declares that, when he came even to the learned Greek city of Corinth, he came not with excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring the

testimony of God, for he determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified; that he was with them in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and his speech and preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God (1 Cor. 2:1-5). His sufficiency was of God, who made him an able minister of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life (2 Cor. 3:5-6). Not his Greek learning which he acquired in his native city of Tarsus, nor his rabbinic or theological learning which he acquired at the feet of Gamaliel in Jerusalem, enabled Paul to preach the gospel of the Son of God, but only that Divine power with which he was endowed with from on high, and which he, with all his natural and theological learning, needed just as much as the ignorant Peter and John, in order to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ (Acts 1; 2; 9; 10.) Nay, all his natural, fleshly advantages, Paul counted but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, in whom he desired to be found, divested of his own imperfect legal righteousness, that he might know Christ and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead (Phil. 3:3-11.)

After these plain, unmistakable statements of the New Testament, what shall we say of the ancient and modern unscriptural, proud, Pharisaic doctrine that human learning is indispensable qualification of a minister of the gospel of the meek and lowly Lamb of God? What shall we say of the numerous and splendid structures known as "theological seminaries," erected in the 19th century, for the purpose of qualifying men to preach the gospel, by a course of study ranging through several years, and occupied with from 40 to 100 books of uninspired man's composition? What resemblance do these pretentious human inventions bear to the humble, spiritual, Divine methods of the Lord Jesus Christ and His lowly Apostles and other elders of the first century? What a worldwide change, and, in the opinion of the carnal religionists of today, what a vast improvement has taken place in the methods of evangelization! And there is no precept or example of these fine religious improvements among the people of God in the Bible, the question arises where and how did they originate? Enoch and Noah, the two antediluvian preachers recorded in the Bible, had no collegiate training so far as we have any reason to believe. The Egyptian learning of Moses, with his mighty words and deeds, puffed him up, and caused him to run before he was sent, and so thoroughly disqualified him for leading the children of Israel that God saw proper to hide him in the wilderness for forty years, and train him in the Divine school at the backside of the desert, before commissioning him to undertake the leadership of Israel (Acts 7:22-36; Ex. 2; 3.) As for the "companies" or "the sons of the prophets" mentioned in the books of Samuel and Kings,

there is but little authority, in the entire scriptural record, for supposing that they were anything more than sacred schools of music, or that any useful true prophets of the Lord were trained in them; but we are informed that the wicked king Saul was in one of these companies (1 Sam. 5:5-12); that the prophet Elisha told another company of them to hold their peace (2 Kings 2:3); that, in a time of famine, one gathered a lap full of deadly wild gourds to eat, and Elisha healed the pottage with meal; and that Amos says he was not one of them (Amos 7:14). There is no proof that a single prophet named in the Bible was trained in these companies.

In his reply to Wm. Hooper, D.D., LL.D., Elder P. D. Gold. of North Carolina, says: "You say, were there not schools of the prophets? Well, it seems to me that the prophets can give a sensible account of their call as anyone can give for them. Do any of them ever tell us that they were called out of any school, or were ever called to go to any such place? They spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But it is asked, were not the disciples with Jesus for three years before they began to preach? If they are not with Him all their lives, what is their preaching worth? Are the schools in the place of Jesus, or is he to be found by going to them? And is that the way to get to Christ? But you say, will not human learning aid man in preaching the gospel- will it not give him words and power over men's minds, and enable him to preach the gospel in a more attractive form? I am free to admit the value of human learning in man's earthly affairs, and heartily commend its acquisition in that sense. But what does inspiration say about spiritual things, and how they are spoken? 'Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.' When the Lord calls a learned man (though He does not call many), that man glories in becoming a fool that he may win Christ. Human learning makes no part of the new man, and the saint who human learning is just as weak and dependent God for his crumb as any other, and all are feed with the same kind of food. But you say, after one is certainly called to preach, can not the schools polish him, and give him more influence over men, and enable him to better command their respect, by keeping pace with human learning? Tell me, from Scripture, where one ever tried it, or where it was ever authorized. How much can frail man add to God's gift? How much pride do you think is necessary to influence man to presume such a task? Do not the scriptures pointedly forbid the employment of worldly weapons in building up Christ's kingdom? Is the minister of Christ to suit his message to proud man's taste? 'We speak wisdom to them that are perfect, but not the wisdom of this world.' It seems to me scriptures make some allusions to theological schools, though in the way of alarm. 'But the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts will they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears.' Much as the Bible is talked of, it's doctrine is not endured;

but this progressive age calls for theological schools that shall enlighten men to preach doctrines suitable to men's lusts. Men who have devoted so much time and labor in the preparation for their ministry, are worthy of positions of influence and profit. The teachers come down from these schools dosed with a sort of preparation from dead men's brains, that will make them sick enough if God would ever teach them where their dependence lies. How do these schools heap up teachers? They furnish opportunities for obtaining an education, open the way to positions of honor and reward, so that there is but little trouble attending the road, and if money enough could be commanded it would be difficult to tell how many would be heaped up; but they shall have itching ears, and shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. The doctrines and fables of men are accepted. Andrew Fuller becomes a wonderful standard. He takes repentance and faith out of the covenant of grace, and puts them under the law, in the sense that he makes them man's duty, and not gifts of grace. If salvation comes on account of man's performance of his duty, it is of works in some sense. He brings in the modern missionary enterprise, a system somewhat like the popish measures of propagating their creed, but unknown to the Bible and to Baptists, and is a disturber of gospel peace and order among churches. His followers have departed from the truth further than he did, as he refused flattering titles which they accept for modesty's sake with out much urging, and they do not preach salvation as nearly by grace as he did, so they are waxing worse and worse. As the world is to be evangelized, the tender mind of the young must be converted by the means of the newly invented Sunday Schools, and humanly prepared preachers must be sent to the heathen. Some man must hold the hand of the missionary while he goes down in the wells, and he must see how his bread comes before he goes; and your churches combine in forming such tremendous agencies of power as your conventions, while you all glory in the fruits of your own wise system. That your denomination generally indorse your system is manifest, and what little I write may only have the effect of influencing them to fall down before their idols, and shout in louder strains. 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.'"

After the return of the Jews from Babylon they established synagogues and synagogue-schools; and here the Jewish rabbis zealously accumulated and multiplied, and taught the Jewish youth those interminable Pharisaic traditions which made void the law of God, and which Christ severely condemned (Matthew 15:1-9; Mark 7:1-13) Truly, these are unfortunate precedents for the "theological seminaries" of the 19th century. The first "Christian" theological school, says Neander, and with him agree other historians, was established at Alexandria, in Egypt, about A.D. 180, and lasted about 200 years. The earliest teachers were Pantaenus and Clement, "converted" heathen philosophers, and their principal aim seems to have been to teach so-called "Christian" tradition, to transform Christianity into

philosophy, to depreciate humble faith and exalt lordly knowledge, and to base human salvation upon the natural free will of man, declaring that the first motion from sin to holiness must and can be made by the sinner himself. This false system became popular, and spread widely throughout the Greek or eastern “churches.” The most learned and celebrated teacher in the Alexandrian school was Origen, a Universalist. The study of “theology” was pursued in the Catholic monasteries of Asia, Africa, and Europe during the dark ages, and those so-called “schoolmen” were the most famous students. The cold, dry, barren Aristotelian, syllogistic, subtle, frivolous, wearisome, technical, metaphysical, traditionary, mythological, casuistical, pantheistic tomes of the Scholastic Divinity virtually completed the edifice of the Papal Hierarchy, and have been fitly compared by Milman to the great rough pyramids of Egypt, with their immense and useless display of human power, and with their small, dark, labyrinthine passages and chambers, where one may wonder without end and find nothing. The *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, the ideal “theologian,” fills twelve hundred very closely printed folio pages in double columns, and is the Roman Catholic casuistical substitute for the New Testament—in which the author shows that “he is nearly as summate a skeptic, almost atheist, as he is a theologian.” These schoolmen proudly wore the magnificent titles of Perspicuous, Subtle, Profound, Irrefragable, Invincible, Angelical, Seraphic Doctors. Like the Jewish Rabbis, these scholastic doctors analyzed the scriptures to death, substituted the shell for the kernel, made void the word of God by the traditions of men. Christ warned His disciples not to be called Rabbi, or Doctor, or Master; “for,” says He, “one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren” (Matthew 23:8-12) But, like the theologians of the Dark Ages, their successors in the 19th century totally disregard the commandment of Christ, and thus prove that someone else besides Him is their master; and literally and “theological” institutions presume, in professedly Christian lands, to confer these point blank Anti-Christian, childish and worthless titles. Little fear have they of God, when they give flattering titles to men (Job 32:21-22). During the 19th century a large number of the most famous German professors of theology, or “Doctors of Divinity,” have become the most thorough-going infidels in the world, and have labored with persistent and herculean efforts to undermine and destroy the entire Scriptures of inspired truth. They, and others like them, may well be called, in the language of Mr. Spurgeon,^[2] “Doctors of Damnation,” sitting in the teachers seat of the scornful (Ps. 1:1). Some men occupying theological chairs in England and in the United States have developed similar tendencies. The great majority of these “Divinity Schools” teach wretched perversions of the truth, even in the letter; and so long as the Scriptures are true, it is certain that no one nor all of them combined can ever qualify one person to preach the gospel of Christ, for the sufficiency of the spiritual Christian minister is not of men, but of God; the letter, even in all its literal truth, only killeth, but the Spirit gives life (2 Cor. 3:5-18; Gal. 1;

Eph. 3:17-21).

It was the learned religionists of Judea who rejected and crucified Christ; and yet these men had searched and idolized the Scriptures, thinking that in them they had eternal life, and ignoring Christ, who is the sum and substance of the Scriptures (John 5:39-40). The title of “holy” or “reverend” belongs not to sinful men, but alone to the High and Holy Being who inhabits eternity (Ps. 111:9; Isa. 57:15). Elder, or Bishop, or Pastor is the Bible designation of the minister of the word. —While the Scriptures totally oppose the idea of men being made either Christians or ministers by human inventions and means, they equally and emphatically enjoin upon the minister to “read, search, meditate upon the Scriptures, which are given by the inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works; to be earnest to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth; to be in these things” (rendered in both the authorized and the revised versions, “give thyself wholly to them”), “that his progress may appear to all; take heed to himself and to his doctrine, and continue in them” (1 Tim. 4:13-16; 2 Tim 2:15; 3:14-17). Like all the dear children of God, the minister should especially desire “to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18) and, as the Scriptures testify of Him, the true servant of God will delight to read the precious volume of inspiration, and will beseech the Lord Jesus by His Spirit to open his understanding that he may understand the Scriptures, even the deep things of God, the unsearchable riches of Christ, the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, thus comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and like a good householder bringing out of his treasure things new and old, that he may properly feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood (John 5:39; Luke 24:44-48; 1 Cor. 2; Eph. 3; Matthew 13:11,52; 1 Cor. 4:1; Acts 20:28, John 16:13-15 21:15-17; 1 Peter 5:1-4). The call to preach is proved by the ability to preach to the edification of God’s people. The internal call “lies in gifts bestowed, and in the disposition of the man’s mind to make use of them in the service of God; for God never calls a man to any service but He gives him abilities for it; which, when a man is sensible of, and is satisfied that God has bestowed a gift upon him, he cannot be easy to wrap up his talent in a napkin, but is desirous of making use of it in a public manner; not by mere impulse, through vanity of mind, and with ambitious views and sordid ends, but from a principle of love to the souls of men and the glory of God; of this internal call a man’s gifts are evidences to himself and to others.” We may be sure that God does not call a man to the ministry, and then leave his qualification to men. When a man is called of God to the ministry, he at the same time has the gift or qualification (Ex. 4:11-12; Isa. 6:1-9; Jer. 1:4-10; Dan

1:17-21; Amos 9:14-15; Luke 1:15; 3:22; 4:1,14-15; Matthew 10:1-7; Acts 9:20; 20:28; Gal. 1:15-16; 2 Cor. 3:5-6; 4:5-6; Eph. 3:7-8; 4:11-16).

10. The tenth mark of the Apostolic church was the fact that, while the ministry received voluntary help from the churches, they were not salaried, but labored themselves, more or less, for their own support. As already shown, the members were mostly from the middle and lower classes of society, such as fishermen, peasants, mechanics, freedmen and slaves; and as they were few and poor themselves, and each church had several Elders, it was hardly possible for them to furnish entire support to their Elders. Even “the Jewish Rabbis taught gratuitously, and derived their support from an honorable trade and from the free gifts of their pupils. The prevailing sentiment at the time of Christ favored a combination of intellectual and physical labor as beneficial to health and character.” Each Jewish child was taught some trade. Jesus was not only a carpenter’s son, but, until He entered upon His ministry at thirty years of age, a carpenter Himself (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3; Luke 3:23); then He gave all His time and strength to the cause of God, and for three years “His humble wants were more than supplied by a few grateful disciples from Galilee, so that something was left for the benefit of the poor” (Luke 8:3; Matthew 27:55; Mark 15:41; John 13:29). His charge to His Apostles, when He first sends them out, is, “Freely ye have received, freely give; provide neither gold nor silver nor brass in your purses, for the workman is worthy of his meat” (Matthew 10:8-10). Those whose hearts were opened of the Lord would gladly receive and entertain them in their houses (Matthew. 10:12, 13; Acts 16:14, 15). “Disinterestedness is one of the most needful and beautiful ornaments of him who proclaims the free, unmerited grace of God, and exhorts men to seek first of all the everlasting blessings of the kingdom of Heaven.” The ministry were not to turn the work of preaching into a common trade, stipulating beforehand for a regular and fixed salary, and, like a worldly hireling, preaching for filthy lucre’s sake, and, like such a one, when the price is not paid, fleeing because he is a hireling (1 Peter 5:2; 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7; John 10:13). But nothing is plainer in the Scriptures than the Lord’s ordination that they who preach the gospel (not some other gospel, which is not another, but they who preach the gospel) should live of the gospel that they who sow unto the church spiritual things should reap of the carnal things of the church that, as those called of God to the ministry of the word supply the spiritual wants of the flock, so their own temporal wants should be supplied by the flock according as God has prospered them (1 Cor. 9:7-14; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17, 18; 2 Cor. 16:2). Still, let it never be forgotten by the true minister of the gospel that the inspired Apostle who gave all these injunctions as to the temporal support of the preachers of the gospel testifies that he used none of these things, neither did he write these things that it should be so done unto him; that necessity was laid upon

him, yea, woe was unto him if he preached not the gospel; that his reward was in preaching the gospel of Christ without charge; that he had coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel; that his own hands had ministered to his necessities and to those that were with him; that he had labored night and day, because he would not be chargeable to any (1 Cor. 9:15-18; Acts 20:33, 34; 1 Thess. 2:9); that his ministry had been passed in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness, besides the daily internal care of all the churches; that he took pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake, for when he was weak, then he was strong; that he would very gladly spend and be spent for the people of God, though the more abundantly he loved them, the less he was loved (2 Cor. 11:27, 28; 12:10-15). Noble, self-denying, Christ-like servant of God, freely did he receive, freely did he give; the abundant grace bestowed upon him was, indeed, not bestowed in vain; and to that Divine grace alone he ascribes all his unparalleled service and sacrifice for Christ (Matthew 10:8; 1 Cor. 15:10). "He never collected money for himself, but for the poor Jewish Christians in Palestine, to those sore needs other Christians, in their poverty, contributed (Acts 11:27-30; 24:17; Rom. 15:25, 26; 1 Cor. 16:1-3; Gal. 2:10). Only as an exception did he receive gifts from the Philippian Christians, who were peculiarly dear to him (Phil. 4:15-19). And, by precept as well as by example, he earnestly warns ministers against the love of filthy lucre, which is peculiarly unbecoming in them, and almost annihilates their good influence and usefulness; and he exhorts them to contentment, hospitality and disinterestedness" (Titus 1:10, 11; 1 Tim. 3:2, 3; 6:6-19; Acts. 20:17, 33-35). The circumstances of those called to preach the gospel are quite different. "Although God's ministers are generally poor," says Elder Gilbert Beebe, of New York, "Yet there are evidently cases where one minister is more in want of help than another; some have large families, others have none; some few are wealthy, and need nothing from their flock, others are entirely dependent, and are to live of the gospel; some, again, are not so closely occupied in the labors of the gospel as to prevent their laboring some part of their time, and thus, in part, minister to their own necessities. A minister of Jesus should never be above laboring with his hands, and we are persuaded that Christ's ministers are not; still, when it is in the power of a church to relieve their minister from the cares of this world, that he may devote his time principally or wholly to the work, it is right they should do so. But nothing is more apparent than that the worldly system of contracting with preachers to reach by the day or year for a stipulated amount of lucre presents a charm which allures thousands, whom God has not called to preach His gospel, from the bar and other pursuits in the ministry, thus, by the greediness of lucre, making merchandise of the gospel. In regard to the meager assistance given by some of our churches to their ministers, much of the fault lies within the preachers in withholding the proper admonition of the gospel; but a still greater fault is in the frequently preaching as though they

thought it wicked for the ministers of Jesus to receive remuneration from their brethren for their time, service, etc. Let this subject, with every other in New Testament, receive due consideration and prompt action.” “Ministerial support,” says Elder W. M. Mitchell, of Alabama, “is a point not to be regulated by agreement between the church and minister, but it is a standing law regulated by the authority of God. Let churches and ministers see that they do not add to it, nor diminish from it. The minister may and ought to do some work if able to do it, and ought to use every lawful effort of industry and economy so far as he can without impairing his pastoral duties, and he should not use the liberality of his brethren to foster pride, vanity or idleness, neither in himself nor in his family, but for a decent support, and for relieving his own mind and hands, that he may be the more serviceable to his brethren and churches. He should do this even for the sake of example, if nothing else (2 Thess. 3:7-12). When the turning point of pastoral services is placed on a money basis by any preacher, it would be best for the church to withhold from him.” “The voluntary system,” says Mr. Schaff, “best corresponds with the spirit of the gospel, was practiced by the church for the first three centuries, and is the most advantageous to the kingdom of God. Legal enactments for the payment of tithes to the ministry, as to the priests among the Jews, are not met with in Christendom before the sixth century.” Since that time the connection of “Church” and State has made the legal support of the ministry of the “established church” the custom in Europe; but the Constitution of the United States fortunately forbids such an establishment and support of any religion in this country. Yet regular stipulated ministerial salaries, though unknown in the apostolic church and in the first three centuries, are given in nearly all the religious denominations of the United States, but not among Old School, Primitive or Bible Baptists.

11. The eleventh mark of the Apostolic church was the sending out of the divinely called and qualified ministry by the Holy Spirit in themselves and in the churches, their going forth, whither soever the Lord directed, in simple dependence upon Him, and their preaching the gospel to every creature, whether Jew or Gentile, and especially shepherding the lambs and sheep of Christ. During the early part of His ministry Jesus called His twelve Apostles and sent them forth to preach, forbidding them to go to the Gentiles or Samaritans, and directing them to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:1, 5-7); and He furthermore directed them to charge nothing for their services, and to provide nothing beforehand for their support; and He told them that, while a few would receive them, they would, like Himself, be hated and persecuted by the great majority of men; and He instructed them when persecuted in one place to flee to another, and fear not those who could kill only the body, but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell; and He intimated to them that they were very precious in His sight, for the very hairs of their head were all numbered, and the all seeing

God would be with them; nay, He even identified Himself with them, saying, “He that receiveth you receiveth Me, and He that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me” (Matthew 11:9-42). What an unworldly commission! In what an unworldly manner were the Apostles to enter upon it! How unworldly must have been the motive of Christ and His Apostles! How plainly they acted as though this world were nothing, and eternity were all! How few human beings are there now in the world like them! Christ gave to the seventy disciples instructions similar to those which He had given to the twelve Apostles (Luke 10:1-16). His language in Luke 22:35-38 is manifestly not literal, but allegorical, meaning “The predicted time of trial for the Master and His followers is now at hand; you may expect hardship, contempt and persecution hereafter much more than heretofore;” for two swords were not enough to defend eleven persons from millions of foes, and Christ healed the wound inflicted by Peter’s sword, and commanded His too forward disciple to put up again his sword into its place (Matthew 26:51, 52), thus showing that the weapons of their warfare were not to be carnal, but spiritual (2 Cor. 10:15). Just before His ascension He told His Apostles that they should, in a few days, be endued with the power of this Holy Ghost, and they should be witnesses unto Him both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:5-8). He said, “All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:18-20). Or, as Mark gives the commission, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but He that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15, 16). Instead of preaching only to the Jews, as He had commanded them during His ministry (Matthew 10:5, 6), the Apostles, after the ascension of Christ, were to preach to any human being that they met in all the world; and they were to go forward in simple dependence upon Him who had all the power in Heaven and earth, and who would always be with them; and they were everywhere to preach the gospel, that is, according to inspired authority, “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, whether Jew or Greek”; “Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:23, 24). Ezekiel, in the valley of very dry bones representing the whole house of Israel, simply prophesied, by Divine direction, the almighty power of God that was soon to be exerted in their behalf—how that God would open their graves, and cause them to come up out of their graves, and put sinews and flesh and skin upon them, and breath within them, and they should live, and know that the Lord had performed this might work (Ezek. 37:1-14); it was not the work of the bones or of the prophet or of any created arm, but

exclusively the work of Almighty God, and all the living house of Israel know it. So the Apostles were commanded by Christ to preach, and did preach, not the power of dead sinners or of human appliances of any kind, but the power of a Divine and Almighty Savior to save any sin-laden soul; yea, even the amazing power of the voice of the Son of God to penetrate the should of the spiritually dead sinner, and make him live (Mark 16:15; Rom. 1:16; Matt. 1:21; John 5:25; Eph. 2:1-10). The Apostles could not utter that voice, much less can any other men; not the Apostles, but only the Divine Spirit, could impart spiritual life and hearing to one dead in trespasses and sins, and make him a new creature in Christ, prepared to hear and believe the gospel and be baptized and be saved (John 6:63; Eph. 1:19, 20; 2:1-10; 2 Cor. 5:17, 18; John 3:1-8). The Apostles had no more power to do the work of the Spirit in regeneration than they had to do the work of the Father in election, or the work of the Son in redemption; all these works being equally Divine. Only those ordained to eternal life believe, and this ordination is of God (Acts 16:48; Rom. 8:29-39; Eph. 1:3-14; 2 Thess. 2:13, 14; 1 Peter 1:1-5). —Now, as God alone knows who and where are His elect and redeemed people to whom it is His holy will for His gospel to be preached that they may hear and believe and be saved, and as He has not instituted His ministry in vain, it is quite certain that, just as the Son did during his earthly ministry, so must the Spirit now direct His ministers where to go. The Apostles received such directions from the Spirit, as we learn in the book of Acts (8:29, 39; 10:19, 20; 11:12; 13:1-4; 16:6, 7, 9, 10; 18:9-11; 21:4, 11; 22:21; 23:11; 27:24). They went as thus directed by the Holy Ghost; and, as Christ had instructed them, when they were persecuted in one city, they fled to another (Acts 8:1-25; 12:17; 13:50-52; 14:5-7, 19, 26; 16:37-40; 17:5-15; 18:6; 21-28). Thus directed by the Spirit, and driven by persecution, these true, unworldly, poor, and mostly unlearned servants of God, depending upon Him for support, and despised, hated, scourged, stoned and imprisoned by the rich, proud heathen and Jewish religionists, traversed the Roman Empire, and found some of God's people) wherever they went, whose hearts were opened by the Lord to believe the gospel and take pleasure in entertaining the ministry of the word (Acts 16:14, 15). They thus found and taught and guided and tended and fed (not goats and dogs and swine, but) the dear lambs and sheep of Christ (not with the chaff and husks of human learning, vain philosophy, false science, and the mere externals of religion, such as rites and ceremonies, upon which gracious souls cannot live, but) with the sincere milk of the word, and the strong meat of Divine, sovereign and all-sufficient grace, and the sound doctrine of the Apostles and prophets (Ezek. 34:11-31; Isa. 40:1-11; John 10:14-16, 27-30; 21:15-17; 1 Peter 5:1-5; 2:2; Acts 20:28; Heb. 5:12-14; Rom.8:29-39; 11:5-7; 3:24-31; 4:16; 5:19-21; 6:23; 1 Cor. 1:23-31; 2; 2 Cor. 12:9; Eph. 1, 2; 1 Peter 1:1-5; Isa. 45:24, 25; 61:1-3; Jer. 23:6; 33:16; 31:31-34; Col. 2:8, 1 Tim. 1:4; 6:20; Gal. 2:21; 3:10, 17; 4:10, 11; 5:1-6).

The dear people of God who thus partook of the spiritual treasures brought them by His called and qualified and sent servants, loved these poor, persecuted and faithful ministers of the word, and freely gave them of their carnal treasures for their support. “It is God’s order,” says Elder J. R. Respass, of Georgia, “That those to whom the gospel is ministered are the are the ones to minister in Carnal things to the preacher. God opened the heart of Lydia, and He is the same God now. We grant that, if the letter of the gospel is forced upon an unwilling people, those sending it must be at charges for it; but when God sends it, He sends it to a person whom He will prepare to receive it; and, if they do receive it, they will care for those preaching it. They will, if they are worth of it, and able to do it. Though even then God’s ministers are made to approve themselves ministers of Christ, in necessities, distresses, cold, nakedness and hunger. No other ministers save God’s ministers will endure such things for the love of God; men will endure such things for the love of the world, but not for the love of God. In human schools children are pretendedly taught Christianity now as they are taught geography and arithmetic, and men are taught to preach as a doctor is taught medicine; and, in the same worldly manner in which a commercial agent is sent by a merchant to a foreign country for traffic in merchandise, the so called ‘missionary’ is now sent by his employers to heathen lands. Anybody can afford to trip over to foreign countries if the sacrifice is done away; a mere spirit of adventure may prompt a man in going; a love of science or fame will make men do it—make them encounter great dangers, privations and hardships. See how many have perished by cold and starvation in search of the North Pole. The Jesuits set up the cross in the trackless wilderness of this county amongst the Indians, years and years ago; and so did trappers and hunters make their sign there, too. But when God sends His true servants, they go in His Spirit, to do His work, and not to please the flesh; they get no honor of men; no paeans are sung to them for the great sacrifice they are making; and they go often, if not bound in chains as Paul was, bound in spirit, encountering sneers, ridicule, persecution and contempt from the Rabshakehs of the world. (God and man and true religion are the same today that they were in New Testament times.) As for many heathens made to the ‘missionary’ cause in professedly Christian lands, we don’t believe a word of it; such declarations dishonor Christ. That Christ loved His people with an everlasting love; that He gave Himself for them; suffered and died for them; that a woman never loved her little babe, or a husband his wife, as Christ loved the church; and that God spared not His only Son, but gave Him for us to die, the just for the unjust; and after all the sufferings of Christ after His resurrection and ascension and meditation; having, too, all power in Heaven and in earth and over all flesh, to give eternal life to all that the Father has given Him—and then to say that they are perishing because some stingy miser will not throw in money, or some proud, vain woman wears a diamond pin, or some unwilling man will not go to preach, or some fleeing Jonah goes to Tarsus, is absolutely ridiculous.

There is not a husband in the world that loves his wife, having the power that Christ has, would leave her to pine and die on some foreign shore; and much less would Christ. No doubt the Pharisees had a mission system in Christ's day, for we are told they compassed sea and land to make proselytes—went everywhere propagating their religion. Paul had that religion before he was a Christian. It was respectable in the eyes of the people, and they looked with great contempt upon Christ and His disciples. Christ and His religion are the same today as then. Men in nature did not love the religion of Christ then, nor do they yet; nor did they receive it by worldly wisdom, because it was and is God's decree that men, by wisdom, should not know God. 'For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?' Why then resort to it, seeing it is foolishness with God, to effect the purpose of God? 'For you see you calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh,' etc. Our confidence is this: That the Lord will prepare His called servants to serve Him as He wills; that He will imbue them with His Spirit and endow them with power from on high, so that they will demonstrate His Spirit in their work and glorify Him. Thus it is that we find some of them called without learning sufficient even to read a hymn, but spelling out, so to speak, the Scriptures by pineknot fires at night when the day's work was over, and arriving at a proficiency in the word rarely equaled; men of robust minds and faith, compared with whom the men of mere worldly learning are in their littleness but dwarfs, but mole hills to mountains. (Consider, for instance, the case of John the Baptist, with his wild food and raiment and surroundings, than whom, says Christ, there was none greater among those born of women. Matthew 3; 11:11). If God wishes an educated minister, like Paul, He calls him. The Old School or Primitive Baptist ministers are Bible Missionaries, traveling, as directed by the Spirit, in the manner of the Apostles, in dependence upon the God of Israel, tens and hundreds of thousands of miles. Why we do not and have not gone all over the world, is not for us to explain any more than it is a matter for us to explain why so few, even here, in this professedly Christian land of increasing pride and greed and dishonesty and selfishness and immorality and hypocrisy, believe the truth as it is in Jesus. And that others have been over the world is no great matter after all, unless they have benefited the world more than they have the Sandwich Islands, from all accounts of those demoralized and depopulated people." During the hundred years since these islands were first visited by Europeans, the native population has decreased from about 400,000 to about 40,000; and though the people are more generally educated than any other people in the world, never every one being able to read and write, intemperance, licentiousness and disease abound; and Mr. J. R. Graves, an "Old Landmarker Missionary Baptist," editor of the "Tennessee Baptist," says, in the issue of his paper of June 10th, 1882, that "if the bottom facts were only known, it would be found these

Islanders are only pseudo Christianized heathens, and are today made tenfold harder to convert to Christianity than they were before a missionary ever touched the island. The work," he adds, "was done by Pedobaptists, unchecked by Baptist teachings or influence. The poor natives were taught exactly by the Confession that if they would mentally accept the forms of Christianity instead of idolatry, and be baptized for the remission of their sins, they would be Christians and saved. What has been done in these islands," continues Mr. Graves, "is now being done in Africa and Asia by Pedobaptist missionaries." "We oppose such Mission Societies," says Elder Gilbert Beebe, in the "Signs of the Times," "as are independent of the church of God, which we hold to be the only divinely authorized religious society upon earth; but we have, through the columns of a former number of this paper, offered to support the Lord's ministers or missionaries to the utmost of our ability, even to the dividing of our last loaf with such of them as go out without purse or scrip, relying upon the sure mercies of David, without waiting to get the Lord's promises indorsed by a Mission Board. We feel disposed to let such as have hired themselves out to Missionary Boards stand or fall to their own master, knowing that 'his servants they are, to whom they yield themselves servants to obey.' We consider all that a kind Providence has put into our possession belongs to the Lord, and as His stewards we are ready to deal it out to His servants according to His word." Such, no doubt, is the feeling of every true Bible Baptist. The history of scriptural and unscriptural missions will be given in the next chapter of this volume.

12. The Twelfth Mark of the Apostolic church was that it was absolutely the only divinely recognized religious organization in the world. There was no forbidden, unhallowed and corrupting alliance between the church and worldly societies and human institutions, combining believers and unbelievers, for carrying on God's work of evangelizing the nations; although, as it would seem, such confederacies, if ever necessary, were most essential in the first establishment of the feeble church on earth. When Israel came out of Egypt God forbade them ever to return to the carnal delights and idolatrous corruptions of Egypt any more (Deut. 17:16; Jer. 42:13-22). And when the mighty Assyrian army was approaching Jerusalem and threatening Israel with destruction, and some carnal, unbelieving, rebellious Israelites desired to go down to Egypt to get the assistance of her strength, and wisdom, and silver, and gold, and gods, *the Lord pronounced a woe upon them for taking counsel of another besides Him, and for trusting in the shadow of Egypt instead of in the living God;* and He directed them to cast away their idols of silver and gold, and to rest quietly and confidently in the Holy One of Israel, and they would see His salvation (Isa. 30, 31). And the Israelites, with Hezekiah their king, had the grace given them to obey the Divine command. They trusted implicitly and alone in the God of Israel for deliverance, and the angel of the Lord slew, in a single night, one hundred and eighty-five thousand of

their Assyrian enemies, and drove the remainder back to their native land, and not one Israelite was harmed (Isa. 36, 37). These wonderful and ever to be remembered facts in sacred history are thus well described by the poet;

*“The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.*

*“Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown*

*“For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and forever were still.*

*“And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.”*

The one thing needful, therefore, for Israel is, not to seek a ruinous alliance with the shadowy, unreal and deceptive wisdom and gold and strength and idols of Egypt or the world, but to trust alone in the only true and living God, who, with but a glance or a simple volition or word of His, can destroy their last enemy in a moment. “Thus saith the Lord: Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord;” while, on the other hand, God says, “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is” (Jer. 17:5-8). Every step toward Egypt is a departure from Jerusalem; every leaning toward man is a desertion of God. “We readily admit,” says Elder G. Beebe, “our opposition to the present system of Bible societies are religious institutions for the conversion of the world; but we are so far from being opposed to the gratuitous circulation of the Bible (without note or comment), that in a preceding number of the ‘Signs of the Times’ we are offered to supply a whole country at our own expense. We are opposed to Tract Societies, and we are ready to give the reason of our opposition; but we are not opposed to the circulation of Bible truth in

pamphlet, tract, newspaper, or any other form, gratuitously or otherwise.” “Our people,” says Elder J. R. Respass in the “Gospel Messenger”, “do not affiliate with the temperance societies of the world, but none favor temperance among all classes more than we do; and in the church we require it, so that a drunkard cannot remain in the church. But we hold that a Christian should be temperate because he is a Christian, and not because he is a member of a temperance society; that Christ and the church should be honored by his temperance, and not a society composed of all sorts of men, whether infidel, or profane, or adulterous, or of whatever character. For a member of the church of Christ to resort to a society of worldly men in order to become a temperate man himself, or to make somebody else temperate, is to forsake Christ and turn to man to do that which Christ had failed to do, or was incapable of doing, and to say that the grace and power of Christ were not sufficient to do what a society of men could do, thus ascribing more glory and honor to the society than to the grace of God. If our influence as Christians and church members fails upon the world, then we have no more than we can do or are required to do. What man believes that Christ would have gone into a secret chamber with a crowd of Sadducees, Pharisees and Herodians, with all sorts and classes of men, and yoked Himself with them to abstain from wine or other spirits to make men temperate [or for any other professedly benevolent object]? Even the thought is monstrous, almost sinful. Then His people, in whom He dwells and walks, have no right to carry Him and yoke Him with unbelievers in these organizations. But, after all, these temperance societies have confessedly failed, and there is now a resort to mightier legislation, to the strong arm of the law, to make men temperate, and still drunkenness increases. [The extensive and rapidly increasing use of opium as a substitute for alcoholic stimulants is by no means a proof of improvement in morals. We are opposed to religious Sunday Schools taught by the blind leaders of the blind and regarded as nurseries of the ‘church;’ but we maintain that parents should raise their children morally, and to respect God, and to read the Scriptures; and we are not opposed to any one who knows the truth teaching the truth to any one else on any proper occasion.] It is claimed that these fine modern institutions have made the present age what it is; but those who make the claim should be ashamed to confess it. For the present age is, perhaps, an almost unprecedentedly bad one. There is more infidelity in the world at this time than, perhaps, ever was in any other age of the world, all men, except a very small remnant, caring very little for any particular doctrine except the almost universally received doctrine of works and money. The age is bad, socially, morally and politically; and no thinking man will deny it. Men are greedy, selfish, dishonest, cruel and unmerciful. Even modern religionists call this a nation of drunkards. Lying, false swearing and murder, are things of everyday occurrence. Look at the corruption in the capital of the nation: the Star Route prosecutions, the office holders that have, upon salaries barely sufficient to maintain them in their positions, become millionaires; the open

bribery at elections. A President is murdered by a disappointed office seeker, in the very heart of the capital, in broad daylight. Look at the oppression of the poorer classes by monopolies; they are ground by these monied princes between the nether and upper millstone. They can put the price of meat and grain up or down at their own will, and no man hinder. Look at the wide extended undermining of the very foundations of civil society, not only by the Mormonism or simultaneous polygamy practiced, in spite of congressional legislation, in Utah, and rapidly infecting the adjoining territories, and gathering in tens of thousands of converts by most industrious and unscrupulous missionaries visiting and poisoning every region of the civilized world, but also by the rapidly and alarming increasing number of unscriptural divorces, facilitating successive polygamy, in the Northern and Western States of the Union. One thing we can say, and are glad to say, that the Primitive Baptists are not responsible for this condition of things; we have had no hand in it. The poor, tried and afflicted people of God, though few and nothing in themselves, should remember that the battle is not theirs, but the Lord's; that more are they that be with them than they that be with their enemies; and when our eyes are opened, and faith is given us, then we can trust in the Lord and be strong and courageous, and not be afraid of all the multitude arrayed against us." It is only when we are weak in self that we are strong in the Lord; only in our weakness is His strength made perfect; when we most feel our helplessness and nothingness, His grace is all sufficient for us (2 Cor. 12:9, 10; Phil. 3:3). Whether the Lord deliver us from the fiery furnace or not, we are not to disobey and dishonor Him, and worship the gods of the heathen. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," says the inspired Apostle to the church; "for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:14-18).

Numerous Scriptures forbid the intimate association of God's people with the heathen or unbelievers (Ex. 34:11-16; Deut. 7:1-11; 22:9-11; Ezra 9; Neh. 13:1-3, 23-31; Ps. 26:4, 5; 44:20, 21; 106:35-48; 1 Cor. 15:33; James 4:4; John 15:18, 19), for the expressed reason that such associations are *invariably corrupting to the people of God*. Especially corrupting must be such alliances as are based upon money, which is represented in the Scriptures as the god of this world, and the love of which is a root of all evil (Matthew. 6:24; Luke 16:13; 1 Tim. 6:10). From such money based societies let it be deeply impressed

upon our minds that Peter, who had no silver or gold, and Paul, who had to work day and night for his daily bread, and even the Lord Jesus Christ, who had not where to lay His head, would have been debarred, unless some friend had paid their fee or a miracle had been wrought for that purpose. Can it be possible that such Egyptian or worldly alliances of the children of God, so repeatedly and pointedly forbidden in both the Old and the New Testament of Scriptures, are of the Lord and will be blessed of Him? Besides corrupting the people of God, these alliances demonstrate confidence in the flesh and a lack of faith in God; that is, a departure and alienation from God, and, to the extent they reach, and identification with unbelievers. God solemnly calls upon all His dear children who have been ensnared and carried down into Babylon— *“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues”* (Rev. 18:4). Babylon was an idolatrous nation; and it is demonstrably certain that, if human language means anything, the language employed by a large number of high officials in these modern religious confederacies represents these human means and methods as the most important and indispensable requisite for the conversion and salvation of the world; that is, they represent these human institutions as *gods*, and thus, confederating with Babylon, professed Christians have become idolatrous too, just as the Scriptures abundantly warn us. Christ and His Apostles, let it be indelibly impressed upon our minds and hearts, *instituted absolutely none of these forbidden, unhallowed and contaminating, idolatrous and ruinous Egyptian and Babylonian confederacies. There were in the apostolic church no such auxiliary religious societies as* Foreign Mission Societies, Home Missionary Societies, Bible Societies, Tract Societies, Education Societies, Dorcas Societies, Temperance Societies, Secret Benevolent Societies; neither were there any Infant Church Memberships, Substitutions of Sprinkling or Pouring for Baptism, Sunday Schools, Religious Picnics and excursions, Church Fairs, Festivals, Taleaux, Holy Raffling, Holy Shooting at the Mark for money, Protracted Meetings full of Holy Altars, Pharisaic Preachers, Anxious Benches and Mourners’ Seats, Life Memberships in Religious Societies for sale at \$100 each of less, Pulpit Affiliations with unregenerate and unbaptized religionists, Female Revivalists, Theological Seminaries, Doctors of Divinity, Reverend Gentlemen, a Man-Called, Man-Qualified, and Salaried Ministry, Corrupting alliances of Church and State, Authoritative and Imperious Religious Bodies above the individual Churches, Bishops above Elders, Popes, Cardinals, Prelates, Diocesan Bishops, Arch-Bishops, Metropolitans, Monks, Nuns, Jesuits, Holy Wafers, Holy Days, Ave Marias, Holy Images, Holy Relics, Holy Candles, Holy Incense, Holy Prayer-Books, Holy Litanies, Holy Silken Gowns, Holy White Muslin Robes, Holy Inquisitions, supplied with Holy Racks, Holy Tortures, Holy red-hot tongs, with which to pinch the flesh and pull out the tongues of Christians, Holy Crusaders to hunt them down with barbarous armies and slay them by thousands, Holy Sale of Indulgences to Sin for money enough, Holy

Confessionals, Holy Penances, Holy Purgatories. Without these outward means of men's and Satan's invention, and in direct opposition to all human and diabolical schemes and powers, the word of God grew mightily and prevailed, so that in the 70 years from A.D. 30 to 100, according to the general estimate, the number of Christians increased to five hundred thousand in all parts of the heathen Roman Empire. It was the glorious work of the Almighty Spirit of God, who quickeneth whom He will, and bestows spiritual gifts on men according to His good pleasure, who has but to breathe upon the valley of dry bones and they will live, while, without the Divine Spirit, all the wise, pretentious, monetary, unscriptural devices of men are less than nothing and vanity. It was a stone cut without hands that smote and destroyed the great metallic lifeless image of worldly glory in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, and that became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth—the stone representing the indestructible kingdom of the God of Heaven (Dan. 2). It is upon the immovable rock of His own eternal Divinity that the Son of God is building, and will continue to build, His church, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail (Matthew 16:18—*petra*, rendered “rock,” is a great mass of living rock imbedded in the earth, while *Petros*, rendered “Peter,” is but a small fragmentary stone, made lively or living by the life of Christ within, and built, with the other Apostles, by Christ upon Himself—see 1 Peter 2:4-10; 1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20-22; Rev. 21:14). “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it” (Ps. 127:1). The Righteous Branch, even Christ, “shall build the temple of the Lord, and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne (Zech. 6:12, 13). The hands of the spiritual “Zerubbabel have laid the foundations of this spiritual house; His hands shall also finish it, and He shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it” —“*Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts*” (Zech. 4:6-9).

No doubt it is a paradox and a mystery to the world that the Apostle Paul, who affirms, more abundantly and emphatically than any other inspired writer, the sovereignty and almightiness of Divine grace, and the great fundamental doctrine of salvation by grace alone, without the deeds of the law, was the greatest, most industrious, most self-sacrificing worker that ever lived—he declares that it was the almighty grace of God which thus wrought in him (1 Cor. 15:10; Eph. 1:19-23; 2, 3, Phil. 2:12, 13); he exhorts his brethren, partakers of the same heavenly calling, thus to be followers of him; *but let it be profoundly observed that none of the religious works which this highly favored servant of God, after his conversion, engaged in, and none of the religious works to which he exhorts his brethren, were corrupt imitations of a wicked world, or unholy alliances with the servants of Satan.*

The position of the apostolic church must be the standard and example to be followed by all subsequent believers in Christ; and all subsequent bodies of people professing Christianity may, by comparison,

see where they stand, whether on the side of Divine truth, or on the side of human error. As they conform to the Pattern, they are to be accepted; and, as they lack this conformity, they are to be rejected.

If there is a command from Christ to observe any one or more of the customs or institutions just enumerated as not observed by the Apostles and primitive saints, then let it be pointed out and obeyed. But, if such cannot be shown, then we must fall back and rely implicitly upon the doctrine and example of those who are seated upon twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

ENDNOTES:

[1] It is claimed that Irenaeus was born A.D. 97, and that he makes one allusion to infant baptism. The fact is that both the date and place both of Irenaeus' birth and death are unknown. The ablest scholars believe that he was born between A.D. 120 and 140; and some suppose that he died A.D. 202. His book against Heresies was composed, says Mr. Schaff, between the years 177 and 192. In that book he says that "our Lord came in order that through Himself He might save all men, infants, and little ones, and children and youths and elders, even all who through Him are born again unto God." The expression "*born again*" is said, in the early so-called "Fathers," *habitually* to mean "*baptized*;" but it remains to be proved that it *always* has that meaning, and that it has that meaning in the sentence just quoted from Irenaeus. The phrase "through Him," instead of "through water," militates emphatically against the idea of baptismal regeneration in the passage—so admit the German scholars.

The earliest *undoubted* reference to child baptism is by Tertullian of North Africa (born 160 A.D., died between 290 and 240—converted about A.D. 190), and he earnestly opposes it. Certainly, then, child baptism must have been, not of Apostolic, but of recent origin, when Tertullian wrote.

"Bunsen shows that Tertullian was not arguing against *infant* baptism at all, then unknown, but against the baptism of little growing children from six to ten years old who could go down with the other catechumens into the baptismal bath, but were not yet in a state to make the proper responses. This custom was coming into fashion, but Tertullian rejects it. From boys of ten, who might possibly sometimes give evidence of sincere piety, the clergy advanced to take in those of six or seven responded for by others, though able to descend into the water, unaided, with the adult catechumens. Then those of three or four, when just able to repeat a few of the sacred words, as Gregory Nazianzen recommends, were, by a further corruption, brought by baptism into the fold of the 'church.' From this very circumstances would arise the strongest argument for going a step further. For, since in these very

young children baptism could not be a profession of personal faith, it could only lead the masses to suppose that it acted as a charm, and that the child was *more safe* in case of death, a view carefully cherished by the clergy. Thus arose the belief that *all*, even infants, dying without baptism, would be lost; and hence followed finally the baptism of babes eight days old, and even those of a day. The first *known* instance of this last was A.D. 256, in North Africa, and these ideas slowly and gradually pervaded the 'church,' as Neander has shown. A host of authorities fully sustain this view of the origin of infant baptism." "The Catholic practice of pretending to make infants catechumens, or rudimentally instructed in Christianity, before baptism, is an undersigned proof of correctness of the above explanation, and of the truth of Baptist principles."—*T.F. Curtis* Dean Stanley says that there is but one known instance of infant baptism in the third century, though he defends the practice as being "a standing testimony to the truth, value, and eternal significance of natural religion." and as showing that, "in every child of Adam, whilst there is much evil, there is more good."

[2] Mr. C. H. Spurgeon is regarded by millions as the greatest preacher of the nineteenth century. His Sunday morning sermons were for some time telegraphed by cable across the ocean, at an enormous expense, and published in the Monday morning edition of a half-dozen American newspapers, an honor conferred on no other minister in the world. Well, Mr. S. himself relates that, after he had begun preaching in 1852, his father and others strongly advised him to enter a theological college and prepare more fully for the ministry, and that he had concluded to do so, but was withheld from such a course by *the providence and the voice of God*; the former strangely preventing an appointed meeting with the college tutor, and the latter loudly startling him with the words, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not!" Mr. S. says that he then looked at his motives and intentions, and he resolved, though he anticipated obscurity and poverty as the result, to renounce the idea of collegiate instruction, and to go on preaching the word in his humble way to his humble people. He acknowledges that it was the Lord who mysteriously guided him in his perplexity, saying to him, "This is the way; walk ye in it." How inconsistent is this early individual experience of Mr. Spurgeon's with his subsequent establishment of a "Pastors' College" in London, and with his own remark in a recent discourse! "I wish I knew how to preach," he said. "I wish not to use a single word of fine language, for I believe that oratory has been the curse of the Christian church. My one aim is to get the heart and bring the sinner to Christ."