

“ I am not she that list
My anchor to let fall,
For every fleeting mist:
My hope’s substantial.”

ANNE ASKEW, MARTYRED 1546.

“ I may lose all my friends. Well, be
it so, if it is God’s will ; but I am determined
to go to Heaven alone, rather than walk in
fellowship with any who repudiate His truth,
and decline to obey His commandments.”

GEORGE MURRELL, ST. NEOTS.

ARTICLES
OF THE
FAITH AND ORDER
OF A
Primitive or Strict and Particular
BAPTIST CHURCH
OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST,

With Annotations.

BASED ON THE
Declaration of Faith and Practice
OF
JOHN GILL, D.D., 1720.

THE ARTICLES.

HAVING been enabled, through Divine grace, to give ourselves to the Lord, and likewise to one another, according to the will of God (1),—we count it our duty to make a declaration of our Faith and Practice, to the glory of His holy name. (2)*

(1.) 2 Cor. viii. 5.

(2.) Rom. x. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 12; 2 Tim. i. 13; and 1 Pet. iii. 15.

I. The Doctrines of the Gospel.

I. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are verbally inspired (1),—and our sole, supreme, and all-sufficient guide in every matter of Christian Faith and Practice. (2)

(1) John x. 35; 2 Tim. iii. 16; and 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

(2) Psalm xix. 9—11; and cxix. 128; Isa. viii. 20; Luke xvi. 29—31; John v. 39; 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16; and 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

II. THE BLESSED TRINITY IN UNITY.

We believe that there is one living and true God (1),—the Creator and Upholder of all things (2),—and that there are three eternal Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who are equal in nature, power and glory (3),—and that the Son and the

*The longer Articles are divided into clauses, which are separated from each other by dashes, (—). With each of these a group of proof texts corresponds.

Holy Ghost are as truly and properly God as the Father. (4)

(1) Deut. vi. 4 and v. 26; John xviii. 3; 1 Thess. i. 9; 1 Tim. ii. 5; and James ii. 19.

(2) Gen. i. 1; Ex. xx. 11; Job vii. 20; John i. 3; Acts xvii. 24.

(3) Matt. iii. 16, 17, and xxvii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Col. ii. 9; and Heb. i. 8; 1 John v. 7.

(4) John i. 1—3 and vi. 69; 1 Cor. vii. 17 and xii. 11; 2 Cor. iii. 17; Col. ii. 2; Heb. ix. 14; and 1 Pet. iv. 14.

III. THE FEDERAL HEADSHIP OF ADAM, AND HUMAN GUILT AND DEPRAVITY.

We believe that God created the first man, Adam, after His own image and in His own likeness, an innocent, upright, and holy being, capable of serving and glorifying Him (1),—but that he, sinning, all his posterity sinned in him, and have come “short of the glory of God;” the guilt of whose sin is imputed to, and whose corrupt nature is derived by, all that descend from him by ordinary and natural generation (2), so that all men are under sentence of condemnation, and by their first birth carnal and unclean, averse to all that is good, prone to all that is evil, and incapable of pleasing God, and are hence by nature the “children of wrath,” (3),—and that they are consequently not only involved in spiritual death, but subject to corporeal and eternal death (4)—from all which there is no deliverance but by Christ, the “Last Adam.” (5)

(1) Gen. i. 26; Psalm viii. 5; Eccles. vii. 29, and 1 Tim. ii. 14.

(2) Gen. ii. 17 and iii. 3; Rom. iii. 23, v. 12, and viii. 10; 1 Cor. xv. 22, and Job xiv. 4.

(3) Psalm lviii. 3; John iii. 6; Rom. v. 18, and vi. 23; and Eph. ii. 3.

(4) Matt. viii. 22; * Rom. v. 15; 2 Cor. v. 14; Eph. ii. 1; 1 Tim. v. 6; Eccles. xii. 7; 2 Sam. xiv. 14; Heb. ix. 27; Matt. x. 28; Luke xii. 5; Rom. viii. 13; Rev. ii. 11, and xx. 14.

(5) Psa. xlix. 7, 8; John iii. 36, and xiv. 6; Acts iv. 12; Rom. iii. 22, 23 and 1 Cor. xv. 45.

*“Let the (spiritually) dead bury their (natural) dead.”

IV. THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

We believe that, before the world began, a Divine and gracious arrangement was made between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to determine and secure the salvation of sinners, which is scripturally designated the Covenant of Grace. (1)

—We believe that, from eternity, the Father loved a multitude whom no man can number,—whom He chose,—sanctified,—and predestinated to eternal salvation,—and to “the adoption of children” in and by the Son. (2)

—We believe that the Son, by Covenant, gave Himself up into His Father’s hands,—to be the Surety of the people, “with whom were His delights,”—and engaged in the fulness of time, to assume their nature, to work out an everlasting righteousness for them,—to endure all the penal wrath and hot displeasure due to their sin,—and to obtain eternal redemption for them, so that they might be blessed in Him with all the blessings of grace and glory. (3)

—We believe that these blessings are conveyed and communicated to those who were elected by the Father and redeemed by the Son, by the Holy Ghost, who as a Person in the Covenant of grace, engaged before time to quicken and regenerate them,—to invest them with spiritual capacities and powers, and to work in them “those things which are well-pleasing to the Lord.” (4)

(1) 2 Sam. xxiii. 5; Zech. vi. 13; 1 Cor. xi. 25; (“new testament” or “covenant”) Heb. x. 16, 29, and xiii. 20.

(2) Deut. xxxiii. 3; Jer. xxxi. 3; John xvii. 23, 24; 2 Thess. ii. 16—Rom. viii. 29; 1 Cor. i. 27, 28; Eph. i. 4; 1 Thess. i. 4; 1 Pet. i. 2—Jude 1—Acts xiii. 48; 1 Cor. i. 30; 1 Thess. v. 9—Psa. lxxxiv. 11; Eph. i. 5; Gal. v. 6; and 1 Tim. i. 1.

(3) Prov. viii. 22—Isa. xlii. 1—John xvii. 4, 6, 12; Heb. vii. 22—Prov. viii. 31; Psa. xl. 6—8 and Heb. x. 6, 7; Isa. vii. 14; Matt. i. 23; Isa. xxxii. 2 and 17, xlii. 21; xlv. 17, 24 and liv. 17; Jer. xxiii. 6; Dan. ix. 24—Isa. liii. 4, 11; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. iii. 13—Col. ii. 14; Heb. ix. 9, 12; Gal. iii. 8—16; and Eph. 1, 3, 6.

(4) Isa. xlv. 3; and liv. 13; Jer. xxxi. 33, and xxxii. 40; Heb. viii. 10, and x. 16; Joel ii. 28; Eph. iv. 20; Heb. xiii. 21, and 2 Pet. i. 3.

V. THE MEDIATION OF CHRIST.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, (who was set up from everlasting as the Mediator of the new Covenant,) having engaged to be the Surety of His people (1)—did, in the fulness of time, really assume human nature, (but free from sin,) (2)—in which He suffered and died in their room and stead, as their Representative and Surety (3)—thereby rendering all the satisfaction for their sins which the law and justice of God required (4)—as well as making way for the communication of all the blessings which are needful to them, both for time and eternity. (5)

(1) Prov. viii. 23; Zech. xiii. 7; Rev. xiii. 8.

(2) Isa. vii. 14 and Matt. i. 23; Matt. xii. 8; Gal. iv. 4; Heb. ii. 14; and 1 John iv. 2, 3.

(3) Isa. liii. 5, 6; Matt. xx. 28; John x. 15, and xi. 50; Rom. v. 6, 7; 1 Cor. xv. 3; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. iii. 13; Eph. v. 2; 1 Tim. i. 15; 1 Pet. ii. 24, iii. 18, and iv. 1; and 1 John iii. 16.

(4) Job xxxiii. 24; Psa. lxxxv. 10; Ezek. xvi. 63; Dan. ix. 24; Acts xiii. 39; Rom. iii. 24—26, and viii. 1, 3, 33; Gal. iii. 13.

(5) Rom. viii. 32; Gal. iii. 14, and iv. 5; and 2 Pet. i. 3.

VI. PARTICULAR REDEMPTION.

We hold that since the redeeming and atoning work of the Lord Jesus was defined and determined by His Covenant engagements; He suffered to ransom the persons and expiate the sins of the elect of God only; who, (and no others,) participate in the special and peculiar blessings that flow from His sufferings and death.

Isa. liii. 6; Matt. i. 21; John x. 15, 16, 26, and xvii. 6, 9; Acts xx. 28; Rom. xi. 7; Eph. v. 25; and 1 Pet. i. 2 and ii. 24.

VII. THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST.

We believe that the Lord Jesus was raised from the dead, (1)—and has ascended in His whole person to Heaven, (2)—where He intercedes, as our great High Priest, for those whom the Father gave Him, and whom He redeemed with His blood, (and no others,) and that

His pleas are perpetual and prevalent, (3)—and we hold that the Holy Ghost works on earth in concurrence and harmony with His advocacy in Heaven, progressively accomplishing the salvation of those for whom He died, to His abundant satisfaction and glory.

(1) See the accounts given by the Evangelists, 1 Cor. xv. 3—7.

(2) Acts i. 9—11; 1 Pet. iii. 22.

(3) Zech. vi. 13; Rom. viii. 34; Heb. i. 3, viii. 1, x. 12; John xvii. 9; and Psalm ii. 8.

(4) Psa. cx. 3; Isa. xlix. 8, 9, liii. 10, 11; John xvi. 13, 14; 1 Cor. xv. 25; Phil. ii. 9, 10, and 13; Heb. xii. 2; and Jude 24.

VIII. JUSTIFICATION AND FORGIVENESS.

We believe that the Justification of God's elect is by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, without the consideration of any works of righteousness done by them (1),—and that the full and free Pardon of all their sins and transgressions, past, present, and to come, is only through the blood of Christ, according to the riches of Divine grace. (2)

(1) Psa. lxxi. 16; Isa. xlv. 24; Dan. ix. 24; Rom. iii. 24—26, v. 19, and viii. 30.

(2) 2 Cor. v. 21; Phil. iii. 8, 9; Titus iii. 5; Psa. xxxii. 1 and Rom. iv. 6, 7; Isa. xxxviii. 17; Hosea xiv. 4; Micah vii. 19; Luke vii. 42; Acts xiii. 38, 39; Rom. iii. 25; 1 Cor. vi. 11; Eph. i. 7, and iv. 32; Col. ii. 13; Heb. x. 17, 18; 1 John i. 7, 9, and ii. 12; and Rev. i. 5.

IX. DIVINE CHASTISEMENT.

We believe that, though the people of God are exempted from the penal consequences of all their sins by the death of Christ, and freely forgiven all their transgressions (1)—their voluntary sins after regeneration and conversion are followed by His paternal rebukes and chastenings (2)—for the correction of their waywardness (3)—their instruction in the truths they have disregarded or slighted (4)—and the restoration of their souls. (5)

(1) See Article VIII.

(2) 2 Sam. xii. 3; Psas. xxxix. 11; lxxxix. 32 and cxix. 75; Prov. iii. 12; Jer. xxxi. 18—20; Mic. vi. 9; Mal. ii. 2; 1 Cor. xi. 30—32; Heb. xii. 5—9; and Rev. iii. 19.

(3) Psa. xxxix. 11 and xciv. 10; Jer. xxx. 11, and Hos. ii. 6.

(4) Psa. lxxviii. 34, 35 and cxix. 67, 71; Hos. v. 15 and xiv. 1—4.

(5) Psa. xxiii. 3, and lxxxviii. 8; Isa. xxvii. 7—9 and lvii. 17—19; 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7; and 1 John i. 9.

X. EFFECTUAL CALLING.

We believe that all whom the Father chose and the Son redeemed, (and no others,) are effectually called by the Holy Ghost (1),—and that the work of regeneration, faith and conversion to God is not an act of man's free will and natural power, but of the almighty, efficacious and invincible grace of God. (2)

(1) Psa. cx. 3; Isa. xliii. 6, 13, and xlix. 9; Ezek. xvi. 6; John vi. 37; Acts ii. 37—39; Rom. viii. 29, 30; Gal. i. 15, 16; Eph. i. 11; Phil. ii. 13; 1 Thess. i. 4, 5; 1 Pet. i. 2, 3; 2 Pet. i. 2, and Jude 1.

(2) Psa. lxxv. 4; John i. 12, 13, iii. 8, and vi. 44; Rom. ix. 15, 16, and x. 20, 21; Col. ii. 12; James i. 18; and i. Pet. ii. 9.

XI. THE GOSPEL—ITS NATURE AND INVITATIONS.

We believe that the Gospel,—or the glad tidings of the sovereign, free, and enriching grace of God to lost sinners, through Jesus Christ, by the Holy Ghost—(1) is of the nature of a declaration or proclamation, and that to proffer mercy, or tender salvation, or offer Christ to the unregenerate, (as is often done, as if men had it in their own power to accept or reject the grace of God, and will augment their damnation if they refuse it,) is unscriptural, and wholly without Divine authority, (2)—and that the invitations of the Gospel are addressed to those who possess spiritual life, and should be presented to those only whose character and condition, as conscious and contrite sinners, are so clearly described in the word of God. (3)

(1) Luke viii. 1; Acts xiii. 32; Rom. x. 15, and 1 Cor. xv. 1, 8.

(2) Isa. lxi. 1, 2; Luke xii. 3; Acts xvii. 23, and xx. 27; Rom. iii. 25; Col. i. 28; 1 John i. 3.

(3) Matt. xi. 28; John vii. 37; Acts ii. 37, 38, and xvi. 29—31; Rom. x. 12, 13; Rev. xxii. 17.

XII. SPIRITUAL FAITH NOT A NATURAL AND LEGAL DUTY.

We believe that the “precious faith” of “God’s elect,” with which salvation is conjoined, (1)—is “the gift of God, “obtained” by the elect “through the righteousness of God our Saviour,” wrought in the heart by “the operation of God,” and manifested by acts of spiritual belief or trust which are performed through gracious ability communicated by the Holy Ghost (2),—and that it is not a duty incumbent on men as men, which they can perform at their pleasure, but is obligatory only upon chosen, blood-bought, and heaven-born sinners, to whom power has been imparted to believe in the Lord Jesus to the saving of their souls. (3)

(1) Mark xvi. 16; John vi. 40; Acts xvi. 31; Rom. iii. 24—26; Titus i. 1; Heb. x. 39 and 1 Pet. i. 9.

(2) Pet. i. 1; Eph. ii. 8; Phil. i. 29 and ii. 13; Acts xviii. 27; and Col. ii. 12 and x. 26.

(3) John vi. 44; John iii. 23.*

XIII. FINAL PERSEVERANCE.

We believe that all those who were chosen by the Father, and redeemed by the Son, and who have been sanctified by the Holy Ghost, shall certainly and finally

* The candid reader may object that these are insufficient as proof texts.

This is conceded, but it is confessedly difficult, if not impossible, to prove a negative; nor can texts that directly deny that *Duty-faith* is scriptural be advanced.

It should, however, be remembered that the responsibility of proof is always allowed to be with those who make an assertion.

Our *Duty-faith* brethren should not, therefore, assume that their position is incontrovertible because we do not urge texts against their view: but rather prove it themselves from the Bible. Let them produce texts which assert that it is the duty of natural men to be spiritual, and to perform spiritual acts,—*spiritual* faith being one of them—and the controversy will be ended.

Young Christians should ask, concerning any doctrine that is claimed to be scriptural, not so much, “can it be disproved?” as “Is it proved?”

We are told to “prove all things” (1 Thess. v. 21)—not to disprove every error which may be advanced.

persevere so that not one of them shall ever perish, but all shall attain to everlasting life hereafter.

Job xvii. 9; Psa. lxxxiv. 5, 7; Prov. iv. 18; Matt. xviii. 14; John x. 28; Rom. viii. 30, and xi. 29; 1 Cor. xv. 58; Eph. iv. 30; Phil. i. 6; 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14; Heb. x. 38, 39; 1 Pet. i. 2—5; and 1 John v. 18.

XIV. THE INTERMEDIATE STATE OF THE DEAD IN CHRIST.

We believe that the souls of all "who die in the Lord" are immediately ushered into His presence, and at once enter into rest, joy, and perfect holiness, (1)—and that their "mortal bodies," though "the dust return to the earth as it was," will be quickened and re-united to their heaven-born spirits at the "resurrection of the just." (2)

(1) Isa. lvii. 2; Luke xxiii. 43; Phil. i. 23; 2 Cor. v. 8; Rev. xiv. 13.

(2) Eccles. xii. 7; Luke xiv. 14; John v. 28, 29; Rom. viii. 11; 1 Cor. xv. 20, and 42—45; and Heb. xii. 23.

XV. THE RESURRECTION AND THE FINAL CONDITION OF THE GODLY AND THE UNGODLY.

We believe that there will be a "resurrection of the dead," both of the just and of the unjust (1),—and that Christ will come a second time to judge both the quick and the dead (2).

We believe that He will then change the vile bodies of His saints, and fashion them like unto His own glorious body, and usher them into His kingdom and glory, in which they will eternally reign with Him (3);—and consign all that know not God to the equitable and conscious punishment of hell for ever and ever. (4)

(1) Dan. xii. 2; John v. 28, 29; Acts xvii. 18; Heb. vi. 2; Rev. xx. 12.

(2) 1 Cor. xv. 23; 2 Tim. iv. 1; Heb. ix. 28; and Rev. i. 7.

(3) Job xix. 25; Psa. xvii. 15; Isa. xxvi. 19; John xi. 25, 26; 1 Cor. xv. 20, and 42—58; Phil. iii. 20, 21; 1 Thess. iv. 16—18; 2 Thess. i. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 12; Heb. ix. 28; 1 John iii. 2; and Rev. xxii. 5.

(4) Dan. xii. 2; Matt. x. 28, xiii. 42, 50, and xxv. 41; Luke xii. 47, 48; John v. 27, 29; Acts xvii. 31; 2 Thess. 1, 9; and Rev. xx. 10, 15.

II. The Constitution and Order of a Gospel Church.

XVI. THE CONSTITUTION OF A CHURCH.

We believe that a Church is an independent and organised body of spiritual men and women (1)—who have been baptised and are agreed upon the essential truths and ordinances of the Gospel (2),—and have voluntarily given themselves to the Lord and to each other, for their common benefit and the glory of God (3);—and that it is subject (in all spiritual matters) to no authority save that of the Lord as made known in His holy word. (4)*

(1) Acts xv. 41, 42, xviii. 22; Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. i. 2; 1 Thess. ii. 14; and Rev. 1. 4.

(2) Acts ii. 42; 1 Cor. vii. 17, xi. 16, xiv. 40; Col. ii. 5; Amos iii. 3; Rom. xii. 16; 1 Cor. i. 10; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Phil. i. 27, iii. 16, iv. 2; 1 Pet. iii. 8.

(3) Rom. xv. 7; 1 Cor. xiv. 26; 2 Cor. viii. 5; Gal. v. 10.

(4) Matt. xxii. 21; John xiii. 13, 14, and xviii. 36; Acts iv. 19; xvi. 4; 1 Cor. vii. 17; Eph. v. 23; and 1 Thess. iv. 1.

XVII. PASTORS AND DEACONS.

We believe that the officers of Christian churches are Pastors, (or Bishops,) and Deacons, and that the right of choosing these is vested in each individual Church as such.

That a Pastor's duties are spiritual,—namely, to tend the flock of God; to administer the ordinances of His

*From the nature of the case it is not possible to cite texts in support of church order as definite and decisive as those quoted in corroboration of doctrinal truths. The New Testament gives us broad, general principles, and enjoins us to "do all things decently, (or in a manner which is becoming to and in harmony with these,) and in order." (1 Cor. xiv. 40.) The Holy Spirit dwells in the churches, and leads them to apply these principles as circumstances arise. The ways of our predecessors when in undoubted harmony with the Word of God, therefore demand our regard and respect. Paul speaks with deference of the "custom of the churches." (1 Cor. xi. 16; Cant. i. 8.) Hence, those who have departed from the long-established usages of Particular Baptist Churches, should rather be required to justify their conduct by the word of God than demand of us "chapter and verse" for abiding by the well-considered precedents set by the eminently godly and enlightened men who went before. (Jer. vi. 16.)

house; to expound the Word and preach the Gospel; instruct inquiring sinners; visit the sick; and generally to watch for the souls of those under his care as one "that must give an account." (1)

That Deacons are honorary servants of the Church, who, for Christ's sake and love to His cause, attend to all temporal matters, and thus leave their Pastor more free to pursue his high and holy calling. (2)

(1) Jer. iii. 15; Ezek. xxxiv. 3; Acts vi. 2, and xx. 18—21; 1 Tim. iii. 2—7, and iv. 15, 16; 2 Tim. iv. 2; Titus i. 6—9; Heb. xiii. 7; 1 Pet. v. 2; and Rev. i. 20, where "the angels of the seven churches" were probably their Pastors.

(2) Acts vi. 1—6; 1 Tim. iii. 8—13; James v. 14; Phil. i. 1.

XVIII. THE TWO ORDINANCES.

We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only two symbolical ordinances enjoined in the Gospel; all other ritualistic forms and ceremonies being disallowed and forbidden by the Word of God.

Mal. iii. 7; Matt. v. 19, xv. 9 and xxviii. 20; Col. ii. 20—23,—read verse 20, "are ye subject to (humanly devised and unscriptural) ordinances"?

XIX. BAPTISM, ITS SUBJECTS, METHOD AND SIGNIFICANCE.

We believe that Baptism consists of the immersion in water of the whole persons of professed believers, (1) "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (2)—and sets forth our identity with Christ Jesus in His death and resurrection; the necessity of the new birth ere we can be vitally associated with the true church of the Lord Jesus; and the cleansing of sin by His precious blood. (3)

(1) Matt. iii. 6, 16; John iii. 23; Acts viii. 36—38.

(2) Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts x. 48.

(3) Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12; Acts xxii. 16: "Be baptised, and (declaratively) wash away thy sins." Express the fact by the act.

XX. BAPTISM SHOULD BE PRECEDED BY CONFESSION.

We believe that, inasmuch as Baptism is rightly administered to spiritual believers only, a Church should be assured of the godliness of all who desire it, as a prelude to membership; and we hold that a personal confession

of Faith should be made by all such in the presence of the Church, before they are received in the Lord's name.

Psa. lxxvi. 16; Luke viii. 47; Acts ii. 41, and viii. 36—38; Rom. x. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 12; Heb. iv. 14, and x. 23; and 1 Pet. iii. 21.

XXI. THE LORD'S SUPPER.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a symbolical repast, setting forth, by the breaking, taking, and eating of Bread, and the drinking from a Cup of the juice of the fruit of the vine, the method of our salvation through the death of our Lord; the ratification of the Covenant of Grace by the shedding of His blood; and our union and communion, both with Him and His people; and that it is to be observed till He comes again.

Matt. xxvi. 26—28; Mark xiv. 22—25; Luke xxii. 19—20; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. i. 10, 16, 17, and xi. 23—26.

XXII. STRICT COMMUNION.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a Church ordinance, and that it is scripturally administered to such persons only as have manifested their loyalty to Christ by being baptised, and by joining and continuing in honourable membership with a Baptised Church of the New Testament Faith and Order,—one, that is to say, that is commonly described as a Strict and Particular Baptist Church: and who are assembled "in one place" as a Church, for the observance of this ordinance of their Lord and Saviour.

Acts ii. 42, and xx. 7; 1 Cor. x. 17, and xi. 18—22.

XXIII. TRANSIENT COMMUNION TO BE EXTENDED ONLY TO MEMBERS OF CHURCHES OF THE SAME FAITH AND ORDER.

We believe that, inasmuch as by receiving persons at the Lord's Table, we sanction their Christianity, their doctrinal profession, and their walk before men (1)—transient, or occasional Communion at this ordinance of our Lord's, should be extended to such persons only as stand in creditable membership with scripturally constituted Churches of Jesus Christ. (such, that is to say, as are known as Strict and Particular Baptist Churches,) in which the essential truths and the ordinances of the

Gospel are maintained and practised as in our own midst. (2)*

(1) Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. v. 11; 2 Cor. vi. 14; Phil. ii. 29; 2 Thess. iii. 14; 2 John 10, 11.

(2) 1 Sam. xv. 22; Acts v. 32; 1 Cor. vii. 19; Col. ii. 5.

XXIV. RECEPTION OF MEMBERS FROM SISTER CHURCHES.

We believe that a member of another Church, professing the same Faith and Order as ourselves, who is desirous of uniting with us, should be received by an honourable dismissal from the Church to which he belongs, without an oral and public statement of his experience and Faith.†

2 Cor. iii. 1; Gal. ii. 9; Phil. ii. 22.

XXV. RECEPTION OF CHRISTIANS FROM OTHER CHURCHES.

We believe that, should Christians, belonging to Churches of another Faith and Order desire membership with us, such should be received on a confession of their experience and Faith; but that their Baptism should be accepted as valid, if they were immersed as spiritual believers "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

* The practice of some Strict Churches differs from the above.

For example:—

Some receive all baptised persons.

Others receive all baptised persons, *of whom the Minister or the Deacons of the chapel approve.*

Others, again, receive members of all Churches *which consist entirely of baptised believers.*

Some, again, whose order is more rigid than the above, insist that none shall be admitted to transient communion but members of Strict and Particular Baptist Churches, holding with them, certain tenets relative to the mode of the Sonship of Christ and the relation of the Law of God to believers.

† The Rule at Chadwell Street Chapel is that "Members of other churches professing the same Faith and Order may be received by an honourable dismissal, such dismissal to be regarded as a guarantee of their moral character, but all such persons shall come before the Church and state their Faith and experience previous to their dismissal being sent for."

The words, "*such dismissal to be regarded as a guarantee of their moral character*" are not in the Original Rules, and were added in 1889 after the death of John Hazelton.

XXVI. LAPSED MEMBERSHIP.

We believe that Christians who have suffered their Church membership to lapse, and that such as have been withdrawn from, (whether for non-attendance, immorality, or holding unscriptural doctrines,) have no Church standing; but, if they so desire, must be received by an oral and public confession of faith and experience, in the same way as when they first connected themselves with the Lord's people,—their Baptism, (as in Article xxiii.) being recognised as valid.

James v. 19, 20; * 1 Cor. v., compared with 2 Cor. ii. 6—8.

XXVII. OBLIGATIONS OF CHURCH MEMBERS.

We believe that the members of a Church are solemnly bound to lead godly and consistent lives (1)—to attend all meetings when practicable (2)—to be courteous, conciliatory, and forgiving to all the rest (3)—to contribute to the funds of their own church, (4)—and to aid other churches, and the needy members of the one family of God in all places (5)—as the Lord enables them. (6)

(1) Acts xix. 36; Rom. xii. 1, 2; 1 Thess. iv. 11; 1 Tim. ii. 3; Tit. i. 13, ii. 12; and 1 Pet. iv. 15.

(2) Heb. x. 25.

(3) Matt. v. 9; Gal. vi. i; Eph. iv. 26 and 31, 32; Col. iii. 13; and 1. Pet. iii. 8.

(4) Acts xi. 29, and xx. 35; 1 Cor. ix. 11, 14, xvi. 1, 2; 2 Cor. viii. 12, and ix. 7—11; Gal. vi. 6; and Heb. xiii. 5, 6, 16.

(5) Rom. xii. 13; 1 Cor. xvi. 1; 2 Cor. viii. 24; Gal. vi. 10; Heb. vi. 10, and xiii. 16.

(6) Acts ix. 20; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; 2 Cor. viii. 12; and Gal. vi. 10.

* From this we learn that a reputed Christian who has "erred from (the profession and practice of) the truth," must be regarded as a "sinner": and it is a sound inference that, if he be graciously restored, he should be required to "confess his faults" (verse 16) and avouch his adherence to the faith of the gospel, before his readmission to the Church.

XXVIII. CHURCHES SHOULD CONSERVE AND CIRCULATE
THE TRUTH.

We believe that it is incumbent on every Church as such, and upon each of its members individually, to maintain, contend for, and disseminate the truth of God, (1)—both as it concerns all men as sinners, (2)—and the children of God as His peculiar and privileged people, (3)—and we consider ourselves bound to promote and engage in the circulation of the Scriptures, the moral and religious instruction of children, and the preaching of the Gospel to every creature,—in the prayerful hope that all may be benefited, (4)—and God's elect made "wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus." (5)

(1) Prov. xxiii. 23; Eph. iv. 15; Phil. i. 7, 17, 27, and ii. 16; 1 Thess. i. 8; 1 Tim. i. 19 and iii. 15; 2 Tim. i. 13; 3 John 8; Jude 3.

(2) Prov. x. 11; Acts xx. 20, 31; Phil. iii. 18, 19; Col. iv. 5; 1 Thess. v. 14, 15; 2 Tim. ii. 25.

(3) Acts xviii. 26; Gal. v. 1; Phil. ii. 16; Titus iii. 8.

(4) Gen. xviii. 19; Ex. xii. 26, 27; Deut. vi. 7; Psa. xxxiv. 11; Prov. xxii. 6; Ecc. xi. 9, making no break to xii. 7; Mark xvi. 15; Luke xviii. 16; Acts xi. 19, 20 and xx. 21; Gal. vi. 6; Phil. i. 15—18; Col. i. 23, 28; 2 Tim. ii. 25, iii. 15 and iv. 17.

(5) Dan. xii. 3; 1 Cor. iii. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 2 Tim. iii. 15.

XXIX. CONCLUSION.

All and each of these doctrines and ordinances we consider ourselves under the greatest obligation to embrace, maintain, and defend; believing it to be our duty and privilege to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel."

And whereas we are very sensible that our "conversation," both in the Church and in the World, ought to be "as becometh the gospel of Christ," we judge it our incumbent duty to "walk in wisdom towards them that are without," and to exercise a conscience void of offence towards God and man, by living, "soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."

And as regards our conduct to each other in our Church

communion, we esteem it our duty and our privilege to walk with each other in all humility and brotherly love; to watch each other's conversation; to stir up one another to love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, but as we have opportunity, to worship God according to His revealed will; and when the case requires, to warn, rebuke, and admonish one another, according to the rules of the Gospel.

Moreover, we think ourselves obliged to sympathise with each other, in all conditions, both inward and outward, into which God, in His providence, may bring us; as also to bear with each other's weaknesses, failings, and infirmities; and particularly to pray for, and with one another, that the Gospel and the ordinances thereof, may be blessed to the edification and comfort of our souls, and for the accomplishment of the number of God's elect all which duties and privileges we desire to be found in the performance of, through the gracious assistance of the Holy Spirit; whilst we admire and adore the grace which has given us "a place and a name in God's house better than that of sons and daughters."