

LECTURE VIII.

THE CHURCH AND ITS INSTITUTIONS.

SECTION I.—CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH.

THE Church is an institution adapted to our social condition. Every man has individual responsibilities. He has a moral agency and responsibility which cannot be merged in that of the mass. The law of God addresses each man, and each, in his individual capacity, obeys or disobeys. So with the provisions of grace for fallen man. Christ tasted death for every man, and ordained the preaching of the Gospel to every creature. Each one, therefore, in respect to his salvation, has to act for himself.

Still, man is not an isolated being. His nature is eminently social. He is ever in society, bound to it by numberless ties, and impressed by it at every turn, from the cradle to the grave. The Christian religion does not overlook these great truths. While it is well suited to man's character as an individual, in every diversity of circumstance, it also fully provides for his social wants, and, in this respect, shows its superiority over every other moral and religious system. It prescribes adequately for our social condition.

But precepts for the conduct of life are not enough. Society, to exist at all, must be organized with a constitution and discipline. It is not the place here to discuss fundamental questions respecting civil society. We merely allude to the acknowledged fact that civil society cannot

Ed. Note: Using the Septuagint in this manner is a prelude to the error in the following segment on the supposed existence of the Church in the Old Testament.

exist without an adequate organization. This being admitted, it may be remarked that the church relation is demanded by our religious wants, as much as organized civil society is required by our social nature. Had sin never entered the world, one form of society might have been sufficient; but in the existing state of the world, the church institution is essential to the highest welfare of mankind. Civil society alone is not sufficient for the moral necessities of men.

These principles are early recognized in the Scriptures. Even in the days of Adam we have this record: "Then began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord" (Gen. 4: 26, marg.). As sin had already made fearful ravages in the human family, there was need of *separation*—a coming out on the Lord's side. The words subsequently employed to designate the church retain this idea. In the Hebrew קָהָל , עֵבֶד denote *assembling, calling together*. In the Septuagint and New Testament, the specific word for church is Ἐκκλησία, which signifies a *select body*, from ἐκ καλέω, *to call out*. Our word church, from the Scotch kirk, is derived from the Greek Κυριακός, *House of the Lord*. A study of the derivation and import of this term might have saved much confusion and logomachy on this subject.

It is easy to see from what has been said that the Church of God must have existed substantially in all ages. We have already seen that it existed in the days of Adam. Its existence in the patriarchal dispensation is recognized in various ways. Enoch prophesied, Noah was a preacher, each patriarch presided over the spiritual concerns of his own household and dependents. The Jews, as a nation, were specially selected and for many ages constituted the peculiar people of the Lord. In a more formal way than any that preceded them, they entered into covenant with God, observed his ordinances, and maintained his worship. It is true that in all these forms, the civil and religious, Church and State, were blended in one, a state of things

See Ed. Note on the next page.

Ed. Note: This statement and, therefore, some of the obvious conclusions drawn from it are in error. The Church is a New Testament institution and, as such, did not exist in the Old Testament.

Only in one place in the New Testament is the word _____, translated as “church,” used when speaking of any group in the Old Testament and that was in Acts 7:38. And that one time it was used in the context of an assembly of the people of Israel in the wilderness. Not in any manner suggesting that it, the assembly of Israel in that place at that time, was in any way connected with the New Testament institution known as the Church that was built by Jesus. At no time does the Bible even suggest that any Old Testament gathering of people, even for religious purposes, is in any way connected with the New Testament Church.

In general, there are two main teachings on the beginnings of the Church. One biblical and one not biblical. Those who believe that the Bible teaches that the Church was started by Christ during His ministry here on earth, which is in line with biblical teachings, would categorically deny that it existed before that time. The other group, those who erroneously believe the Church was started at Pentecost, would also disagree that it ever existed before that time. Therefore, to believe that the Church existed in the Old Testament would be denied by the majority of Bible believers today.

For a more detailed discussion of the subject, see these 3 of the courses prerequisite for this current course: **Bible Doctrines, The Church, and Ecclesiology.**

Dr. Van

Ed. Note: From this point on we are once again on a biblical footing. The "Divine authority" spoken of by the textbook author should be viewed as that authority given to the Church by way of its institution by Christ as sent from the Father. Not by any institution of it in the Old Testament from the beginning.

adapted to the infancy of society, when men acted more in the mass, and whole communities and nations avowed either the worship of the true God or idolatry. In a more advanced state of the world a different order of things became necessary. We are not to suppose, however, that from Moses onward the Church was confined to the Jews. Pious individuals, and perhaps communities of such, existed in other nations without being required to become incorporated with that people.

✓ That the Church exists by Divine authority under the Gospel cannot be doubted by any believer in the New Testament. Christ and the Apostles modified it, gave it new ordinances, and adapted it to the nature of this fuller dispensation, and established it to be coeval with the Gospel itself.

From the preceding view we learn the necessity and Divine authority of the church relation. Some, indeed, in every age have opposed it, and there are not wanting those in our own day who are bitter in their denunciations of it. The hands of such have been strengthened by the abuses that have existed in the Church. It is not to be denied that those have prevailed to a fearful extent. But to condemn an institution of Divine appointment, on this account, shows a narrow view and a bad spirit. What good thing has not been abused? Not a natural agent can be named that has not been perverted to evil purposes. Is it to be inferred that they are all inherently and necessarily evil?

Besides, a perverse and corrupt body, whatever *name* it may assume, is not a true church of Christ. If a church become lukewarm and iniquitous, unless it repents, God will reject it. Were, then, nine-tenths of the Church nominal, for any length of time, to become corrupt in doctrine and practice, this would not extinguish the true Church. God will raise up a Church of the faithful, while he will abandon a corrupt and incorrigible institution to its apostasy. Such has ever been his procedure. If, in the whole world, but

* **Ed. Note:** The term "sacraments" should not be used. The term "ordinances" carries the best biblical meaning. The term "sacraments" allots some saving power to the ordinances when, biblically, they have none.

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seven thousand remained who had not bowed to Baal, or but twelve, or even one, *such one* would keep the Church alive. The indiscriminate denunciation with which some assault the Church is as unreasonable as it is impious. We should discern between the precious and the vile. We should consider that in every age the true Church has been the great medium of communicating spiritual blessings to the world.

The Church of England correctly defines a church to be "a congregation of faithful men, in which the true word of God is preached, and the ~~sacraments~~ duly administered according to Christ's ordinances." Various distinctive terms have been applied to this institution. Luther distinguished between the visible and invisible Church, by which he denoted the professed and the real Church. Some have supposed that the pious, who make no public profession, compose the invisible Church. But this is not Scriptural. The Bible does not recognize *secret* religion. It requires a confession of Christ before men, self-denial, and cross-bearing, as evidences of discipleship. (Matt. 10: 32, 33, 38.)

Another term applied is that of *general* or universal Church. This is Scriptural. Not that this word is distinctly applied; but the idea is implied wherever, in general terms, a distinction is made between the righteous and the wicked. Indeed, glorified spirits in heaven, as well as the saints on earth, may be included in the general Church. We are not to suppose that the general Church exists as such in an organized capacity. The term "general" is applied chiefly for convenience. The general Church is the aggregate of all the various individual churches.

Again, associations of individual churches combined for religious purposes, harmonizing in sentiment and effort, may properly be called a church. Thus the Lutheran, Episcopal, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist church. No such association, however, has an exclusive right to be denominated *the Church*.

Ed. Note: The "Universal" or, as the author calls it, "general" Church, is not to be understood in the sense of an earthly "Universal" Church. That is Catholicism and is not scriptural. No Universal Church can exist on earth until the Lord brings it back with Him at His return. The Bible only refers to Local Churches when speaking of the churches existing on the earth today and on to the time of the Second Coming of Christ. (See the prerequisite courses for further explanation.)

To the New Testament mainly must we look for instruction on the subject before us. If the Church was not first organized by Christ and the Apostles, it underwent in their hands such modifications as to make it substantially a new institution. On this principle Coleman observes, "The Jews had no distinct organization which could with propriety be denominated a church. Much less is any association under other forms of religion entitled to this appellation."¹ The Church under the Gospel was adapted to this full, spiritual dispensation.

In the New Testament the term church is used in two senses :

1. To denote all true believers—the Church general. Of this Church Christ is the head; all those spiritually united to him are its members. Various figures are employed in Scripture to designate the relation which Christ holds to his people—as husband and wife, the head and the body, the vine and its branches. See also the tender and expressive prayer of the Saviour, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17: 20–23). Some suppose this prayer has not been answered, and are looking for its accomplishment in the future. This may be true in a degree. Yet all true believers are united to Christ and to each other. The Apostle makes "love to the brethren" one of the strongest evidences of spiritual life.

The dissensions which exist in the Church prove two things: (1) That some in the nominal Church are not real members of the body of Christ. (2) Many true members are yet imperfect. Just in the degree that they are united to Christ are they united in love to each other.

Erroneous interpretation of Scripture on the subject of the general Church has led some to deny the necessity of any organized local churches. But the Scriptures afford no

¹ Antiquities, p. 54.

This church
does not exist
on earth today.

countenance to their position. They contain nothing against, but much in favor of, local church organizations. Religion would not subsist in the world, any more than civil society, without organizations. Experience proves this. To be adapted to the moral wants of the world, the Church must diffuse its influence in society. To maintain the ordinances, impart instruction, and preserve discipline, there must be individual, local organizations.

2. Hence, another sense in which the term church is used in the New Testament is in reference to distinct, religious societies. Indeed, this is its ordinary import there. The Apostles organized numerous churches, which are spoken of in various connections: Acts 9: 31; 15: 41; Rom. 16: 16; 1 Cor. 7: 17; 14: 34; Gal. 1: 2, 22; Col. 4: 15; Rev. 1: 4. These, and many other passages, are explicit on the point of individual churches. Sometimes an association of churches is called a church. (Cf. 1 Cor. 1: 2 with 14: 34.) But the ordinary and specific use of the term in the New Testament has reference to distinct local bodies.

The Gospel Church was organized by Christ. He is its chief corner-stone, its head and lawgiver. The constitution of the Gospel Church rests wholly upon the precepts and practice of Christ and his inspired Apostles. They not only organized and governed churches, but also transmitted a record of their doings to us, to be followed in the perpetuation of the Church. Essentials in church building are not left as matters of indifference to be regulated by uninspired men. The acts of popes, councils, or any other mere human authority, have no right to change the Divinely established constitution of the Christian Church.

Who are eligible to membership in individual churches? All true believers, and no others. The precepts and practice of Christ and the Apostles settle this question beyond a reasonable doubt. How are churches to be constituted? By ministers. When these find a company of faithful men, able and willing to sustain the ordinances of the Gospel, they

Ed. Note: To start a Church with the authority delegated from Christ, the One who instituted the first Church, the minister must be sent out by a Church who has that authority in a direct line to the original Church instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Without that delegated authority, the minister does not have the right to start a "church". This is one of those "Gospel rules and discipline."

have a right to constitute them a church, subject to the Gospel rules and discipline.

How and on what conditions are persons to be received to the church? We answer, This matter rests with the church itself, subject to the laws of Christ. The church, not the minister, or a select number of its members, has the right of admitting persons to membership.¹

The Gospel condition of membership is a credible evidence and profession of faith in Christ. None but those who are regenerate, who deny self, bear the cross, and confess Christ before men, can properly be recognized as his disciples, and all such should be. One must acknowledge the Divine authority of the church and its ordinances and his obligation and purpose to conform to them, before he can be received to membership. The ordinary and Scriptural mode of making the requisite confession and covenant is by baptism. In connection with this there is, of course, a vote of the church and generally the hand of fellowship formally extended. There must be an established mode of the reception and recognition of members. Baptism is the professional ordinance, the outward sign of regeneration. We would not contend that baptism alone makes one a member; but, according to the Scriptures, this is always to be required.

SECTION II.—GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH.

THE forms of church government may be divided into three general classes—Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, and Independency. These we will notice in order.

1. **EPISCOPACY.** The distinguishing feature of this form is that it vests the government of the church in the clergy. In all its varieties, from Romish Papacy to low church Episcopalianism, the laity have no essential part in church government. Laws are passed, members received, disci-

¹ See the subject of church government and discipline, discussed in the next Section.

plined, and excommunicated, by the priest, bishop, or pope. Episcopacy is defended from two sources.

(1) *From Scripture.* It is claimed that the Apostles exercised such authority. But were this admitted, it alone would not clothe ministers now with the same prerogatives. The Apostles were inspired, and were Divinely authorized to prescribe laws for the government of the church — which no minister can now assert of himself.

Again, the passages cited do not prove that even the Apostles held the government of the churches. The texts mainly relied on to prove that they did are 1 Cor. 5 : 5 ; 1 Tim. 5 : 20 ; Titus 3 : 10. The last two are no more than general directions and exhortations. The first relates to a specific case, but proves the reverse of what Episcopalians claim for it. If Paul held exclusively the government of the church at Corinth would he not have excommunicated that gross offender at once? But, so far from doing this, he sends a letter to the church, exhorting them to do it, thus showing that the government of that church was in the hands of its members. Matt. 18 : 15–17 also shows that church government belongs to the body of members.

(2) Many Episcopalians do not claim any Scriptural requirement of their usage, but contend for it on the ground of *expediency*. They hold that the Scriptures have prescribed no particular order of church government, but have left the whole matter to be regulated as circumstances shall require. They assert that as a general thing the members at large are not competent to exercise discipline, and that distraction and anarchy would result from committing it to their hands. This rests on the assumption that the mass of men are not capable of self-government, and the consequent need of an aristocracy. But so far, at least, as our own country is concerned this assumption has been proved to be utterly groundless. Our civil constitution recognizes the people as the source of authority; and the experiment has amply proved that they are competent for self-government. So the

Bible, our great moral charter and bill of rights, confers the government of the church on its members, and experience has shown its practicability and wisdom. The members of the church are as able to govern themselves as the citizens of the State are to govern themselves. On the other hand, the evil of denying the rightful equality of men, and investing a few with exclusive prerogatives, has been abundantly shown. If this is an abuse, it is one to which most are prone. It is true that society, in the mass, may practice injustice and oppression. But they are not so likely to do it. Where the equality of all is admitted, there will be checks and balances interposed by conscience and by opposing interests; and injuries can be more easily redressed.

2. **PRESBYTERIANISM.** This holds the government of the church to be in the hands of the members. It is, therefore, widely different from Episcopacy. It differs from the Independent form in vesting the government of each individual church in a board of elders, elected, however, by the church; and, in allowing of appellate jurisdiction, or the right of appeal from the decisions of an individual church.

In support of governing the church by ruling elders, 1 Tim. 5: 17 is cited—"the elders that rule well." But this does not necessarily prove that ruling elders were a distinct class or that the sole government of the church was in their hands. Ruling and teaching were usually included in the duties of the same person. (See 1 Thess. 5: 12.) What is fatal to the Presbyterian argument on this point is the fact that elders in the apostolic churches were ministers. Elders, presbyters, and bishops, in the New Testament, all denote the same thing. This all admit.

It is also sometimes asserted that Matt. 18: 17; Acts 8: 1, etc., denote not the whole church, but only a select portion appointed to manage its concerns. But this position cannot be sustained. The opposite sentiment is evident on the face of these passages and many others. 1 Cor. 12: 28 is also referred to. But this refers to different gifts rather

than classes of men in the church. Several of these were possessed by the same person.

As a matter of expediency it is doubtless true that in special cases the church may find it best to create a board; for instance, in case of a difficult and protracted labor. But this is quite another thing from having a standing board to govern in all cases. Neither Scripture nor experience warrants the creation of any such aristocracy in the church.

Appellate jurisdiction, in the Presbyterian church, takes the ultimate decision of questions from the individual churches. In any cases of church discipline an appeal may be carried from the decision of the church to the Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly: and in any case the decision of a church or of any of the inferior associations may be reversed. This arrangement has, doubtless, some advantages. It tends to consolidation and often promotes efficiency. It is also attended with disadvantages. It opens a door for protracted controversy and tends to accumulate power unduly in the hands of a few. To the extent in which it is claimed and exercised by Presbyterians, appeal is not warranted by the New Testament.

3. INDEPENDENCY. This is the form of government which prevails in the various Congregational and Baptist denominations. According to this form each local church is independent in the management of all its internal concerns, being responsible to Christ alone. Some, as the Brownists, have carried the doctrine to an extreme, disallowing all church associations or councils.

That the individual churches are the sources of ecclesiastical authority, and that each church in the management of its internal affairs is independent, the Scriptures clearly teach. Such were the churches planted by the Apostles. (See the Acts and Epistles, *passim*.) The churches continued to be independent for some time after the Apostles, and a different order was introduced only when they began to degenerate. There is no evidence that in the times of

the Apostles, or of their immediate successors, the act of a church relating to its own business, or within its appropriate jurisdiction, was ever reversed.

It is urged by some that as no particular form of church government is expressly prescribed in the Scriptures, each body of Christians is left to choose whatever form it pleases. This we cannot allow. The Scriptures are our rule and guide in this as well as in other matters of faith and practice. They afford us all needful instruction on the subject. Christ and the Apostles, who planted the first churches, set us an example. So far, at least, as the main principles are concerned, their teaching and the precedents they furnished should be followed by us in church building and government. Else why were the records of the apostolic churches incorporated into the Scriptures, if not for our instruction and guidance? To leave these and adopt the inventions of uninspired men must expose us to great abuses. True, we should take into account essential changes in circumstances, especially with reference to points of minor importance; but this does not warrant us in neglecting general and fundamental principles of Scriptural doctrine.

Now, it is generally conceded, even by Episcopalians, that in the apostolic and primitive times each church was an independent body. Unless, then, it can be shown that our circumstances are so different from theirs as to demand a radical change in this particular, it is safe and proper for us to follow the apostolic example in church building and discipline.

The independence of the churches does not preclude them from forming associations for mutual benefit and for the extension of religion. Under the Apostles they associated on different occasions and for various purposes. (Rom. 15: 26; 1 Cor. 16: 1, etc.) See an important controversy in the churches of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, referred to the church at Jerusalem. (Acts 15.)

From all that has now been said we derive the following principles:

Ed. Note: This section is in error. It is not scriptural for such associations to have more than an advisory capacity or authority. At no time in the Scripture is any type of authority over local churches given to any association, group, or anyone else other than the Local Church body itself.

1. Each church is independent in the management of its internal affairs.

2. Churches have a right to form associations, and subject themselves to such regulations, not inconsistent with their own independence in internal discipline nor opposed to the Gospel, as will best subserve the purposes of benevolence.

3. The churches are the sources of authority ; hence, all associations should originate with the churches, and be composed of delegates appointed by the churches.

4. For convenience and efficiency there may be various associations formed, as Quarterly Meetings, Yearly Meetings, and a General Conference.

→ 5. The authority of these associations is not simply *advisory*. While they have no control of the internal affairs of the churches, yet within their proper province they have all the power that any ecclesiastical body can have. Such is the polity of the Freewill Baptists and others. The Yearly Meetings are amenable to the General Conference, the Quarterly Meetings to the Yearly Meetings, the churches to the Quarterly Meetings, and individuals to the churches. Such arrangement is adapted to secure efficient discipline, purity, and order. A corrupt or disorderly member of either of these bodies may be disciplined and excommunicated. But no appeal can be prosecuted from one body to another so as to reverse the action of the other. Each body has its own sphere of duty. Thus the rights of the churches are strictly guarded ; and, at the same time, the advantages of union, co-operation, and fellowship, are secured.

The churches, as already remarked, have the sole management of their own internal affairs. To them belongs the appointment of pastors, and provision for their support in the way they judge best. Also the appointment of deacons and all other church officers. The house of worship should be under their control and be owned by them. They, subject in all things to Christ, have the exclusive right of disciplining their members. The pastor ought to belong to the

church to which he administers, have all the rights of a church member, and, as such, no more than any other one.

Each church should have a covenant. The Bible is indeed the rule of faith and practice to all; but as all Christians receive this, yet interpret it variously, each church should have an expression of their views of Scriptural doctrine and discipline. The covenant should not merely embrace such articles as are absolutely essential to salvation, but such as the members deem essential to completeness of Christian character, and of high practical importance.

The union, harmony, and strength of the churches are best promoted by associating those in a church who agree on all great practical points. While different opinions and practices prevail there had better be denominational distinctions. Proselyting and every species of sectarianism should be discountenanced. Each denomination of Christians should regard the others as members of the family of Christ, as co-workers in the same great cause with themselves. This is Christian union, and best subserves the cause of truth. In the present state of mankind every attempt to merge all denominations into one only creates a new sect. No church is obliged to receive a person to membership, though a Christian, unless he so agrees with them that they can walk together in harmony. He had better join those with whom he does agree.

Strict church discipline is of great importance. The usefulness of the church relation depends very much upon it. Without it the church cannot be the salt of the earth and light of the world. Its proper exercise tends, also, to the highest good of the offender. The Scriptures authorize church discipline, and give explicit directions for conducting it.

“Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in

the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matt. 18: 15-17).

"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner: with such an one no not to eat" (1 Cor. 5: 11).

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Thess. 3: 6).

When duly administered it has the sanction of God. (Matt. 18: 18.) As it is of so much consequence it should be administered with great deliberation, love, and energy. Those who, in the judgment of the church, forfeit their Christian character should be excommunicated; and, ordinarily, no others. The great object in church labor should be to maintain the honor of the cause and to reclaim offenders.

The rules of discipline are laid down in Matt. 18: 15-17. The spirit of these should be carried out in all cases of church discipline. There will, of course, be some diversity in the details, suited to the different cases. Some general directions may here be given:

1. Each church should have an efficient standing committee, whose duty it is to attend to cases of delinquency, visit offenders, report cases, and prosecute labor before the church. It should be understood, however, that their existence does not release individuals from their duty in any degree.
2. There should be a stated church meeting, as often as once a quarter, to act on cases of discipline.
3. The pastor should be standing moderator of the church.

Ed. Note: These general directions may be followed if the Local Church decides to do so. However, they are not necessary to handle cases of Church discipline. If the scriptural process of handling Church discipline is followed- one on one, then in the mouth of two or three witnesses, then take it to the Church body, such a committee as is suggested in this section is not necessary. Each Local Church, however, can decide as a body if they want to have such a committee.

4. In special cases church labor may be prosecuted before a committee; but the final decision in every case should be made by the church at large.

5. In church labor the accuser and accused, if possible, should be brought face to face.

6. Care should be taken that kindness and love mark all the proceedings. Party feeling and bitterness should be carefully avoided.

7. An excluded member is to be treated kindly, yet as one who has forfeited his Christian character and reproached religion. We should not countenance his course, though we may seek to reclaim him.

8. One church ought not to receive a person excluded from another true church.

9. The majority should govern, and the minority cheerfully acquiesce, ~~except when it may be necessary to have a council from the Quarterly Conference, or other association to which the church belongs.~~ In church business a unanimous vote is desirable, but not indispensable.

10. The female members have a right to take part in the proceedings and vote, especially with reference to the admission or rejection of members.

Each church, ordinarily, should have a house of worship, stated public services, Sabbath school, church, prayer, and conference meetings, and the ordinances regularly administered. Churches should be organized by ordained ministers, usually appointed therefor by the Quarterly Conference or association, to which, when organized, it should be immediately united. No individual Christian has a right to stand voluntarily without church connection; nor should a church stand alone, without becoming associated with others. Candidates should be examined by the whole church, and, after baptism, admitted to membership by receiving the hand of fellowship. Members, on removing their residence to another place, should take letters of dismissal, and, as soon as practicable after removal, unite with some other church,

Taking it to a council is not scriptural.

"Sabbath school" should read "Sunday school." Sunday is not nor has ever been the scriptural "Sabbath."

when, upon notification of the former church, their connection with that ceases.

SECTION III.—CONSTITUTION OF THE MINISTRY.

THE interests of religion require a class of men specially devoted to its services. In the earliest times the head of the family was priest of his household. Under the Jewish dispensation one entire tribe was set apart to the duties of the sanctuary. They were not to be embarrassed with secular cares, and therefore had no portion in the distribution of the promised land. They were exempt from military duty and other worldly business, and were wholly devoted to the purposes of instruction, sacrifice, and worship. They derived their support from an equitable assessment upon the other tribes.

One of the first public acts of Christ's ministry was the appointment of the twelve Apostles, whom he instructed and sent forth to preach the Gospel. Afterwards he commissioned seventy others. The ministry thus constituted he designed to be perpetual, as is clear from the commission he gave to his disciples near the time of his ascension: "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 alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28: 19, 20).

It is the prerogative of God alone to call men to the sacred office. All men are not suitable for ministers of the Gospel, nor are all Christians. Nor would it be proper for all to engage in it if they were. Temporal as well as spiritual interests must be attended to in their place. A selection must therefore be made, and God has wisely reserved this to himself. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Heb. 5: 4).

How does God call men to the Gospel ministry? Some say by miraculous, or, at least, extraordinary, manifestations.

But there is no evidence that such is his method at the present day. The best ministers have no such experience. Others make the call consist in certain *impressions* on the mind. Impressions should surely be regarded in deciding upon duty; but they alone are not a safe ground of reliance, for they may be deceptive. *The will of God* is to be sought on the subject; and it is to be learned in a *rational* way. The man who is inquiring for duty on this point should seek impartially, earnestly, prayerfully, to know the will of God concerning it. Some principles may here be laid down:

1. The candidate for the sacred office must be *pious*. No unregenerate man should presume to enter the Christian ministry. "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do, to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" (Psa. 1: 16). Such should practice God's requirements for themselves, before they undertake to teach them to others.

2. He who is to fill the sacred office must have a *capacity* for the work. Not, indeed, a sufficiency of himself, for this no man has. Nor, as yet, all the requisite qualifications. God doubtless shows persons their duty to become ministers, in many cases, long before they are prepared to devote themselves wholly to the work. But the candidate must have a suitable capacity. We question not the ability of God to make ministers of idiots, brutes, or stones; but he does not do it. He works by rational means and in a rational manner. If he chooses the poor of this world, it is because they are rich in faith. He chooses the weak and foolish things of this world—not really such, but only so in the estimation of that wisdom of man which is foolishness with God. An inspired Apostle declares that a bishop must be "*apt to teach.*" (1 Tim. 3: 2.)

3. He must be *disposed* to give himself earnestly to the work—that of preparation—and to every duty that shall devolve upon him. No man who does not faithfully apply

his energies, can ever become a successful minister. To be eminently useful, one needs to be well educated, well versed in the Scriptures, in many of the sciences, and in a knowledge of mankind—to have a mind disciplined and furnished, a good judgment, lively imagination, tender sensibilities, decision and energy, a facility of communicating, patience, courage, an ardent love for souls and for all the interests of religion. Now, unless one is willing to labor heartily and perseveringly to make these attainments, he ought never to think of entering the ministry. Better for himself, the church, and the world, that he abide in some other calling. The Gospel ministry has been greatly reproached by admitting unsuitable men into it. Many of them might have been useful in other stations, but they should not have become ministers.

4. The judgment of experienced ministers and other Christians must be consulted. Rarely, if ever, should one go forward in this work without their concurrence.

5. By a diligent, prayerful study of the subject, the individual should obtain a settled conviction that it is his *special duty* to consecrate his life to the ministry, and that *he can take no other course with a clear conscience*. In view of the whole matter, he must feel, like Paul, that a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to him—that necessity is laid upon him, and woe is unto him if he preach not the Gospel. (1 Cor. 9: 16, 17.) When one comes to this place, he should not, on any account, be disobedient. He should engage in it cheerfully as a desirable work.

On this important subject, we present extracts from an article on the "Special Call to the Ministry," by Prof. J. Fullonton:

"By the speciality of the ministerial call, we mean an indication of the Divine will, wrought in the mind, not like that which determines the choice between two secular professions, nor yet like that which determines to the general Christian his sphere even of religious activity. Howard was moved

to exemplify his religion by ministering to the temporal and spiritual wants of imprisoned criminals. Wilberforce his, by untiring and self-sacrificing efforts to break up the infamous slave trade, and to remove its concomitant evils. The Sabbath-school teacher his, by imparting religious instruction to the youth, and others theirs, in a thousand different ways. Now, all these enterprises are Christian in their character and results, and, hence, have the Divine approval, yet to them there is not a call like that to the ministry. This latter is specific, and characteristically differs from each and every one of them.

“If the above statements be true, then many constructions put upon the ministerial call must be defective, if not, indeed, false, and as the negative view of the subject is under consideration, it may be well to consider some of these constructions, with a view to point out and expose their fallacy.

“I. A desire to do good and to glorify God cannot be a call to the ministry. The view here presented amounts to this: A young man, in taking a survey of the Church in its destitution and wants, and of the world in its moral desolation and wretchedness, feels prompted by a desire to help the Church, and to aid in the redemption of the world, to assume the functions and prerogatives of a minister of Christ. But such a desire is common to all Christians, so that it does not constitute even a distinctive sign of a call, though it may be of piety.

“II. An impression of the greatest amount of usefulness does not constitute a call. Many can give no other reason for entering the ministry than a conviction that they can be more useful in it than in any other profession or employment. It is not difficult to conceive that ‘to desire to be a bishop is to desire a good work,’ and that a true minister is, of all men, the most useful; but how a modest man, and especially a humble Christian, can conclude that *he* himself can effect the most good in such a calling, without special grounds of assurance, is a matter not so clear. A convic-

tion that such is the will of God, in some way emphatically expressed, could, it would seem, alone lead to this conclusion. To conclude, then, that a man is called to the work because he has an impression of being eminently useful in it, is to invert the natural order of things, inasmuch as he can be useful in it only, at least mainly, because he is called. If it be asked whether fitness may not serve as a call, we answer, without the call there can be no fitness. There are other and varied qualifications, but all subordinate to this, never to be taken in its stead, though they may be regarded as its tests. With all the solemnity and earnestness the importance of the subject warrants, we deprecate the idea of a young man's balancing his talents and tastes with a view to adaptedness to the various professions, and coolly concluding that he is best fitted for the ministry, and can be most useful in it. We would not be understood as discarding reason in the matter, but would insist that it shall be held subservient to higher authority, which is the voice of God in man, a point which we shall presently reach.

“III. The authority imparted by the Church or its accredited ministry is not a sufficient call to the work. That the office of the ministry is of Divine appointment, none, perhaps, will deny; but that the assumption of it by whosoever will, or an appointment to it without special Divine direction, receives thereby the Divine sanction, can by no means be affirmed. If this were so, then the civil ruler is the minister of God in the same sense and to the same extent as the preacher of the Cross. But this is far from the representation of the matter in the New Testament. . . .

“We conclude, then, that an essential call to the ministry consists in a state of mind, or disposition towards it, which may be denominated ‘desire,’ induced by the Holy Spirit and confirmed by Divine Providence. Not a general, or ordinary desire, but a want and tendency of mind which nothing but this work can meet. Not a desire for its accidents and

concomitants, but for the work itself. Not for the social position it confers, nor yet for 'the occasions which it offers for the exercise of talents with which we may think ourselves endowed,' but for the order of being it involves, God's ambassador, his messenger of grace, his medium of communication with man. We are painfully conscious of the feebleness and poverty of language in attempting to express the conception of this inward summoning of the soul to the work in question, though to our own consciousness it seems clear and well defined. And this is not strange, nor is it to be urged as an argument against the fact, since it is the operation of the Spirit which, as in conversion, 'bloweth where it listeth.' With such convictions, however real, though not easily explained, the soul cries out, 'Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.' There may be a consciousness of want of ability and qualifications, yet the spirit yearns for this work with a yearning it cannot help. From every human view there may arise obstacles to success and usefulness, still there rings through all the chambers of the soul the imperative voice of God, 'Son of man, I have made thee a watchman.'"

The position is sustained by reference to such passages as the following:

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13: 2).

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (Acts 20: 28).

Also, by these considerations, treated at length, *viz.*:

- "1. The work itself is special.
- "2. What is here contended for is true in other like cases, [the prophetic office and the priesthood].
- "3. This method is best adapted to secure a true and efficient ministry."¹

¹ Freewill Baptist Quarterly, Vol. VI., Art. II.

PARITY OF MINISTERS.

A great question has long divided Christendom respecting the *parity* of ministers. Are there different grades of authority in the Christian ministry, or do all possess equal rights? On this point, it should be observed that the Scriptures must be made the ultimate source of appeal. Human authorities of every sort are fallible, and hence not decisive. The testimony of the fathers is so conflicting, so uncertain as to its source,—many of their writings having been corrupted,—that it can aid us very little in the decision of this question. As was remarked by Milton: “Whatever time, or the heedless hand of blind chance, hath drawn down from of old to this present, in her huge drag net, whether fish, or sea-weed, shells or shrubs, unpicked, unchosen, those are the fathers.” Ch. Spect., March, 1834, p. 3.

Nor is this a matter of mere prudential regulation, which we may dispose of, or change at pleasure. The Christian ministry is of Divine appointment. The rules of its constitution are laid down in the Gospel, and from them we are not at liberty to depart. Whatever God has prescribed on this subject is binding, and nought else is. A departure from this principle has been productive of the most pernicious effects. To the law and the testimony.

Episcopalians contend for three orders of church officers, *viz.*, bishops, elders or presbyters (termed by them *priests*), and deacons. Respecting the last, *i. e.*, deacons, there has not been so much controversy. That this office was held in the apostolical churches is evident from such passages as 1 Tim. 3: 8–10. An account of its origin is generally supposed to be given, Acts 6: 1–6; from which it appears that the duty of deacons pertained chiefly to the temporal affairs of the churches. In some instances deacons became ministers; so Philip; but there is no evidence that deacons, as such, were an order of ministers. To assist ministers in providing for the poor, in the general pecuniary matters of

the church, in social meetings, etc., they are clearly needed. It appears from Acts 6 that they were ordained.

We will now examine the principal arguments against the parity of ministers :

1. The Apostles were a distinct and higher order of ministers. We admit, the Apostles were a distinct class of ministers. But to authorize prelacy by this argument, it must not only be shown that they were a distinct order ; but also that they had the sole power of ordaining ministers and disciplining the churches, and that these prerogatives were to be perpetuated in their successors. Now, there is no sufficient evidence that such was the design of the apostolic office. In the Scriptural account of the appointment of the Apostles, and of the minute instructions given them, not a word is said of their having the exclusive power of ordination and discipline. Nor is there any such intimation in the sacred writings. On the other hand, we are taught that their distinguishing characteristic consisted in their being *witnesses* of Christ. "And ye are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24: 48). When an apostle was to be elected in place of Judas, the object is very definitely stated : "Wherefore, of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection" (Acts 1: 21, 22). See also Acts 2: 32; 5: 32; 10: 39-41. Paul claimed the same as an evidence of his apostleship. "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" (1 Cor. 9: 1, 2). We see from these passages that the distinguishing characteristic of the Apostles was that they were *personal witnesses* of Christ. Of course, this office is not perpetuated.

Nor did the Apostles exercise the exclusive prerogatives claimed for them. *Ordination* was performed not by apostles, but by elders or presbyters. (1 Tim. 4: 14; Acts 13:

1-3.) Church government and discipline were in the hands of the churches. (Matt. 18: 15-18.) That the Apostles had the gift of inspiration and of working miracles avails nothing to prelacy; for surely those powers do not pertain to their "successors."

2. But it is argued that we find an apostolic succession actually recognized in the Scriptures. It is asserted that mention is made of several other apostles besides the twelve and Paul. As Adronicus and Junia (Rom. 16: 7), Sylvanus, Timothy, and Titus. It will be sufficient to examine the part of the argument relating to Timothy and Titus. The rest does not need a serious refutation. Respecting Timothy, we observe he is nowhere called an apostle in Scripture. 1 Thess. 2: 6 either denotes Paul himself, as the plural is often used for the singular, or he is speaking in the name of the Apostles. In other passages Timothy is spoken of in a manner which indicates that he was not an apostle. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother" (2 Cor. 1: 1; Col. 1: 1). Besides, if he was an apostle he received ordination from the elders or Presbytery (1 Tim. 4: 14), though Paul was one who laid hands on him. (2 Tim. 1: 6.) Episcopalians, then, must admit either the validity of ordination by elders or that Timothy was not an apostle.

So as regards Titus: he is nowhere called an apostle. Paul left him in the island of Crete for a season to labor in setting the churches in order, ordain elders, etc., but there is no evidence that he had any exclusive right of ordaining or discipline in Crete or elsewhere; or that the office assigned him was anything more than a temporary one created by an exigency. The angels of the churches (Rev. 2: 1; 3: 1, etc.) have been claimed as prelates. But there is no evidence that they were more than elders, or at most, moderators of associations of elders. There is, then, no proof of apostolic succession in the New Testament.

3. The final appeal is to ecclesiastical history. But the

New Testament is the only ecclesiastical history that has Divine authority. The practice of uninspired men cannot invalidate its claims. We admit that Episcopacy rose early in the Church. But the same history that records its origin shows it to have been a departure from the simplicity and purity of the Gospel—an innovation of gradual growth, cherished by the pride and ambition of the worldly, and productive of most pernicious effects. Such history of it can give it little claim to the regard of evangelical Protestants.

Arguments in favor of the parity of ministers and against prelacy :

1. Christ conferred equal rights and prerogatives on all his ministers. He ever discouraged assumptions of superiority in his disciples, and taught them that they were all brethren and servants. (Matt. 23: 8.) In his final commission, to be in force to the end of the world, no distinction is recognized. Christ set up no spiritual hierarchy.

2. The ministers mentioned in the New Testament were equal. Bishops, presbyters, and elders were all the same, and the terms denoting them are used synonymously in the Christian Scriptures. These facts Episcopalians themselves admit. There is no evidence in the New Testament that one class of ministers was higher in authority than another class, as ministers. Paul and Barnabas were ordained, not by apostles or prelatical bishops, but by the ordinary ministers of the churches at Antioch. (Acts 13: 1-3.) Timothy was ordained by presbyters or elders. (1 Tim. 4: 14.) Decisions in matters of faith and practice were made by the Apostles and elders with the whole church. (Acts 15: 22; Matt. 18: 15-18.)

3. Prelacy and Episcopacy are corruptions gradually introduced after the Church had become greatly degenerate. No regular succession from the Apostles has ever been fairly made out: if it could be, the succession must be traced through a thousand years of gross darkness and abomination

Ed. Note: It should be noted that the textbook author uses the terms "minister" or "Gospel minister" to mean a pastor. This can be misleading. Biblically, all Christians are called to be "ministers" but all do not minister as pastors. Keep this difference in terminology in mind when studying this textbook.

under the Papal hierarchy, and end at last in the simplicity of the apostolical churches wherein all the ministers were equal. We conceive, therefore, the evidence to be conclusive in favor of the equality of Gospel ministers—such was the order established by Christ and the Apostles, and which has never, by any proper authority, been changed.

SECTION IV.—QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF MINISTERS.

In discussing the subject of ministerial qualifications we will consider :

I. Some that are indispensable :

1. We mention first in this connection, *deep piety*. The business of the Gospel minister is to deal in spiritual things. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2: 14). (Cf. Psa. 50: 16.) How absurd it would be to set an illiterate man to teach the sciences, a blind man to describe colors, a deaf man to instruct in music. How much greater the absurdity of committing the interests of immortal souls to one who is not in the way of life himself—who has no practical acquaintance with Divine things nor love for the law of God! This would be truly putting the blind to lead the blind. Religion has already suffered immeasurably from such folly. The piety requisite must be real, pervading, consistent, fervent. A single moral obliquity or besetment may mar the whole character. We do not mean that the minister must be absolutely perfect or infallible; but a decided Christian.

2. He must have *natural ability* suited to the duties of a minister. It is not the duty of all Christians to become ministers. There are natural obstacles in the way of some, which grace itself would never enable them to surmount. It is so difficult for some to learn or to communicate that they should never think of entering the ministry. This natural incapacity is one of the strongest possible

proofs that God does not call them. He uses appropriate means in dealing with moral beings. There are several classes of men whom, it would be easy to show, God never calls to the ministry. Paul says, a bishop must be "apt to teach." One must have a natural capacity for any business he engages in, to be successful. Ministers are not an exception to this rule. As a general rule, in order for one justly to contemplate the ministry as his field of labor, he should have a good faculty to learn from nature, from books, from men; and to apply the knowledge he acquires to practical purposes. Hence, it is obvious that one may be a skilful farmer, mechanic, merchant, or musician, who could never be a successful minister. Piety is not sufficient, nor sincerity. These with other necessary qualities may render a man highly useful in a private sphere, who, as a minister, would only be an incumbrance.

3. He must have *an education requisite for the work*. All men are educated in a degree. Observation, experience, social intercourse, to say nothing of books and schools, do much to develop the natural powers. Most men in the common pursuits of life do become prepared for the sphere in which they move. They deem a careful and thorough preparation indispensable. A farmer who should suffer his sons to grow up in idleness could never expect them to make good farmers. The mechanic and the merchant have to pass through a long apprenticeship. The school teacher, the physician, the lawyer, the statesman, unless he depend on imposition and quackery, regards a thorough discipline and training, preparatory to his particular profession, as a matter of course. And is the Christian ministry an exception to all this?

It may be said that the Holy Spirit qualifies men for the sacred office. True, but he does it by blessing them in the use of appropriate means. He does not do it at the present day by miracle or special inspiration. We allow he must bless us, he must sanctify the heart and the attainments;

else all our efforts will be of little avail. He gives no encouragement to wilful ignorance, imbecility, slothfulness. Men in all ages have become useful by employing consistent means. The patriarchs, prophets, Apostles, reformers, all possessed extensive knowledge sanctified by deep piety; and they would not have accomplished what they did without it. It is justly considered an outrage for an ignoramus to set up for a school teacher or physician. And is quackery in the Gospel any less dangerous or pernicious? Let all history decide. Because special Divine influences are essential for the qualification of a minister, this does not in the least supersede the necessity of natural endowments and acquirements. A minister is a man, he has to deal with men, and if he would do them good he must deal with them on rational principles. It is as much presumption to depend on God without using appropriate means on our part as to depend on means without seeking the Divine favor. Attempts have been made a thousand times to divorce gifts and grace; but always with fatal results. Just in the degree that either is neglected there must be loss.

It is impossible to fix a standard of attainments for all; since men so greatly differ, and their circumstances differ. Each one should be qualified for the sphere in which he is to move. A man may be prepared to minister to fifty people, or three hundred, or a thousand. The same individual, according to his abilities and attainments, may meet the wants of either number. In deciding, therefore, upon the degree of attainments to be sought, one must have regard to his natural capacity, health, pecuniary circumstances, age, and especially his prospective sphere of labor. He should have enlarged, liberal aims, and make every proper exertion to fit himself for the widest sphere of usefulness; and he may be pretty well assured that he will fill as important a station as he is qualified to fill.

II. There are other qualifications not directly included in those above noticed, though more or less implied in them.

Eminence in these is desirable, though not always essential. Among these we may enumerate :

1. *Genius*—an inventive, original faculty—a power of adaptation to circumstances, of making the most of every help.

2. *Patience*—in research, and self-culture, and efforts to do good, as well as in sustaining the trials incident to a minister's life.

3. *Perseverance*. Many fail from lack of it. The minister should never be weary in well-doing—never discouraged.

4. *A vivid conception*—this is a great help to style and manner.

5. *Deep feeling*. A cold, phlegmatic temperament is a great obstacle to usefulness. One must be interested himself if he would interest others.

6. *Diligence*. The minister has much to do. He must be active and energetic ; he must love his work.

7. *Fondness for order*. Much may be gained by being systematic and regular.

8. Kindness, both of heart and manner.

9. Hospitality.

10. Sobriety.

11. Cheerfulness.

12. Good manners.

13. Common sense.

The list might be extended and enlarged under each head, but a bare mention here must suffice.

We pass to notice some duties of ministers :

1. *Self-culture and discipline*. The mind never remains long stationary. It is growing either better or worse. A minister should be improving in every respect. He must grow in grace daily, be ever overcoming, pressing on in spiritual attainments. It is not enough that he labors for the good of others. He must attend to the state of his own heart. He must himself be a consistent Christian. So with

Test Question: Find the scripture that is being referenced in this sentence. You will be asked in the lesson test to identify it.

intellectual and other attainments. He must not depend on his general duties to furnish him sufficient culture. He should daily make direct efforts for his own personal improvement. He must study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. Many, by relying on their past attainments, or upon the common routine of labor for the development of their powers, and furnishing their minds, make a great mistake. To be a growing man and successful minister one needs to spend a large portion of his time in private study and devotion. In this way only can he be expected to bring "beaten oil" into the sanctuary.

Neglect of self-culture is one of the greatest faults of ministers. The manner in which some spend their time and conduct themselves in private is absolutely shameful. In numerous instances, however, much is to be ascribed to want of light and instruction. Many do not know how to study. The duty cannot be too strongly urged upon every one to acquire right habits of study and improvement; to be a diligent student of books, of men, of nature, as long as he lives. He should have his systematic courses of private study, upon which to *task* his energies. He should make thorough preparation for every public duty. It is a shame to be perpetually making apologies. To engage in doing what we are consciously unprepared for is rarely our duty. What is worth doing at all is worth doing well. Let one pursue the right course, and he will, in all ordinary circumstances, find himself prepared for the discharge of duty. Ministerial conferences and other associations for mutual improvement are great helps, and ought never to be neglected.

It follows from what has been said that it is not the duty of ministers to embarrass themselves with worldly callings. Under the legal dispensation the priests were exempt from military duty, they held no civil office, they had no occupation, trade, or profession, but their sacred calling. The

same principles were established under the Gospel. Christ required his Apostles to forsake all and follow him: he did not allow them to engage in any secular business to furnish means for their own support. He *ordained* that those who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel, not by worldly avocations. If the Apostles sometimes labored with their hands for a livelihood, it was a special emergency, similar to one which made Paul advise certain disciples not to marry. For ministers to leave the worship of God and serve tables is no more *meet* in the sight of God than is celibacy. Extraordinary circumstances may justify either. The minister's responsibilities in the sacred office are such as to demand his whole time and energies, nor can he fail to devote himself to his great work, without the existence, somewhere, of great fault.

2. Another ministerial duty is that of *preaching the Gospel*. This is his great and most specific work as a minister. The Scriptures give great prominence to this duty. The passages which relate to it are too numerous to be mentioned. In periods of great degeneracy in the Church, preaching has been almost wholly abandoned. So it was for centuries during the dark ages. The priests were incompetent, and did not attempt to preach. They were occupied with frivolities and mummeries. But as learning and religion revived, preaching was again demanded.

Experience proves that efficient preaching is essential to the maintenance of Gospel institutions. The minister should feel that his great duty is to "preach the word, to be instant in season, out of season; to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." (2 Tim. 4: 2.) It is not the place here to discuss at length the subject of preaching, which belongs to the department of homiletics; but it must be insisted on as of special importance. The minister, it is true, has other responsibilities, which are not to be lightly esteemed; but they are not such as need interfere with a faithful performance of this duty. To this he is to bend his energies; here,

mainly, he is to lay out his strength. Here he can labor to the best advantage, accomplish the most in the shortest time. In this country, particularly, the pulpit has great power, and he who would meet the reasonable expectations of the people must neglect no opportunity of preparation for, and improvement in, pulpit duties.

3. *Attendance upon the ordinances of the church.* No church can prosper where these are not regularly and efficiently administered. They should not be a mere form, but have life and power. And much, in this respect, depends upon the manner in which they are conducted. The minister has much to do, also, in promoting the interest of the social meetings, maintaining strict discipline, enlisting the church in Sabbath schools, missionary, temperance, and other benevolent and reformatory measures. Each church should be heartily engaged in all the great moral causes; and much here depends upon the minister.

4. The minister is to be *a faithful pastor*. He should be personally and even intimately acquainted with all the people of his charge. (Acts 20: 28.) He should make a personal application of Gospel truth to every individual in private. This will, of course, require much labor; but if heartily performed, it will afford much pleasure, and will greatly contribute to the pastor's usefulness as a preacher. It is not the place now to dwell minutely on this topic.

In review of the whole subject, we may well exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Without Divine aid, these responsibilities would be too much for man. Still, we are not to shrink from the undertaking. We are to do our duty faithfully, relying upon the grace of God. Christ has promised to be with his devoted servants to the end of the world, and great will be their reward. Those who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars, forever and ever.

Study the biblical difference between supplication and prayer. Both are enjoined in the Lord's Model prayer in Mt 6:9-13. Look up the meaning of both terms and refer also: Acts 1:14; Eph 6:18; Php 4:6. Although the two terms are often interchangeable in the scriptures, still, study the difference between the two when a differentiation is mentioned as in the three references just given.

SECTION V.—ON PRAYER.

SOME have defined prayer to be the "desire of the heart." This is doubtless essential to its nature, but not a full definition. Simple desire is not prayer. One may desire a thing without praying for it. Prayer is an expressing or offering up of desire. As a Christian duty, it may be thus defined: A sincere offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ.

The duty of prayer may be urged from three considerations:

1. It is *appropriate*. We are needy and dependent. This we should feel and acknowledge. It is *natural* for a child to ask for what it wants; men make requests of each other in every variety of circumstance. How reasonable, then, that we make request to God for blessings which he only can bestow.

2. From the example of the holy. As early as the third generation from Adam, we have this record: "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." (Gen. 4: 26.) The patriarchs were eminently men of prayer. They prayed much, and with great fervency. The same is true of the prophets and Apostles. Christ often prayed, and on special occasions, as before the ordination of the twelve Apostles and before his crucifixion, he spent whole nights in prayer. If Christ needed to pray, surely we do. The most devoted and useful Christians and ministers since Christ, have ever been praying men. So were Whitefield, Payson, and many others.

3. This duty is expressly enjoined in Scripture. "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5: 17). "In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4: 6). "I will therefore that men pray everywhere" (1 Tim. 2: 8). Numerous other similar passages might be cited.

Several objections will now be noticed:

1. It is said the unregenerate ought not to pray, and Prov. 15: 8; 28: 9, are quoted; but these passages condemn hypocritical, not sincere, prayer. God requires "all men," "everywhere," to pray. Any man that feels his needs can pray, and ought to pray. The prayer of the ruler, "I believe, Lord, help my unbelief," and that of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner," were not condemned, but approved of God.

2. Another objection relates to the Divine purposes. But those are conditional, and are never presented in Scripture as an obstacle to prayer. On the contrary, we are taught to pray, to fill our mouths with "arguments," to bring forth our "strong reasons," to importune, and persevere. With the encouragements God has given us, the sneers of skeptics should have little regard.

3. It has been objected that, as God is infinitely wise and good, he will bestow all needed blessings, whether we pray or not. This objection overlooks the fact that God has made prayer the condition of receiving, and has promised to answer prayer. "Ask and ye shall receive." God may bestow blessings in answer to prayer, which, without it, he could not consistently grant.

4. The immutability of God. This, and indeed all the other objections, might as well be urged against the use of any means by man. Why should the farmer plow and plant? Why does the student study? Because these are means to ends. So is prayer. God, as a Moral Governor, adapts his administration to the circumstances of moral agents. God is immutable, but man is not. The more enlightened and spiritual any one is, the less is he influenced by these and similar objections.

The *moral influence* of prayer upon ourselves is very great. It induces in us feelings of dependence and humility, leads to self-examination, watchfulness, sobriety, stability, and energy. While these benefits are to be recognized as having great value, they are not to be regarded as constituting the

chief motives to the recognition and performance of this duty.

The motive of highest encouragement is the promise of God that he will hear and answer prayer. But for this assurance prayer would lose its efficacy. To make requests to others merely to affect ourselves would be absurd. But God has promised to bestow blessings in answer to prayer—blessings which will not be bestowed without prayer.

We are required to pray without ceasing, *i. e.*, ever maintain a devotional spirit, be ready to pray at any time. According to the various circumstances under which prayer is offered it is distinguished by appropriate terms.

1. Ejaculatory prayer—the putting forth of holy emotions in prayer on numerous occasions through the day. It is a spontaneous exercise of the devout heart.

2. Secret prayer. We need seasons of stated recurrence, when, retiring from the busy scenes of life, we may have communion with our own hearts and with God in our closet. Christ expressly enjoined it. (Matt. 6: 6.)

3. Prayer at meals. The Apostle enjoins that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all in the name of Christ, with thanksgiving. As every gift is from God, it is appropriate that we ask his blessing on our daily food.

4. Family prayer. The vengeance of God is denounced on the “families that call not on his name.” (Jer. 10: 25.) Joshua declared, “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” (Josh. 24: 15.) The Lord’s Prayer is strikingly adapted to families. The family relation is such as clearly to indicate this duty. Its salutary influence has long been known.

5. Public prayer. Here the minister prays in behalf of the people, and should put up petitions in which all can appropriately join. Prayer is an essential part of public worship.

Several requisites of prayer may here be mentioned :

1. A deep conviction of our needs. Without it our prayers will be heartless and formal. To obtain this conviction we must study ourselves and the Scriptures.

2. We must feel our dependence on God. To acknowledge this in words is not enough. Especially must we feel our dependence on him for spiritual blessings.

3. *Faith* is an indispensable requisite. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11: 6). (Cf. James 1: 6.) God has made many great and precious promises, suited to the wants of all. These promises we are to plead before him in faith. "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11: 24).

4. Another requisite is a pure motive. Says the Psalmist, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." (Psa. 66: 18.) Says an Apostle, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." (James 4: 3.) No oblation can be acceptable which is the offspring of hypocrisy and corruption. Unless one renounces sin, his prayer will not be heard.

5. Simplicity. The object of prayer is not to compliment God or man, nor to exalt self; but to pour out our sincere desires for the blessings we need. All pompous display and ceremony should therefore be avoided; and a spirit of childlike humility and earnestness cherished.

6. Prayer should be direct and specific. Indefiniteness is to be avoided here. Many burden their prayers with much irrelevant matter. In prayer we should always have some distinct object in view, and not allow ourselves to fall into a formal round or into vain repetition. It is wrong to come before God with no particular request. Almost every prayer recorded in Scripture is specific.

7. Prayer should be appropriate to the occasion. Much of the interest of the exercise depends on this. Ejaculatory prayer should be suited to the various exigences which arise.

Secret prayer should respect our wants as individuals. Family prayer should be adapted to the condition of the family—to the circumstances of all the members. Public prayer should be an expression of the wants of the people at large. Not only should the different kinds of prayer be appropriate as such, but there should be appropriateness in each prayer to the particular occasion. Our circumstances are perpetually changing, and our petitions should vary accordingly. We should ask for the blessings most needed at the time. Then there will be variety and interest.

8. There should be perseverance in prayer. Earnest, persevering labor is made the condition of receiving almost every good thing. The Scriptural examples of importunity in prayer are numerous. Jacob wrestled all night in prayer before he prevailed. Elijah prayed seven times on Mount Carmel before an answer was given in the descent of rain. The Saviour agonized in prayer until he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood; and also by express precept taught the need of importunity. (Luke 18: 1, *et seq.*) We are not to seek for great excitement or to work ourselves into any particular frame; but we should be in earnest, and be resolved in the strength of God not to remit our exertions until the blessing is obtained. Confession and thanksgiving are suitable accompaniments of prayer. The exercise will of course vary in length. It should never be prolonged to tediousness; for it is a well-established maxim that where weariness begins, devotion ends.

In respect to *answers* to prayer we have this rule: "If we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." (1 John 5: 14.) It would be wrong for us to ask anything which we know to be opposed to the will of God. He always hears right prayer; not that the answer is in all cases in direct accord with the supplication; but, in infinite wisdom and goodness, according to our needs. Such should ever be the spirit of our petitions: "Not my will, but thine, be done."

With regard to *spiritual* blessings, however, we may have greater confidence of receiving the very things for which we pray; and, in all instances, the answer will be the best for us.

We should also supplicate blessings for others, and expect to be answered; not so as to interfere with their moral agency, but as will be in accordance with it. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5: 16). We cannot doubt but great blessings have thus been bestowed in answer to prayer. Nor is there any special difficulty in understanding this subject by those who have just views of God's moral government. Those who adopt theories in respect to decrees and predestination which make the universe a grand puppet show, must frame some mechanical scheme to explain the consistency of answers to prayer. But in view of the character and moral government of God, there is no such difficulty. We are required to pray for rulers and for all in authority. We are bound also to act in consistency with our prayers, else they will be of no avail.

SECTION VI.—ON THE SABBATH. ←

THE first question respecting the Sabbath relates to the time of its institution. The first mention of it in the Bible is in connection with the account of the creation. "On the seventh day, God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made" (Gen. 2: 2, 3). This would seem to settle the question that the Sabbath was instituted at the beginning.

Some, however, contend that this account is given by anticipation, and that the Sabbath was not, in fact, instituted until the delivery of the Jews from Egyptian bondage. The main argument for this position is that we find no express

Ed. Note: Again, keep in mind that the textbook author equates the Lord's Day, Sunday, with the Sabbath, when it is not biblically the same thing. The precept of giving a day over to God is inherent in the "Sabbath" but use of the word is misleading when speaking of Sunday, which is the day we give over to God at the leading of New Testament scriptures. Although our day of worship is based upon the precept of the Sabbath, it is not the same thing.

mention made of keeping Sabbath in the interval between the creation and the departure from Egypt. But it would be very unsafe to conclude that the Sabbath, or any other institution, was not observed during a given interval, merely because it is not expressly mentioned. No particular instance of circumcision is recorded in Scripture from the settlement of the Jews in Canaan to the circumcision of Christ, a period of about fifteen hundred years; yet no one doubts that the rite was practiced throughout. When an institution is established by Divine authority, the presumption is that it is observed by the godly until it is repealed.

Besides, there are incidental allusions to the Sabbath in the period under consideration; as, "at the end of days" (Gen. 4: 3); "and he stayed yet other seven days" (8: 10, 12); "fulfil her work" (29: 27). The first express mention of the Sabbath in the wilderness is that of a well-known institution. (Ex. 16.) The reason given in the fourth commandment for the observance of the Sabbath relates to its institution at the creation. (Ex. 20: 11.) We learn, also, from the testimony of Philo, Homer, Hesiod, Josephus, Porphyry, and other ancient writers, that the division of time into weeks and the observance of the seventh day were common to the nations of antiquity. They would not have adopted such a custom from the Jews. Whence, then, could it have been derived, but through tradition, from its original institution in the Garden of Eden?

The conclusion is irresistible that the Sabbath was Divinely instituted at the foundation of the world. This belief is confirmed by other evidence. A precept for the observance of the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments. Now, it is well known that the precepts of the Decalogue are not positive, but moral; their obligation rests on no enactment, but they were, from the beginning, naturally binding on all men. The moral law pertained not only to the Jews, but to all men in every age. The commandment for observance of the

Sabbath being a part of this law, its universal and perpetual obligation follows, according to the declaration of Christ. "The Sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2: 27). As might be expected in a moral institution, the Sabbath is found to be suited to the wants of man, physically, intellectually, and morally. And even the brutes need it.

It is objected, that since all time is the Lord's, one portion is no more sacred than another. Is it not, when Jehovah has ordained the special consecration of a particular portion? The objection also disregards the need that man has of a Sabbath. We do not deny that some have perverted the institution; but this fact releases none from obligation to observe it according to the design of the Institutor.

Some have argued that Paul classes the Sabbath with the Jewish ritual, which was abolished by Christ. See Col. 2: 16; Rom. 14: 5, 6. But there is no evidence that the Apostle, in these passages, refers to the institution of the Sabbath, or, at least, that his language warrants their conclusion. The Jews had numerous laws and exactions respecting the Sabbath, which were a part of their own polity. These were abrogated by the Gospel; but this did not affect the institution itself, which was obligatory long before the existence of the Jewish polity. To assert that the Gospel repealed the fourth commandment, or any other part of the moral law, is contradictory of the clearest declarations both of Christ and the Apostles. (Matt. 5: 17, 18; Rom. 3: 31.)

The law of the Sabbath requires one day in seven, in regular recurrence, to be separated from common to sacred purposes. The spirit of the precept is that, after six days of labor, there should be one of sacred rest in regular succession, uniformly observed by mankind. Not that all men, in all latitudes and longitudes, by sea and land, in every circumstance, are required to keep the same exact portion of time; for this would be impossible. The law of the Sabbath is one that can be obeyed in practice. It must be observed

according to the original design. No man, community, or nation has the right to change the proportion of time, as the French sought to do by substituting the Decade for the Sabbath; nor can they keep any day they please. Such procedure would at once destroy the institution.

The *day of the week* kept as Sabbath is not, indeed, essential to the institution. The day may be changed, *by proper authority*, without affecting the institution, as may be inferred from its nature, and from the language of the fourth commandment. No one, however, but God, can change the day. The Lord of the Sabbath can unquestionably change the day of its observance.

It is generally believed that the seventh day of the week was, by Divine appointment, observed as the Sabbath, from the creation of the world to the crucifixion of Christ. It is also very generally believed that under the Gospel the time is changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. The principal grounds of this belief are the following:

1. Under the former dispensation, the Sabbath was commemorative of the work of creation. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work. . . . For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex. 20: 8-11). Under the Gospel it is more appropriately commemorative of the resurrection of Christ, the crowning act in the work of redemption. "The stone which the builders refused is become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psa. 118: 22-24). Also Isa. 65: 17, 18. The resurrection of Christ was on the first day of the week. "And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet

spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun" (Mark 16 : 1, 2). Also Luke 24 : 1, etc.

2. Christ not only rose the first day of the week, but a week afterwards met his disciples again, while assembled for worship, and also at Pentecost, seven weeks from his resurrection. (John 20 : 26 ; Acts 2 : 1.)

3. The Apostles met for worship on the first day of the week, administered the sacrament, and made charitable collections. "And upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them" (Acts 20 : 7). "Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week," etc. (1 Cor. 16 : 1, 2). It was termed by them the Lord's day. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev. 1 : 10).

4. The primitive Christians universally observed the first day of the week as the Sabbath, as appears from the testimony of Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and others.

5. God has sanctioned the change by the blessings he has in every age bestowed upon the observance of the Christian Sabbath.

The Sabbath, then, is still in full force, and has never been essentially changed. Christians still observe the Sabbath,—the Sabbath of the Bible—the Sabbath of the fourth commandment—the Sabbath instituted at the beginning, made of universal and perpetual obligation, and appointed as an expressive type of the Rest that remains to the people of God.

Another question of some practical importance is, when does the Sabbath commence? Some say, at sunset on Saturday, according to the ancient mode of reckoning. "The evening and the morning were the first day," "second day," etc. But under the Christian dispensation it seems better to conform to the modern mode of reckoning, beginning at

Ed. Note: We do give a day to worship of God but it is not the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. The Law was given to Israel alone at Sinai. We keep the precept given but not the Law given because the Commandments on Sinai were given only to Israel and also because all of the Law was fulfilled by Christ.

midnight. The Saviour evidently did not rise before midnight, since it was the third day from his crucifixion on Friday; though very early, before daylight. (John 20: 1.)

While, then, Sunday evening is to be regarded as a part of the Sabbath, Saturday evening may well be considered as the *preparation for the Sabbath*. The business of the week should be so arranged as to leave us, in a good measure, disencumbered from worldly cares Saturday evening, thus allowing some reflection upon the closing week, and anticipation of the approaching Sabbath. When such precaution is not taken, a great part of the benefit of the institution is apt to be lost.

The Sabbath has been often perverted:

1. The Pharisees burdened it with their traditions. The like has frequently been done since.
2. Some, by interpreting the *rest* of the Sabbath improperly, have made it synonymous with indolence and sloth.
3. In many countries it is regarded too much as a festival or holiday.

The Scriptural requirement clearly is that the entire day be separated from secular to sacred purposes. We should as faithfully appropriate the Sabbath to the object of spiritual improvement as we do the other six days to the ordinary affairs of life. The fact that we are to devote all our time, and do all things to the glory of God, does not supersede the necessity of this institution. In Isa. 58: 13, it is enjoined upon us that we "turn away our foot from the Sabbath, from doing our pleasure on that holy day; and call the Sabbath a Delight, the Holy of the Lord, Honorable; and honor him, not doing our own ways, nor finding our own pleasure, nor speaking our own words." From this and other passages we may learn:

1. The impropriety of attending to worldly business on the Sabbath, except as necessity requires. Not only so, but our thoughts also should be withdrawn from worldly business.

2. Worldly sports and amusements are inconsistent with the Sabbath. This rule extends to conversation, reading, and the thoughts, as well as to outward acts.

3. While it is right to perform works of necessity and mercy on the Sabbath, we should govern ourselves in deciding what are such works, by conscientious principles, the study of the Bible, the example of devoted Christians, the consciences of others, and regard to our own spiritual advancement. We should not violate the dictates of an enlightened conscience either in ourselves or others. Consider the rule of the Apostle: "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat none." It is a bad omen when one feels the Sabbath to be a restraint, and is disposed to lower its sanctions to the standard of the worldly. The Sabbath is no bondage to the living Christian, nor are its duties tasks, nor its prohibitions restraints, except to a part in us prone to evil, and which needs to be crucified.

4. Devotional duties, both public and private, belong to the Sabbath. Nothing can release us from the latter; nor from the former, but such circumstances as would release us from the claims of our daily business.

5. It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day. The preaching of the Gospel, and other ordinances of the church, Sabbath schools, meetings for the promotion of temperance, anti-slavery, peace, and similar moral objects, are appropriate to it. But visiting, traveling, etc., unless from *necessity*, are forbidden.

6. The Sabbath is equally binding on all. Mariners on the ocean and physicians may keep the Sabbath according to the spirit of the requirement as well as others, and should govern themselves by the same principles. So also with ministers and theological students. They should make the same distinction between the Sabbath and other days that the farmer or mechanic does. They need it equally. Their studies during the week, being in a great degree scientific and abstract, affect the mind and heart differently from those

studies which pertain to the Sabbath. Hence, when the Sabbath comes those pursuits should be laid aside, and they should apply themselves exclusively to the devotional and other practical duties of their calling. Preaching is a duty belonging to the Sabbath, but preparation for it belongs to the week. The pen, the dictionary, and the scientific treatise are to be laid aside on the Lord's day, equally with the hoe, the axe, and the plane. They should have devotional reading for the Sabbath. Conversation should be to godly edifying. Much time should be spent in secret prayer and meditation. Thus only can the spirituality of ministers and students be maintained.

The *benefits* of the Sabbath are numerous and great. They are strikingly seen in the comparison of those nations that have a Sabbath with those that have none; and between Sabbath-keeping and Sabbath-breaking communities.

1. The Sabbath is a great preventive of crime and vice. Sabbath-breaking leads to almost every other sin. Our penitentiaries are full of Sabbath-breakers.

2. It is an important source of physical improvement. Man and beast naturally need it in this point of view.

3. Its tendency is to improve the manners. By observance of the Sabbath the most rude and debased are greatly cultivated.

4. It is a valuable source of intellectual improvement. A great amount of knowledge is acquired by attendance upon the sanctuary and other duties of the day.

5. Its highest advantage is as a source of moral and spiritual improvement. It is suited in this respect also to the wants of all. Without it religion would not subsist in the world.

It is not strange that such an institution should find bitter enemies in the wicked. It has been an object of special virulence to infidels and the immoral of all ages. It is immediately connected with the best interests of man. Those, therefore, who desire the spread of the Gospel, the

stability of our religious institutions, and the general welfare of society, should use every proper means to promote the right observance of the Sabbath, and increase the interest and profit of the services appropriate to it. Thus shall we prepare for the eternal Sabbath of heaven.

In a general view of the Sabbath as a law for all men, in all places, and at all times, it may be said :

I. *It is a law of nature.* Even inorganic matter, after the grandest display of material activity conceivable in earthquakes and volcanoes, which boiled the oceans, buried the mountains, and developed geological continents, must have had long periods of rest. Probably more than sixty times as much rest as activity.

1. In vegetable life the law of rest alternated with activity, is shown as the law of life. All vegetable organizations have their times of action and growth, and their times of rest about six times as long as their periods of activity.

2. The continuance of animal life in every species depends upon this same general law. In their nature and circumstances seasons of rest are demanded, without which death ensues.

3. Its necessity in the human body is distinctly seen in its nature, experience, and history. The physiologist and philosopher, manufacturer and merchant, professional man and statesman, have found that a rest one day in seven is most favorable to success, health, and long life.

4. The mind is equally imperative in its natural demands for days of rest. Mental rest from all action seems to be impossible, but comparative rest for a part of the time is necessary to the best development and efficiency of the mind. Less than is required for the body, which requires less than most of the lower animals, and very much less than the trees demand.

5. Man as a moral being, with intellect, conscience, and

will, needs certain days for certain purposes. In one sense even the sensibilities and moral faculties need a kind of rest. No one can love any being with unchanging degrees of emotion. But here, in man's higher being and life, we find the real philosophy and demand for the true Sabbath, where not only rest from labor, but holiness and the sanctified use of such rest, is required. Man cannot live in different places at the same time; no more can be in full force of life upon different subjects at the same time. Different faculties and different subjects must occupy different times for their respective use. The moral faculties need developing and exercising as they cannot be developed in the labor and cares of secular employment. The Sabbath is not merely a day of rest from "works," but a "sanctified" day for "holy" use. The volume of nature, open it wherever we may, reveals a day of rest, and in the highest field and revelations of nature in the moral nature we read the demand of God for a *holy* day. The law of the Sabbath is not only a law of nature, but also

II. *A law of revelation.*

1. The language employed in its original institution (Gen. 2: 2, 3) implies duties to be performed by somebody. But the Divine action was already taken; God had finished his works. Not a word is said respecting his experience or duties upon the seventh day. A day is simple duration, not a thing or being not susceptible to blessing, and can be blessed and sanctified only in its use. God is infinitely blessed in himself, and is blessed in all eternity, and the idea of making a day any more blessed or sanctified in its use by himself is inconceivable. It was evidently intended to be made a special blessing to man, and to be "sanctified" for "holy" employment. But Christ settles the question, and decides that it was not made for God or angels, but "for man." (Mark 2: 28.) The whole history of patriarchal ages by Moses could be printed in type ordinarily used for such purpose, upon less than fifty octavo

pages, and we could not expect a regular practice, with reference to which there was no agitation, to be mentioned in a history of only two pages to a century. The fact that the Sabbath is not mentioned proves the general observance of the original institution. But there are some indications of a division of days. Abel could not have offered an "excellent sacrifice" "by faith" (Heb. 11: 4) without obedience to Divine instruction. He did not make his offering at the end of years, months, or weeks, but, according to the Hebrew, "at the end of days." As no other division of days is known, it was probably upon the Sabbath that this offering was made. Job and his sons seem to have had certain days for worship and sacrifice. The common and sacred use of "seven," as in reference to the animals and dove in the ark, Jacob's service for his wives, Joseph's mourning for his father, and in scores of other places, indicates some special event, ordinance, or practice as the cause of the sacredness of this number. There is nothing in nature emphasizing that number, nor any reason in nature for the septenary division of days. There are astronomical reasons for years, months, and days; but how anybody thought of weeks of seven days is unaccountable, except by revelation. The institution of the Sabbath in Eden accounts for this reckoning, and the recent discoveries in Nineveh and Babylon, the most ancient histories of ancient nations, and the general practice of all nations in reference to the division of days, in some way indicate the original law of God.

2. It is one of the Ten Commandments. All laws, human or Divine, are general or specific, and all valid specific laws must accord with general laws. The ceremonial laws of the Jews were based upon the general laws of the Decalogue and the general promise of atonement. These laws were given before the ceremonial, specific Jewish laws were promulgated, emphasized with Divine manifestations not accompanying the specific instructions, and so written and preserved as to indicate a more general use and obligation

than those exclusively for the Israelites. Everybody admits that nine of the ten laws are universal and binding upon others as well as the Jews. To suppose that in a code of laws so important and universal in their claims, announced and promulgated with such authority, without the least indication of local distinction or difference in character, there should be placed a specific, local law, binding only upon a small nation for a limited time, is very improbable. There was a specific use of the old and universal Sabbath, just as there was a specific use of the rainbow after the flood, of Jacob's pillow of stone after his dream at Bethel. Of course there had been rainbows from the first, but after the flood they were a sign of a promise; and the old stones of Jacob's pillow became a pillar; and the Sabbath, the memorial of creation, became also a memorial of the creation of the Jews into a nation, and a sign of allegiance to God, so that its violation by a Jew was treason, to be punished as treason is generally punished by all nations. There never was a Jewish Sabbath any more than there were Jewish lambs and goats. The lambs and goats of creation were used in Jewish sacrifices; so the Sabbath of creation was used in Jewish jurisprudence until the Jewish economy was superseded. There is a clear difference between the use of the original Sabbath "made for man" as man, and the use of the original Sabbath in its Jewish associations. The Sabbath of nature and revelation continues, and is superseded only by heaven.

III. *It is an institutional law.* A law involved in an institution established by Divine authority for all men in all times, not for a single individual or specific act like the bathing of the Syrian leper in the Jordan, or of the blind man in Siloam, but for society perpetually, like baptism and the Lord's Supper. Institutions are for men and not for animals, and therefore imply personal action and moral character, mental and spiritual conditions. But they are for society, and therefore must be visible and physical in manifestation. The Sabbath, like the Church, is both a visible and a spiritual

institution. In its variety of temporal claims it involves the following things.

1. Six days of labor. But as a compound being, man can work with mind and brain as well as with muscles and bones. Mental labor may be quite as exhaustive and useful as physical labor. But in some way, with mind or muscle, every man is as positively by this law and nature required to work the six days as to rest from labor upon the seventh. The common statement that the Sabbath is a "day of rest," is incorrect. God did not rest from fatigue. "He fainteth not, neither is weary." He did not rest from pain. He is "the God of peace." But he "rested *from his work.*" And man must have some work from which to rest if he keeps the Sabbath according to God's plan. Neither the Father nor the world owes any man a living. Any one may be thankful for the privilege of earning a living. But labor, like all other duties, is conditioned by ability. "It is accepted according to what a man hath" (2 Cor. 8: 12). "If any would not work, neither should he eat" (2 Thess. 3: 10). It is duty to "visit the sick," "feed the hungry," and to labor "six days," but lack of health, means, or opportunity may release from such duties. (Gal. 6: 10; Phil. 4: 10.) But a "willing mind" on the part of the individual, and general arrangement on the part of society for the works required, meet the obligation.

2. Its physical requirements demand the suspension of secular labor of mind and body upon the next day after the six days of labor in the pursuit of wealth or other temporal blessings. Christ taught the propriety of "leading animals to the water" and of relieving the sick, and the Apostles required benevolence on the Sabbath, but no allowance is made for money-making, political efforts, or amusements.

3. As governments are instituted for society and the protection of personal rights, as the Sabbath is necessary to the good of society, the protection of those who wish to worship is demanded; and as the rest and worship of the

Sabbath is greatly disturbed and hindered by legalized labor, business, and amusements, it is the duty of civil governments to protect the citizens in this regard by preventing unnecessary labor, business, and disturbance upon that day.

The law of the Sabbath, in its spiritual claims, requires—

1. Its benevolent use. "God blessed the seventh day." How otherwise could it be blessed but in making it a blessing to his creatures? And how could it be a blessing to them unless they made it a blessing to themselves and others? It is to be used as a blessing and as a means of blessing and benevolence. It is to be made "a delight, the holy of the Lord." (Isa. 56: 2; 58: 13; Mark 2: 27; 3: 4; 1 Cor. 16: 2.) Works of mercy are works of benevolence; and so it is right to "do good on the Sabbath." Study and business may be profitable to intellect and heart as well as the pocket, but that which can be attended to upon secular days, and especially such works as involve secular feelings more than devotional feelings, as church building and ecclesiastical arrangements, should be put upon business days. But contributions for the poor and for evangelical and mission purposes are calculated to increase the spirit of prayer and devotion.

2. The spiritual claims of the Sabbath require the sanctification or consecration of the day to God. But there is no way to consecrate a day, time, or duration, without a consecrated mind. The day can only be consecrated by its use, and this can only be determined by the state of mind with which it is used. Personal consecration or allegiance to God is necessarily implied in the sanctification of the day. Renewed consecration each Sabbath is involved in the very nature of the law.

3. It is to be a *holy* day, a day for worship and the service of God; a religious day in distinction from a secular day, a day for the honor and praise of God as the source of all goodness and author of all holiness. We should not only ascribe honor and glory to him, but promote that spirit in

others. It is to be a day of holy effort for the holiness of mankind; not simply a day of rest, nor in any sense a rest from fatigue; not the rest of inaction, but rest from secular work, so as to improve the moral and spiritual faculties, cultivate the religious nature and the spirit of devotion, faith, and hope.

4. The institution of the Sabbath involves certain obligations, and the time for discharging such obligations. In all institutions, laws, and obligations, the time for meeting the obligations must be implied or specified. Such specification of time or times differs entirely from the obligation. Promissory notes, tax laws, and bonds are null and void unless a time of payment is stated. Time, as simple duration, having no substance or characteristics of itself, can only be measured and defined by events. Some of these events occur by natural force, and occasion the natural division of time into days, months, and years; and some occur by the appointment of God or the will of men, furnishing eras and epochs, historic periods and times of special appointment, constituting the voluntary divisions of time. There are three ways of specifying the time for meeting the obligations involved in the different relations of life. Sometimes the day of the month and year is given, as in business papers and ecclesiastical agreements. Sometimes the time is left to one of the parties, as in notes on demand. But sometimes the obligation is to be discharged when certain events have occurred or other times are past, as in conditional contracts, bequest notes, or after the process of certain periods. The Sabbath belongs to the latter class. The obligations enjoined in this institution are plain—the suspension of secular mental and physical labor, and holy consecration for one-seventh of the time. And this proportion was not originally a seventh of the years, months, or weeks, nor a seventh of a week,—for there were no weeks indicated in the relations of the earth to other portions of creation, nor in the history of creation, until after the Sab-

bath was instituted. The week is an arbitrary or voluntary division of time not given in creation, but appears as the result of the appointment of the Sabbath, which is mentioned in its relation to the preceding six days. Keeping in mind the distinction between the duties of the Sabbath and the time of their observance, it may be confidently affirmed :

1. That the original law was not for a special day of the week, for there was no week then known, but for a proportion of days, or for the next after six in simple succession. Seventh always means succession or proportion, and never the name of a day of the week. The whole question of the time of the Sabbath turns upon the meaning of the word seventh—a linguistic question. Ninety-nine hundredths of all the Christian scholars who have ever lived believe they keep the Sabbath upon the day of Christ's resurrection.

2. The entire Christian Church has been better united with reference to the proper time for observing the Sabbath than with any other point of Christian doctrine or church usages. Such agreement renders the position probable.

3. There is nothing in the nature of the duties which requires the seventh day of the week.

4. As the Sabbath is an institution for society and can only be properly and profitably practiced where there is general agreement in suspending temporal business and labor, and as the first day of the week is the only time when such rest from labor is now possible, the very nature of the law requires that the Sabbath be observed upon the first day of the week, as it is the only day when it can be observed in a general sense. And it meets the law of the Sabbath if it is placed in immediate relation to the six secular days, which is the only point given in specifying the time. If a man agrees to pay a certain sum of money after six days of work he will not attempt afterward to interline the names of certain days of the week. Neither will the "Lord of the Sabbath" in his law and implied promise, especially as there is no law against another day.

5. There never was and never can be a general, simultaneous observance of the same hours and days for the Sabbath. If a portion of a day either side of the Sabbath may be taken into sacred time, how much secular time may thus be taken without affecting its sacredness? Our missionaries in India commence their Sabbath twelve hours earlier than Americans. Whether they hold their Sabbath on Saturday or Sunday is not certain; but it is certain that there is not — there never was and never can be — a simultaneous observance of the same sacred time in different meridional localities. It is said the Russians went east until they reached Alaska, continuing the observance of the first day of the week as their Sabbath, but, of course, commencing the day one hour earlier every thousand miles or less. Americans went west to Alaska, continuing the observance of the first day of the week, but beginning each day later, and found the orthodox, rigid Russians keeping their first-day Sabbath just one day earlier. If seventh-day believers would take a western trip around the globe they would return converted in fact, whether in doctrine or not. But what about the special day of the week with such differences? To avoid this gain or loss of a day in going around the earth, by international regulation, a day is dropped or added in the log-book and calendar when at a certain degree of longitude. So that if the seventh-day worshiper going west crosses that line on Friday night, he finds the next day is Sunday, and must adopt the policy without a seventh day for that week, or continue the daily change in time and find himself at last keeping the first day. God never commands an impossibility. The simultaneous observance of the Sabbath upon the seventh day of the week is an impossibility; and therefore it may be observed upon some other day.

6. There is not the least probability that the days of the week are now numbered as at first, and it is impossible for any one to know whether he is keeping the day originally sanctified or not. The calendar for past years, months, and

days may be corrected by astronomers; but they know nothing of weeks, which are arbitrary divisions of time, and kept only by record or tradition. For twenty-four hundred years there were no written records. During that long period nations were born and wasted, kingdoms established and destroyed, peoples heathenized and drowned, languages multiplied, and Noah's descendants scattered, rendering the regular succession of weeks and Sabbaths incredible if not impossible. Different governments, languages, and religions would lead to the perversion of the law and changes in respect to times. So, while the Romans made their weeks of eight days, the Aztecs of five days, and the Peruvians of nine days, the Egyptians and Greeks adopted weeks of ten days. This may indicate some tradition of the original week and Sabbath, but certainly does not indicate continued regularity in the observance of a certain day. And as nothing is said to the contrary, it is reasonable to suppose that Abram adopted the custom of his people, the Chaldeans, who had four weeks of seven days to the month, omitting two days, making the first day of every month the first day of the week, and thus changing the relative position of the days of the week and of the Sabbath—if they had a Sabbath. But even if the Jews had a Sabbath no one can reasonably believe that during all their long captivity in Egypt where the weeks were ten days, they did, or could, retain any regular observance of days in opposition to their oppressive owners. And there is no evidence that the Mosaic law was maintained during the captivity in Babylon; or that Nehemiah in commencing his Sabbath reform began upon the same day that God rested from his work.

Is it not clear that while the obligation to observe the institution and duties of the Sabbath rests upon the will of God as revealed in nature and revelation, the obligation respecting the day of the week to be observed rests upon no such foundation?

IV. *The law of the Sabbath is a Christian law.* "The

Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" is older than the Sabbath and is "the Lord of the Sabbath," "who is over all, God blessed forever." "All power in heaven and earth is given unto him." All the laws of nature are Christ's laws, and all the moral laws of the universe are Christian laws. Christianity thus includes all the laws given to man, as man, including the Sabbath, omitting only the specific requirements which are transient, as the Jewish ceremonial laws and sacrifices. The Jewish use of the Sabbath is abolished. (Rom. 14: 5; Gal. 4: 10; Col. 2: 14, 16, 17.) But the institution itself is perpetual and eternal. It is Christian in its objects, being adapted to moral reformation and culture, spiritual worship, happiness, and hope. It is Christian in its benevolence to the poor and suffering, and general good of mankind. It is a Christian instrumentality for promoting the Gospel, establishing Christ's kingdom, and saving souls—without which Christian work cannot be successful. It is Christian in its adaptability to Christian uses. The institution was not new in the Mosaic law, neither is it new under Christ. But in addition to its memorial design in keeping God and creation before the mind, to the Jews it was a "sign" of their national birth and of God's work and covenant with them. It was designed to commemorate the works of God. But the greatest work in the universe is redemption. In its Christian use it is to represent this greatest of all works, as well as the creation of the world. It should now be observed for representing the completion of the works of creation and the completion of the work of redemption; and is especially appropriate upon what is termed the first day of the week.

1. For aught any man knows, this is just as likely to be the day of the week upon which creation was completed as any other day.

2. For large portions of the world it must include a large part of the seventh day, at any rate.

3. As the "seventh" must refer to a proportion of days

or to succession of days in relation to the "six days," and not to the name of a day of the week, if the six days of labor begin on Monday, what is now called Sunday, or the first day, is really the seventh day, and should be so observed.

4. If the Sabbath is "for man" in a general sense, it should be observed by society as a whole as far as possible: and, therefore, as Christendom now is, the first day is the only appropriate time, whatever might be right under other circumstances.

5. This accords with the general and honest convictions of Christ's followers everywhere and in all ages.

6. The successes of the Gospel and the conversion of all the millions under its influence, with very few and limited exceptions, have been secured, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, in the use of the first day of the week as the Sabbath.

7. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most memorable event ever seen by angels or men, and, as the completion of the work of redemption, the most important fact possible for the world's contemplation. Therefore, to use this resurrection day for the observance of the Sabbath to the honor of Christ and the glory of God is consistent with its institution and duties.

8. As the Sabbath is, according to the fourth chapter of Hebrews, a prophetic figure of rest in heaven, which can only be secured by the atonement and resurrection of Christ, the observance of the original Sabbath in a Christian sense and purpose at once suggests the "First" and the "Last," the creation and completion of things—the "beginning of the creation of God," and his eternal glory in the kingdom of heaven. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

SECTION VII.—SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

BAPTISM is a positive institution. It is not naturally binding, like the moral duties, but derives all its authority from positive enactment. We are to learn from the Scriptures, therefore, the law of baptism, and whatever is essential to the ordinance.

The literal observance of this ordinance has been rejected by several classes of men. The Friends or Quakers regard it as figurative and spiritual merely. In support of their position, they quote Heb. 9: 10, which speaks of "carnal ordinances." But this passage relates only to Jewish ceremonies, not to Christian baptism, as appears from the context. Also Matt. 3: 11, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This does not and never did supersede water baptism, as is evident from the fact that the Apostles administered water baptism, after the baptism of the Holy Ghost was enjoyed. Most of those who reject the Divinity and atonement of Christ, deny the Divine authority of baptism.

The law of baptism is given in the commission of Christ to his disciples: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. 28: 19.) They evidently understood this as requiring literal water baptism. When the convicted multitudes at Pentecost inquired, "What shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ." "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2: 37, 38, 41). "When they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8: 12).

At an early period, the doctrine became prevalent that baptism *regenerates*. The dogma of baptismal regeneration has prevailed extensively in the Catholic, Lutheran, and

Episcopal church establishments. It is also held by the Campbellites. The chief passages used in its support are Matt. 28: 19; Mark 16: 16; John 3: 5; Titus 3: 5. But these passages prove no more than the *necessity* of the ordinance as a *symbol* of regeneration and mode of professing it, not that baptism is regeneration. In the light of such passages, we readily allow that the ordinance is of universal obligation. If an individual should knowingly reject this, or any other Divine requirement, he could not be saved. In this sense it is essential to salvation. No more is indicated by the above passages.

The whole current of Scripture is opposed to the theory of baptismal regeneration. Therein we are distinctly taught that regeneration is the *prerequisite* of baptism. John required candidates for baptism to exhibit fruits meet for repentance. So did Christ and the Apostles on all occasions. Their language was, "Repent and be baptized;" "Believe and be baptized." We have no evidence from Scripture that any were baptized until they exhibited credible evidence of piety.

Baptism, then, is not regeneration, but its sign. It is a public profession of faith in Christ, and of being his spiritual children, on the part of those baptized. The renewed man has become dead to sin, buried with Christ, and raised to a new spiritual life. This profession the candidate makes in going forward in this ordinance. (Rom. 6: 2-4; Col. 2: 12, 13; John 3: 3-5, etc.) Other ideas may be included, but the one here indicated is the most definite and prominent.

The Scriptural *subjects* of this ordinance are believers or Christians. "Go ye, therefore, and teach [Greek, *make disciples or Christians* of] all nations" (Matt. 28: 19). "He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16). "*Repent* and be baptized" (Acts 2: 38). It is the duty, therefore, of all believers to be baptized. None but those who gave credible evidence of Christian character

were, in the Apostles' times, admitted to the ordinance; and there is no evidence in the New Testament that any true believers neglected it. The ordinance being *professional*, believers are the proper subjects. ¹

Many, while admitting that believers are proper subjects, hold that the infant children of believers should also be baptized. They argue that baptism takes the place of circumcision, and should, therefore, like circumcision, be extended to infants. But the Scriptures nowhere teach that baptism is a substitute for circumcision. For some time, in the age of Christ and the Apostles, baptism and circumcision were both practiced. The Saviour received both. In all the controversies on the perpetuity of circumcision in the apostolic churches, no one intimated that baptism was substituted in its place; which, were it true, would have been conclusive to the point, and must have been urged. We admit that there is some analogy between baptism and circumcision, and this is all. Circumcision had much the same relation to the Jewish polity that baptism has to the Christian Church. But the analogy itself is fatal to the argument. Circumcision was a prerequisite to the enjoyment of the privileges of the Jewish nation—including both the temporal and spiritual privileges; and, as the males were chiefly concerned with these prerogatives, a rite was chosen applicable to them only. Baptism is a requisite to the enjoyment of the privileges of the Christian Church, and is hence a rite applicable to all proper subjects of church member-

¹ We are surprised to find Mr. Lee advocating the theory that others, even among adults, besides the regenerate, are proper subjects. He says: "All who embrace Christianity as a system of revealed religion, and entertain an honest purpose to live in it, are proper subjects of baptism, without reference to the question whether or not the Spirit has regenerated them, or whether or not they have obtained an evidence of their acceptance with God." Lee's Theology, p. 549.

In support of the position, he holds that the *faith* required in Mark 16: 16 is not "justifying faith," but "only a general belief in the sense of credence." *Ib.*, p. 550. To such extremes, and positions subversive of all spiritual religion, are men driven to furnish a consistent plea for infant baptism.

ship—both males and females. The privileges of the Jewish nation descended by inheritance; circumcision was therefore applied to infants. The duties and privileges of the Christian Church pertain to none but those who have faith in Christ; hence baptism is applicable to believers only.

Another argument for infant baptism is derived from the example and language of Christ. "Then were brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence" (Matt. 19: 13-15). But there is no evidence that Christ baptized these children. Nor does the passage assert that they were subjects of the kingdom of heaven. Its import is that such as are like them (*viz.*, in humility and docility) are subjects. Compare Matt. 18: 1-3. How can those who hold the doctrine of native depravity allow that infants are subjects of the kingdom of heaven? Will any claim that infants are to be baptized because they *need* regeneration? On this ground, all sinners should be admitted to the ordinance. The passage in question relates to a custom of bringing children to distinguished personages to receive their blessing.

Another argument is derived from the mention of several households that were baptized: as that of Lydia (Acts 16: 15), of the jailer (16: 33), of Stephanas (1 Cor. 1: 16). But it is a fatal objection to this argument that we have express evidence that two of these three households were all believers. See Acts 16: 34; 1 Cor. 16: 15. And in the other case, *viz.*, of Lydia, a seller of purple, or milliner, on a business tour with those in her employment, the circumstances were such as to preclude the belief that she had infants in her household. The household of Crispus were all believers (Acts 18: 8); and so have many been since. Now it is a

remarkable circumstance for an entire family to be pious; yet the above *pious households* are the only ones mentioned in the New Testament as being baptized. The argument is against, rather than in favor of, the baptism of infants.

“The promise is unto you and your children” (Acts 2: 39). The passage has no reference to baptism, nor to infants. It is a quotation of Joel 2: 28, of the blessings promised to the righteous and their posterity.

“The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now are they holy” (1 Cor. 7: 14). If this proves that infants may be baptized on the faith of their parents, it equally proves that an unbelieving husband may be baptized on the faith of his wife. The Apostle is urging the sanctity of the marriage relation as subsisting after one of the parties has become a believer. The sanctification and holiness of which he here speaks is not moral, but legal, ceremonial. The passage says nothing of infant baptism, but in the view of eminent pedobaptists contains an implication that the Apostle knew nothing of the rite, else he would have urged the purity of infants on the ground of it.

Many able pedobaptist writers admit that infant baptism is not enjoined or authorized by the Scriptures. Says Dr. Knapp: “There is no decisive example of this practice in the New Testament; for it may be objected against those passages where the baptism of whole families is mentioned — *viz.*, Acts 10: 42, 48; 16: 15, 33; 1 Cor. 1: 16—that it is doubtful whether there were any children in those families, and if there were, whether they were then baptized. From the passage Matt. 28: 19, it does not necessarily follow that Christ commanded infant baptism; nor does this follow any more from John 3: 5 and Mark 10: 14, 16. There is, therefore, no express command for infant baptism found in the New Testament; as Morus (p. 215, sec. 12) justly concedes. Infant baptism has been often defended on very

unsatisfactory *a priori* grounds—*e. g.*, the necessity for it has been contended for, in order that children may obtain, by it, the faith which is necessary to salvation," etc. ¹

Says Caudrey: "We have not in Scripture either precept or example of children being baptized." Says Luther: "It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first Christians after the Apostles." Says Bishop Burnett: "There is no express precept or rule given in the New Testament for baptism of infants."

The next appeal is to ecclesiastical history. Infant baptism prevailed very early—as early as the fourth century after Christ. How could it be introduced thus early, and without great controversy? We answer, just as the doctrines of baptismal regeneration, prayers for the dead, celibacy of the priests, veneration of relics, and other gross errors were introduced as early, and with no more controversy. It was a degenerate age, perversions and innovations abounded, numerous errors grew up gradually, and, as it were, imperceptibly. Infant baptism cannot be traced farther back than to within one hundred and fifty or two hundred years after Christ; and contemporaneous with its earliest mention is the existence of infant communion at the Lord's Supper and the sentiment that baptism has a magical efficiency and is essential to the salvation even of infants! ²

¹ Knapp's Ch. Theology, p. 494.

² "It was common in Africa, in Cyprian's time—*i. e.*, in the third century—to give the sacramental elements even to children; and this custom was gradually introduced into other churches." Knapp's Theology, p. 503.

"When, now, the position, *extra ecclesiam visibilem non dari salutem* [without the visible Church there can be no salvation], with all its consequences, became more and more prevalent, especially after the time of Augustine, and in the Western church, they began to maintain the doctrine of the absolute necessity of baptism in order to salvation; and they gave out that whoever is not baptized and is not a member of the visible church, could not become partaker of eternal happiness. So Augustine had before judged, not only respecting the heathen and the children of heathen parents, but also the children of Christian parents who die before baptism. He was followed by the schoolmen. After this time they began very much to hasten

The existence of the practice is easily accounted for. First came the doctrine of baptismal regeneration and that baptism is essential to salvation; then infant baptism follows, of course. And this is the history of the rite, as given not only by impartial historians, but by many of the pedobaptists themselves. Tertullian, A. D. 220, is the first writer who makes express mention of infant baptism. He opposes it, though not for the same reasons that Baptists do now, but in such a way as to show that it was then gradually coming into use. Neander, an able ecclesiastical historian, and himself a pedobaptist, admits that infant baptism is not of apostolic origin and was not practiced in the first ages after the Apostles.¹ The testimony of history, therefore, is opposed to the Divine authority of infant baptism.

Some hold that the Church has the power to modify existing rites or introduce new ones; hence it could authorize infant baptism. This we cannot admit. Christ is the Head and sole Lawgiver of the Church, and the Scriptures are our only authoritative rule of faith and practice.

Finally, we are told that infant baptism has long existed, has been sanctioned by many worthy men, and is a useful institution. Such arguments have very little weight. The utility of the rite may be fairly questioned. It is an impor-

the baptism of children; and now for the first time the so-called *baptism of necessity* (administered when a child was thought in danger of dying) became common. It happened, also, not unfrequently, that the children of unchristian parents (*e. g.*, of Jews) were forcibly baptized against their own and their parents' will, on the ground that they were thus put into the way of salvation; of this we find many examples in earlier times." *Ib.*, p. 492.

"In the old ecclesiastical writers we find many extravagant and unscriptural assertions respecting the effect of baptism, especially in the instructions which they gave to catechumens and new converts—*e. g.*, in Gregory of Nazianzen, Cyril of Jerusalem, and even earlier, in Irenæus and Tertullian. . . . Christians began very early to attribute to baptism a magical efficacy, by which it produces its effect through its own inherent virtue, and independently of the use of the Word of God, and by which it acts, not only upon the soul, but upon the body also." *Knapp's Theology*, pp. 488, 489.

¹ Neander's Church History. *Bib. Rep.*, April, 1834, pp. 273, 274. Mosheim's *Ecl. History*.

tant, if not an essential, element in all national church establishments. If, while of human origin, it has been made to *supersede* an ordinance of Divine appointment, its influence on the interests of spiritual religion can hardly be questioned. We believe it is the duty of Christian parents to consecrate their children to the Lord; but, as respects having them baptized, it may well be asked, "Who hath required this at your hand?" We reject this rite as an innovation upon the order of the Gospel. All believers are required to be baptized, and thereby *answer their own consciences*. (1 Peter 3: 21.) No rite of human origin can be substituted in place of a Gospel ordinance.

A marked change of sentiment on this subject is taking place. Infant baptism is becoming more confined to national churches and formalists. Evangelical Christians of all denominations are becoming more and more convinced of the evil tendency of the innovation, and of the importance of returning to the primitive rule of administering the ordinance only to Gospel believers.

SECTION VIII.—THE ACT OF BAPTISM.

SOME regard the *mode* of baptism as too trivial a subject to deserve a thorough investigation. They say it is a mere circumstance in an ordinance not in itself essential to salvation. Now, to assert that the mode of baptism is only an incidental circumstance, is assuming the whole question in controversy. We demand proof. And, to settle the question, there must be a careful and candid investigation. It cannot be disposed of by a sneer or a rhetorical flourish. The question is one that has exercised the best minds in different ages; and the Church is divided both in sentiment and practice respecting it. To declare, as some have, that the whole question is *moonshine* betrays either great ignorance or prejudice on the subject. Faithful, dispassionate investigation is the only way in which we can hope to obtain right views of it.

Again, to discourage discussion on the ground that baptism itself is but an external ordinance, and not saving, is equally unworthy of a candid mind. We admit that many have made too much of external forms and ceremonies—have rested in the mere form, and thereby made it to themselves a dead letter, useless. What then? Are rites and ceremonies and external forms to be discarded? Are baptism, the Lord's Supper, the Sabbath, marriage, etc., to be laid aside because they are but forms and external observances? True, they are not saving. Nor is any duty we perform. We are saved through Christ. His works alone are meritorious. But obedience on our part is essential to salvation. God requires an unreserved submission on our part to all his requirements; and if we knowingly withhold it in any particular, we bring ourselves into condemnation.

It does not, then, become us to ask whether a person was ever saved without baptism under any circumstances; or how little we may do and yet attain heaven. It is the spirit of the true believer to say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Whatever is *duty*, whether relating to a great or small matter, whether enjoined by a moral or positive law of God, should be implicitly and cheerfully obeyed. We are individually responsible according to the light and opportunity we enjoy.

Christian baptism is a positive institution of the Gospel. The law of the ordinance is contained in the New Testament. The ordinance originated with Christ and the Apostles, and to them we are to look for instruction respecting it. Whatever rites existed previously or subsequently they cannot be adduced as relevant to this subject, any farther than they throw light upon the law of Gospel baptism. The question is not, what was required of the patriarchs or the Jews, or what has been the practice of any class of uninspired men; but, what does the Gospel enjoin in the ordinance of baptism? As the law of baptism is prescribed in the New Testament, all we have to do is to interpret that law cor-

rectly and obey it. We are not to determine from speculation what that law *ought to be*; but from just principles of interpretation, *what it is*.

The authority for Christian baptism, as a perpetual ordinance in the Church, is derived from Christ's commission to his disciples, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them," etc. (Matt. 28: 19.) (Cf. Mark 16: 15, 16.) The question before us relates to the *import* of this law. And here the whole controversy hinges on the meaning of the original word *baptizo*, there employed to denote baptism. As there employed it can have but one meaning.

Whatever may be true in regard to the double sense of words, all must admit that this word in this place can have but one sense. On this point Dr. E. Beecher justly remarks: "However numerous the possible meanings of a word may be in its various usages, it has in each particular case but one meaning, and in all similar cases its meaning is the same. Hence, the word *baptizo*, as applied to a given rite, has not two or many meanings, but one, and to that one we should in all cases adhere." (Bib. Rep., Vol. III., p. 42, second series.) "The question arises, then," to use the language of the same writer, "what meaning did the word *baptizo* convey to those who, in the age of the New Testament writers, read the command, 'Go baptize all nations'?" (Ib., p. 44.) This is the precise point which should not be lost sight of.

What, then, is the import of *baptizo* as applied to this ordinance? We may first refer to its meaning in the classics. It was a word in common use at the time Christian baptism was instituted. Stuart says that in the classical usage *baptizo* means to dip, plunge, or immerse into anything liquid; and remarks that all lexicographers and critics of any note are agreed in this. (Bib. Rep., Vol. III., p. 298.) He also observes that *baptizo* means to overwhelm, literally and figuratively, in a variety of ways. (Ib., p. 303.) These, according to him, are the only significations which classical

usage has assigned to the word. The proper classical import of *baptizo*, then, is to immerse. See all the classical lexicons.

In the Septuagint and Apocrypha the word occurs but four times, *viz.*, Isa. 21: 4 (fig.); 2 Kings 5: 14 (Naaman dipping in Jordan); Judith 12: 7; Sirach 31: 25 (instances of bathing). All these evidently correspond to the classical usage.

We next seek the meaning of *baptizo* in the New Testament, when not applied to the ordinance. Mark 7: 4; Luke 11: 38, "except they wash," etc., relate clearly to *bathing*. Grotius has the following note on the former passage: "They were more solicitous to cleanse themselves from defilement they had contracted in the market; and therefore they not only washed their hands, but immersed their whole body."¹

In Mark 7: 4, 8; Heb. 9: 10, the noun *baptismous* denotes ceremonial washings. Numerous purifications among the Jews were effected by sprinkling; but many others by bathing or immersion. (Lev. 11: 32; Num. 19: 7, 8.) The latter may fairly be considered the reference in the above passages; for it would not be much information to a reader to state that the Jews had divers ceremonies of sprinkling. But that they bathed thus frequently their persons, also cups, pots, brazen vessels, and beds, might naturally be mentioned as an evidence of their superstition; and a statement which their history fully warrants.

In Luke 12: 50; Mark 10: 38, 39; Matt. 20: 22, 23; 1 Cor. 15: 29; Matt. 3: 11; Mark 1: 8; Luke 3: 16; John 1: 33; Acts 1: 5; 2: 3; 11: 17, it is employed figuratively in the sense of overwhelm. Says Stuart on these passages, "The basis of this usage is very plainly to be found in the designation by *baptizo* of the idea of *overwhelming*, *i. e.*, of surrounding on all sides with a fluid." (Bib. Rep., Vol. III., p. 311.) (Also Robinson's Lexicon.)

¹ Gale's Ref., p. 164.

In 1 Cor. 10 : 2, "they were all baptized unto Moses," it is used figuratively to denote the subjection of the Jews to Moses. The Jews in the wilderness stood in much the same relation to Moses that believers under the Gospel sustain to Christ. This analogy is *illustrated* by the above passage. (Cf. Gal. 3 : 27 ; Rom. 6 : 3, 4.) It does not mean that the Israelites were literally baptized.

The above passages are all those in the Bible where *baptizo* occurs when not applied to the ordinance of baptism, and they show that the sacred writers used the word in its classical or ordinary sense. In both the classics and sacred writings it is often used figuratively and with various shades of meaning ; and the same is true of all words. But that the ordinary, primary, and fundamental idea of *baptizo* was to immerse, no candid philologist can deny.

We come now to the import of *baptizo* as applied to the ordinance in question. We are, of course, to consider the term as employed in its ordinary import, unless there is valid evidence of a change in its meaning, when applied to this ordinance. Is there evidence of such change ? This is an important subject of inquiry.

Jewish proselyte baptism is often referred to in discussions upon this subject. But there is not reliable evidence that it was practiced before the Christian era ; there being no mention made of it in the Bible or elsewhere, until several centuries after Christ. Hence, though that rite was invariably administered by immersion, we would not depend on any argument drawn from that source.

Some insist that the three thousand baptized at Pentecost could not have been immersed. But when we consider the facilities everywhere existing at that time in the Oriental countries for bathing and baptizing ; the fact that one hundred and twenty disciples were present (Acts 1 : 15), most of whom might be administrators ; and that immersion does not require more time than the ordinary method of sprinkling, the difficulty vanishes.

On the contrary, the places chosen for administering the ordinance, such as the river Jordan, Enon, "because there was much water there," afford important indications. No satisfactory reason has been given for this selection except that it was for the convenience of immersing. Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12, "buried with him in baptism," contain clear allusions to the mode, as is admitted by most pedobaptist commentators, as Clarke, Barnes, Chalmers, Stuart.

The practice of the primitive Christians has an important bearing on this point. It can hardly be supposed that they would mistake the Saviour's meaning in reference to the practice and the Apostles' usage, or that they would fail to conform to it. Now, it has been conclusively shown by Stuart "that from the earliest ages of which we have any account, subsequent to the apostolic age, and downward for several centuries, the churches did generally practice baptism by immersion." (Bib. Rep., Vol. III., p. 361.) The Greek Church has practiced immersion exclusively from the beginning to the present time. The fact is well established in history that sprinkling and affusion were first allowed in the third or fourth century, in extreme cases of sickness, and thus, in a degenerate age, were gradually introduced.¹

We appeal finally to the testimony of the most able and

¹ " *Immersion* is peculiarly agreeable to the institution of Christ, and to the practice of the apostolic Church, and so even John baptized, and immersion remained common for a long time after; except that in the third century, or perhaps earlier, the baptism of the sick (*baptisma clinicorum*) was performed by sprinkling or affusion. Still, some would not acknowledge this to be true baptism, and controversy arose concerning it, so unheard of was it at that time to baptize by simple affusion. Cyprian first defended baptism by sprinkling, when necessity called for it, but cautiously and with much limitation. By degrees, however, this mode of baptism became more customary, probably because it was found more convenient; especially was this the case after the seventh century, and in the Western church, but it did not become universal until the commencement of the fourteenth century. Yet Thomas Aquinas had approved and promoted this innovation more than a hundred years before. In the Greek and Eastern church they still hold to immersion. It would have been better to have adhered generally to the ancient practice, as even Luther and Calvin allowed. *Vide Storr, Doct. Chris. Parstheoretic, p. 291.*" Knapp's Theology, p. 486.

candid pedobaptist writers. Says Augusti, "The word baptism, according to etymology and usage, signifies to immerse, submerge, etc., and *the choice of the expression* betrays an age in which the later custom of sprinkling had not been introduced." (Chr. Review, Vol. III., p. 96.)

Says Bretshneider, "An entire immersion belongs to the nature of baptism." Ib.

Neander remarks, "Baptism was originally by immersion; to this form various comparisons of the Apostle Paul allude." (Ib., p. 101.)

Says Limborch, "Baptism, then, consists in ablution, or rather in immersion of the whole body into water. For, formerly, those who were to be baptized were accustomed to be immersed with the whole body in water." (Christ. Theol., Book V., ch. 67.)

Campbell (Translation of the Gospels), on Matt. 3: 11, remarks, "The word *baptizein*, both in sacred authors and in the classical, signifies 'to dip,' 'to plunge,' 'to immerse.'"

J. A. Turretin, Professor of Theology at Geneva, on Rom. 6: 3, 4, remarks, "And, indeed, baptism was performed in that age and in those countries by immersion of the whole body into water." So also Tholuck, Olshausen, Hahn, Scholz, Bloomfield, etc., etc.

Dr. Conant, in the appendix to his Revised Version of Matthew's Gospel, after a full citation of passages where *baptizo* occurs throughout the entire range of Greek literature, concludes with the following summary of results:

"1. That the rendering given to this word, in this revision, [*immersion*] is its true and only meaning, as proved by the unanimous testimony of Greek writers, both Pagan and Christian.

"2. That it accords with the religious instructions of the earliest Christian writers and with the requirements and practice of the whole Christian Church till within a comparatively recent time.

"3. That it is the rendering of the word in any version

sanctioned by early use of the Church, and still retained in the vernacular versions of northern Europe.

"4. That it is the only rendering of the word in any version sanctioned by early use in the Church, and is the only one used by scholars in their versions and expositions for the learned.

"5. That recent and living scholars, without distinction of ecclesiastical relations, unite in asserting this to be the true meaning of the Greek word." (Appendix to Matthew's Gospel, Revised, p. 103.)

In review of this whole subject, we are not authorized to believe that when *baptizo* was applied to a Christian ordinance its import was changed, but the contrary. There were other words which might have been employed. There was *louo*, to wash, *katharizo*, to purify, *cheuo*, to pour, *rhantizo*, to sprinkle, and others, some general, others specific, in signification. But *baptizo* was selected, a word which specifically denoted immersion. We have seen, from contemporaneous usage, the circumstances of administering the ordinance, and the practice of the primitive churches, that *baptizo*, as employed in this ordinance, was used in its original and ordinary sense. There is no proper evidence to the contrary.

As candid interpreters, therefore, we are bound to teach that in this ordinance *baptizo* defines the mode and restricts it to immersion. Wherever, then, this term and its derivatives occur, as applied to this ordinance, just translate them into English, and the whole controversy is ended.

But, one inquires, must immersion be insisted on in all cases? If some, from feelings of delicacy, shrink from such a cross, may they not adopt some other mode? Or, since infant baptism has been long practiced, may it not be admitted as a substitute? In the light of the preceding investigations such questions appear like trifling with a Divine requirement. God has prescribed the ordinance for our observance; he has given us the law that regulates it. He has given us no authority to change it or admit a substitute in its place.

We are to be guided in duty, not by our feelings, but by the law of Christ; not by tradition, but the Bible. We have no right to tamper with the requirements of the Gospel or modify them to suit our prejudices. We have already had abundant and sad fruits of such a temporizing policy.

The Church has lost much by her departure from the simplicity and purity of primitive times. Just in the degree that she has departed from the spirit of the apostolic churches and become conformed to a worldly standard, has she been shorn of her strength. Knapp says (Theol., p. 486), "It would have been better to have adhered generally to the ancient practice, as even Luther and Calvin allowed." The Papists brought in the corruption; let evangelical Protestants purge it out. Just so far as the ordinance itself is to be regarded, it should be observed according to the requirement of its institutor.

As in the Lord's Supper, eating of the bread and drinking of the cup duly consecrated, and received by authorized communicants, is essential to that ordinance; so is the immersion of the believer in the name of the Holy Trinity, by a proper administrator, essential to the right observance of Christian baptism.

We have confined ourselves in this discussion chiefly to the import of the word *baptizo*, since the argument is thus more direct and simple than it would otherwise be, and absolutely conclusive.

SECTION IX.—THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE institution of this ordinance is recorded in Matt. 26: 26–30; Mark 14: 22–26; Luke 22: 17–20; 1 Cor. 11: 23–26. From these and other passages it is evident that the ordinance is of perpetual obligation in the Church militant. The propriety and importance of such an institution are readily seen.

DESIGN OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The main design of the Lord's Supper is clearly indicated

in the above passages, *viz., a memorial of Christ*. "Do this in remembrance of me." "Ye do show the Lord's death till he come."

Commemorative observances have existed in all ages and nations, and have been of great service in cherishing the remembrance of important events. Such was the Passover to the Jews; such is the Fourth of July to us. Christ is the hope of the world. Without his atonement every sinner must have perished. By his sacrifice Christ made possible the salvation of all mankind; multitudes have already been saved, and an innumerable throng will finally surround his throne, redeemed by his blood. It is fit that the great work of redemption should be commemorated by the redeemed. Christians should ever feel it to be not only a sacred duty, but a most delightful privilege, to surround the table of their Divine Lord.

A secondary object of the ordinance is to maintain the *fellowship* of the saints. Hence it is called **THE COMMUNION**. In it believers have communion with Christ and with each other. It is not necessary that each communicant should approve of everything in all the other communicants, for this would be requiring absolute perfection of all as a prerequisite, and would destroy the ordinance.

One ought not to absent himself from the communion because he has trials with another member. A person under the discipline of the church is not at liberty to commune, but all the other members should be punctual at each sacramental occasion. Carelessness and recklessness in respect to it, highly reprehensible, are sometimes manifested by church members.

This ordinance, baptism, and the Sabbath are standing witnesses to the truth of the Christian religion. Had they been forgeries, sought to be imposed in a later age, they would have been detected. They must have been instituted at the time and under the circumstances related by the sacred writers. And this admission goes far to establish

the claims of the Christian religion as worthy of acceptance.

NATURE OF THIS ORDINANCE.

There has been much controversy upon the *nature* of this ordinance. The Papists interpret the Saviour's language, "This is my body, this is my blood," literally, and insist that, at the word of the priest, the bread and wine are changed into the real body and blood of Christ. This is called *transubstantiation*. Hence have arisen their practices of regarding the elements as a sacrifice, worshiping them [*elevatio hostiæ*], administering to the people in one kind only, viz., the bread; and the like. Their doctrine is not authorized even by the most literal construction of the words of Christ, for he called it the bread and the cup, after its consecration. If Christ did not transmute the elements, who can suppose that any priest does now? The Scriptures, equally with our own senses and reason, condemn the popish doctrine as an absurdity.

Luther and many of his followers adopted what is called the doctrine of *consubstantiation*. They held "that though the bread and wine remain unchanged, yet that, together with them, the body and blood of Christ are *literally* received by the communicants."¹ This, however, should be understood of Christ's *glorified* body, and the mode of its presence in the Eucharist mysterious.

The view adopted by Melancthon and many other Lutherans, and by Calvin, is, that the bread and wine remain, in all respects, unchanged, but that the glorified human nature of Christ is influentially present, that is, by a supernatural influence exerted on all communicants at the time when they receive the elements.² This view is still retained by many Lutherans and High Churchmen, or Puseyites.

The Socinians and some others make the ordinance a

¹ Watson's Theol. Inst., pp. 649, 650.

² Schmucker's Theology, pp. 250, 251.

mere form, and even deny its Divine authority in its literal observance.

The view generally held by experienced Christians is that while there is nothing supernatural or mystical in the Eucharist, but that it is commemorative and the elements used are but symbols, yet an appropriate spiritual blessing is enjoyed in the ordinance by all who rightly partake. See 1 Cor. 11: 27-29. Such is the experience of the most devout Christians.

Preparation should be made before coming to the table of the Lord. A preparatory covenant meeting or lecture is very appropriate. The services on the occasion of celebrating the ordinance should be heartily engaged in by all the communicants. It is a suitable occasion for deep self-examination, repentance of sin, and renewed consecration; also of gratitude to our Divine Benefactor. It should be attended with a sincere heart, and in faith. Those who do thus, partake worthily. They may feel their own unworthiness of this or any other blessing of grace; but none can be accused of partaking unworthily unless, like some in the primitive churches, they pervert and profane the ordinance, when they procure to themselves condemnation.

The circumstantials of this ordinance are not prescribed in Scripture, but are left to be regulated by the churches. These circumstantials are the frequency of its administration, the time and place, the attitude of the communicants, and the like. Good judgment must regulate these according to the condition of each church. No more is essential than that an authorized administrator give the elements to suitable communicants, and they eat and drink of the same in faith. Formerly it was considered *a mystery*, and therefore administered in private. But there is no good reason for such sentiment or practice. None well-disposed should be excluded from being spectators. As to how often the Lord's Supper should be observed, experience has shown that, in ordinary cases, it had better not be administered less fre-

Ed. Note: The Lord administered the ordinance only one time and it was during the Passover. The Passover only takes place once a year. Therefore, once a year seems to be the most scriptural. It is, however, up to the Local Church to decide on its frequency.

Ed. Note: The textbook author will discuss only two views concerning who may partake of the Local Church ordinance of the Lord's Supper, "close" and "free." There is, however, a third view called "closed" communion which we will discuss with an Editor's Note at the end of this section. This "closed" observance of the ordinance is the one most in line with the Scriptures.

quently than once in three months, nor oftener than once a month.

→ WHO ARE COMMUNICANTS?

Who should be invited to partake at the Lord's table? It might seem that this question would admit of an easy answer, *viz.*, THE LORD'S CHILDREN. But we need not say that this simple Scriptural direction has been strangely overlooked, and unauthorized tests set up. Some denominations receive those to this ordinance who are not professedly regenerate, though belonging to their church connection; while they reject those not within their pale, though acknowledged to be eminent Christians. This is palpably opposed to the terms and spirit of the institution and the uniform practice of the apostolic churches.

Among evangelical denominations in this country, the chief controversy on this subject is with the Close Communion Baptists. They will not admit members of the pedobaptist churches to the ordinance, on the ground that baptism is prerequisite to the communion, and that the pedobaptists have not been baptized. They also reject the Freewill Baptists, although baptized, because they commune with pedobaptists. It will be seen, therefore, that, in their view, Christian character, church membership, and baptism will not entitle one to the communion. He must also be of their faith and order. This is a position which they rarely undertake to defend by argument, yet it accords with their general practice.

But is baptism an indispensable prerequisite to the communion? Ought pedobaptist Christians to be barred admission to this ordinance? We will notice some of the arguments used in the affirmative:

ARGUMENTS FOR CLOSE COMMUNION EXAMINED.

1. The order of words in the apostolical commission, "Baptizing them in the name," etc.; "Teaching them to

observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28: 19, 20). But this contains no prohibition of the kind contended for. It is barely a commission to baptize and inculcate the performance of all other duties. It establishes no priority of one over another.

2. The order of the apostolical practice. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2: 41, 42). Why not, on the strength of this passage, make baptism prerequisite to prayer, since it precedes it in the order of the record? All the passage proves is that in a given case a multitude were baptized immediately after conversion, and continued in the performance of the various Christian duties. Nothing is here intimated of the Apostles' making baptism an indispensable requisite to the communion.

But even if they did, this does not necessarily authorize close communion now. In the time of the Apostles there was no controversy on the subject of baptism. All Christians were baptized. If any were not baptized it was because they rejected the ordinance. How stands the case now? Are there no unbaptized Christians now, in the estimation of our Calvinistic Baptist brethren? Were not Doddridge, and Brainerd, and Whitefield Christians? But they were never baptized according to the Baptist faith. The Apostles admitted all Christians to the Lord's Supper. We must do the same if we would follow their example. To be consistent we must either do this or deny that any pedobaptists are Christians.

3. It is asserted that communing with pedobaptists is countenancing their error. By no means. We commune with them as Christians, not as free from error. Have Baptists no errors? The question should be, is it an error incompatible with Christian character? Robert Hall said,

“If a man is good enough for the Lord he is good enough for me.”

4. It is said by some that baptism is the door into the church. But this is not true. Christ is the door. (John 10: 9.)

5. “Baptism is prerequisite to church membership,—church membership is prerequisite to the communion; therefore baptism is prerequisite to the communion.” Both these premises need proof. We admit that if one should reject the ordinance of baptism he could not be a church member or a communicant at the Lord’s table. But is this the position of our pedobaptist brethren? Are they to be unchurched? Even if they are, on account of their error in regard to baptism, still we can commune with them as Christians, if not as church members.

6. Finally, it is said, if we commune with pedobaptists we ought to admit them to membership in our churches. This does not follow. If we regard them as Christians we can agree with them in commemorating the sacrifice of our common Lord. But Christians honestly differ on various important points in church building and discipline. The Episcopalian is tenacious of his views, the Independent of his. While these incompatible views are entertained, they cannot unite in the same local church. So with Baptists and pedobaptists. While these differences of sentiment exist, there had better be distinct church and denominational organizations; still, they should cherish each other as brethren in the same general Church of Christ, and co-operate with each other for the salvation of the world.

The arguments, then, for close communion are not sufficient. The practice is authorized neither by Scripture nor reason, but is opposed to both. Its tendency is to cherish a spirit of exclusiveness and sectarianism, and is unworthy the Christian name.

HISTORICAL NOTICE OF THE COMMUNION QUESTION.

↓ In the apostolical and primitive churches free communion was universally practiced. There is no account of any restriction in this period, barring a portion of the Lord's children from their Father's table; but members of churches, however widely separated, were freely admitted to the ordinance.

The first departure from the primitive order on this subject occurred when the growing Papal power assumed to be infallible, and taught that without its pale salvation was impossible. During the long reign of the Papacy in the dark ages they rigidly adhered to this exclusiveness, and denied to those denominated by them *heretics* all Christian privileges. The bitter controversies between the Eastern and Western church establishments fostered the same spirit and practice.

Like begets like. Persecution and intolerance often produce the same in their own victims, who, in turn, practice it towards others when they possess the power. From such causes it is not strange that restricted communion has had a wide and long prevalence; most of the great hierarchies and national church establishments having in this, as in most other respects, departed from the purity and simplicity of the Gospel.

With the dawn of the Reformation, the establishment of Protestantism, and especially of evangelical and spiritual Christianity, the primitive practice of free communion began to be revived, and has obtained general prevalence among evangelical denominations. In most of them there are still those who contend for restriction and exclusiveness like that existing in the formal and corrupt organizations. But the body of true believers will not tolerate it.

There is but one marked exception, *viz.*, as found among the Baptists. A large portion of them have for a long period advocated and practiced close communion, refusing

to celebrate the ordinance with any but those of their own "faith and order." No matter how excellent or eminent as Christians they may allow others to be, they refuse them admission with them to the Lord's table.

But here, as elsewhere among spiritual Christians, a better spirit is gaining ground. Robert Hall did much in his day to expose the evils of close communion and to restore among Baptists the Scriptural faith on this subject. The great body of the Baptist churches in England now hold and practice free communion. And although there has not been as yet an equal advance among this people in America, it is well known that many of their best ministers and members sympathize strongly with the same sentiments, and it cannot be doubted that at no very distant day this remnant of intolerance and exclusiveness among Gospel believers will be removed; and all true Christians, on earth as in heaven, will unite at the table of their common Lord, as they co-operate elsewhere in labor for the universal prevalence of his kingdom.

FREE COMMUNION.

The doctrine of free communion may now be stated in few words. It is that communion at the Lord's table is the communion of saints. Every true believer is of right a communicant. This is the principle, and is authorized on two grounds.

1. *Of Reason.* All Christians have a common interest in the Redeemer's blood, they are alike accepted of Christ, united to him and to each other in the same spiritual relation, heirs together of the same heavenly inheritance. They now co-operate in various ways in which they acknowledge each other as Christians. They may, therefore, unite in commemorating the Saviour's sufferings and death. Experience has shown the influence of close communion to be bad, and that of free communion to be good.

2. *Of Scripture.* The precept for the ordinance is such

See Ed. Note at the end of this section for a refutation of this type of practice of the ordinance.

as to exclude no true believer from the Lord's table, but makes it the duty of all to come. "This do in remembrance of me." "Drink ye all of it." We have no evidence from the practice of the Apostles that they excluded any from the ordinance whom they recognized as Christians. Their doctrine implies the contrary. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye" (Rom. 14: 1). See also a lengthy argument for the exercise of mutual charity and fellowship, 1 Cor. 12: 12-27. If we regard our pedobaptist brethren as Christians, we should not exclude them from the communion. The table is the Lord's, not ours. We have no right to exclude any whom he has not excluded.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER.

How shall it be determined who are Christians? Shall each one be the sole judge of his own case, and the ordinance be open to all who are disposed to partake? This would be virtually opening the door to all: and Unitarians, Universalists, Mormons, and even the immoral, might partake to the profanation of the ordinance and the grief of Christians. The ordinances of the Gospel should not be thus exposed. The Church is Christ's body. All its members have spiritual communion with the Head of the Church, and with each other, and may freely associate in the visible ordinance.

The proper course, as we conceive, is to invite all Christians, or Gospel believers in regular standing in any evangelical church. Each church should clearly define what she understands by evangelical, as thus applied, so that none need mistake the invitation. Those only can be recognized as evangelical who hold both theoretically and practically the doctrines essential to salvation. It should be distinctly understood that persons in regular standing are not invited, unless they are true believers. As a general rule, we say, all such and no others should be invited to the ordinance. None can rightfully complain of this rule as too strict. If, after all, one partakes unworthily, he does it to his own

condemnation alone. His is the act, and no one is responsible but himself.

Exceptions to the general rule may be allowed in special cases. Where the evidence of Christian character is clear and undoubted, one who is not a member of any church might be permitted to partake. Of such cases each church will judge for itself. The practice of some in allowing professed converts before uniting with the church, rejected members of other churches, and, indeed, almost any one so disposed, to come to the Lord's table, is to be condemned.

We should require satisfactory evidence that persons are Christians, before admitting them to this ordinance, equally as in the case of receiving candidates for baptism. Gospel order, purity, and harmony require that in no ordinary case should one be invited to the Lord's table who is not in regular standing in an evangelical church. It should be understood, also, as before remarked, that none such are invited unless they are real Christians.

None have a right to the privileges of this ordinance but Gospel believers—those walking in the path of obedience to God. All such have the right, and should on no account be prohibited. The Gospel rule on the subject, as we understand it, is that Communion at the Lord's Table is the Communion of Saints.

Closed Communion:

The Baptist Position Stated and Defended

John T. Christian

The Baptists are strict communionists and are likely to remain such. We want to be just as close as the Word of God. If we have prospered as a people it is because we have rigidly adhered to the Word of God.

Whenever we turn aside from this well-trodden path for mere sentimentality or transient popularity, the day of our power and usefulness is gone. We are compelled to search for the old paths, and when we have found them to walk in them. Despite all criticisms and abuse, we have prospered as strict communionists.

The reason is not far away. In the face of all clamor we have adhered to God's Word and God has greatly honored us. What he has done in the past he will do in the future.

There is neither argument nor wisdom in open communion. It is based upon mere sentiment, and that a false sentiment. We are strict communionists and we are going to remain strict.

This is freely admitted by Rev. J. L. Withrow, Presbyterian, in an able article in the Interior

He says:

"Furthermore, in their favor it is to be said. They have proved, beyond peradventure, that narrow church doors and severe communion conditions do not bar people out of the Christian church. Against creeds and communion bars there is ceaseless outcry from some quarters.

"The Baptists have no chaptered creed, but their unwritten creed, as England's unwritten constitution, is more insurmountable than the Thirty-nine Articles of Episcopacy, or the ponderous chapters of the Westminster Confession.

"Against chaptered creeds the complaints are so urgent that Congregationalists have recently made a new one. You may safely offer a dollar for every new convert which has been captured by that new creed who otherwise would not have been secured.

"And now the Presbyterians are wasting a heap of hard-earned money (contributed, communionists much of it, by God's poor for better purposes), and are stirring bad blood between the brethren in an attempt to smooth off and sweeten up their creed. The claim is that we keep people out of the church, and candidates out of our ministry with such strict conditions as now exist. It sounds like arrant nonsense in presence of the fact that the Baptist church is the strictest church; and yet it is growing, not as a weed, but as the Word of God is promised to grow.

"There is no church, so far as we know, into which it is more difficult to enter than the Baptist through theological, ecclesiastical and ceremonial conditions. And yet there are throngs pressing through its narrow threshold. Whoever cares to study this subject of easy and exacting conditions or church membership, asking which is most likely to secure accessions to the fellowship of professing Christians, should compare the history of the Baptist church with that of the liberal churches, so-called."

The practice of restricted communion is no arbitrary affair with us. We think the Lord has laid down in the New Testament certain.

Prerequisites to the Communion.

We think the Scriptures warrant definite terms of approach to the Lord's Supper. The divine order is, first, faith; second, baptism; third, church membership; fourth, discipline; fifth, doctrine; sixth, the Lord's Supper. No man has a right to the Lord's table who has not exercised faith, been baptized, and is a member of the church, subject to its discipline, and agreeing with it in doctrine. This is so important that I shall illustrate and defend it from a number of standpoints.

The Lord Jesus himself instituted the Supper. A record of this event is given in Matthew 26:26-30:

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives."

We have no right to change a qualification. Were these disciples baptized? There is no doubt about it. Robert Hall, the foremost defender of open communion, admits this. He says: "It is almost certain that some, probably the most of them had been baptized by John." (Works, vol. 1, p. 303)

In the Gospel of John at least four of the disciples were declared to be disciples of John the Baptist. (1:36--40.) Jesus also made and baptized disciples. (John 4:1-2.) It is not reasonable to suppose that Jesus would have selected men to represent himself, who had refused to obey the first and plainest command of the Gospel.

Says Knapp:

"The practice of the first Christian church confirms the point that the baptism of John was considered essentially the same with Christian baptism. For those who acknowledged that they had professed, by the baptism of John, to believe in Jesus as the Christ, and who in

consequence of this had become in fact his disciples, and had believed in him, were not, in a single instance, baptized again into Christ, because this was considered as having been already done. Hence we do not find that any apostle or any other disciple of Jesus was the second time baptized; not even that Apollos mentioned in Acts 18:25, because he had before believed in Jesus Christ although he had received only the baptism of John." (Christ Theology, p.45.)

But the Scriptures do not leave us in doubt on this subject. When an apostle was to be chosen in the place of Judas Iscariot, he was required to be a disciple of John, as were the rest of the apostles. I quote Acts 1:21, 22: "Wherefore of these men which have accompanied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."

This passage undoubtedly teaches that an apostle must have been a disciple of John. In fact this is made an absolute qualification. This interpretation is sustained by the foremost scholars.

Alexander, Presbyterian, says: "The idea evidently is, that the candidate must not only have believed Christ's doctrines and submitted to his teaching, as a disciple in the widest sense, but, formed a part of that more permanent body which appears to have attended him from place to place, throughout the whole course of his public ministry." (Acts of the Apostles Expl.)

Gloag says: "In these verses Peter assigns the necessary qualifications of the new apostle. He must have associated with them during all of the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them; that is, during the whole of his public ministry. He states the commencement of that period to be the baptism of John, and its termination to be the day of the ascension." (Cris. and Exeget. Comm. on Acts.)

Burkitt says: "That is one who had followed Christ from his baptism to his ascension."

Adam Clarke, Methodist, says: "They judged it necessary to fill up this blank in the apostolate, by a person who had been an eye witness of the acts of our Lord. Went in and out. A phrase which includes all the actions of life. Beginning from the baptism of John. From the time that Christ was baptized by John in Jordan; for it was at that time that his public ministry properly began." (Com., vol. 3, p. 694.)

Barnes, Presbyterian, says: "The word 'beginning from' in the original refers to the Lord Jesus. The meaning may be thus expressed, 'during the time in which the Lord Jesus, beginning (his ministry) at the time he was baptized by John, went in and out among us, until the time in which he was taken up.' etc. From those who had during that time been the constant companions of the Lord Jesus must one be taken, who would thus be a witness of his whole ministry."

It is no answer to assert that John's baptism was not Christian baptism; for beyond doubt this was all the baptism Christ ever received and none of the persons baptized by John were ever rebaptized. It answers every requirement of the Lord Jesus and we ought to be satisfied.

Says Knapp:

"The object of John's baptism was the same of that of Christian. And from this it may be at once concluded that it did not differ essentially from the latter. John exhorted the persons baptized by him to repentance and to faith in the Messiah who was shortly to appear, and make these duties obligatory upon them by this rite, And as soon as Jesus publicly appeared, John asserted in the most forcible manner that he was the Messiah, and so required of all whom he had then or before baptized, that they should believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Now in Christian baptism, repentance and faith in Jesus as the Messiah are likewise the principal things which are required on the part of the subjects of this rite." (Christ Theol., p. 485.)

Turretin maintains with great learning and force that "the baptism of John was the same essentially with that of Christ," or Christian baptism.

Calvin says:

"This makes it perfectly certain that the ministry of John was the very same as that which was afterwards delegated to the apostles. For the different hands by which baptism is administered do not make it a different baptism, but sameness of doctrine proves it to be the same. John and the apostles agreed in one doctrine. Both baptized unto repentance, both for the remission of sins, both in the name of Christ, from whom repentance and remission of sins proceed. John pointed to him is the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, thus describing him as the victim accepted of the Father, the propitiation of righteousness, and the author of salvation. What could the apostles add to this confession?" (Inst. Christ. Relig., vol. 3, pp. 332, 333.)

We are not, therefore, left in doubt about baptism preceding the Lord's Supper.

You will also notice that in the celebration of this first Supper there was no one present except the twelve apostles. His mother was not there; Mary, Martha and Lazarus were not present; the seventy were not admitted, indeed there were no other participants, and no spectators. There was no foolish sentimentality about this observance. Not one argument that open communionists urge can be based upon the institution of the supper by Jesus.

This is the teaching of the great commission. Matthew 28:19, 20, states: "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 alway, even unto the end of the world."

I love to go back to foundation principles, and learn what Christ has commanded, and then

I know how to obey. By this law we are required in the first place, to teach or preach the Gospel; secondly, to baptize those who believe; and thirdly, to instruct such baptized believers to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded: and the order in which these several duties are here stated, is as imperative as the duties themselves.

This argument is so important, and the logic, of Dr. Hibbard, the Methodist writer, so just, that I transcribe a paragraph from him:

"The reader will perceive that the argument is based entirely upon the ORDER of the apostolic commission. It may be questioned by some whether the argument is genuine, and whether it is entitled to any considerable force. But suppose we assume in opposite ground? Suppose we say that the things commanded are important to be done, but the order observed in the commission is a subject, of indifference. Now what will be the consequences of this position? What but total and irretrievable confusion? The apostles go forth; they are intent upon doing all that Christ commanded them, but the order of the duties is a subject of indifference. The consequence is that some are baptized before they are converted from heathenism; some receive the holy supper before either baptism or conversion; others are engaged in a course of instruction before they are discipled; and the most incoherent and unsuitable practices everywhere prevail. Improper persons are baptized, or baptism is improperly delayed; the holy supper is approached before the candidate is duly prepared, and it is therefore desecrated, or it is unduly withheld from rightful communicants. Is not the prescribed ORDER, therefore, in the administration of the ordinances, and the duties of the apostolic commission, all important? And thus we hold that Christ enjoined the order as well as the duties themselves; and, in this order of Christ, baptism precedes communion at the Lord's table." (Hibbard on 13 Apt.. P. 2, p. 177.)

The custom of the apostles is in line with the commands of Christ. The divine order is beautifully set forth in Acts 2:41, 42: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." The order is, teaching, gladly receiving the word, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. The Syriac, the oldest existing translation of the New Testament, so understands this passage.

Calvin says: "I would have breaking of bread understood of the Lord's Supper." (Com. on Acts.)

Blount, Episcopalian, says: "I consider 'the fellowship' or 'communion' and 'the breaking of bread' to stand in close combination, and to indicate that another bond by which these first Christians were joined to the apostles, to one another, and to a unity in Christ, was a collective participation in the Lord's Supper." (Christ. Ch. First Three Cent.)

Baumgarten, Presbyterian, says: "The third characteristic that is noticed in respect to the baptized is the breaking of bread. The communion of the Lord with his disciples may very properly be characteristic that the disciples who, after his resurrection, had recognized him

neither by his form nor by his discourse, immediately knew him upon his breaking of bread with them. This mode of communion was thereby consecrated; and appears as the proper medium of a community which lived together as one family." (Com. Acts of Apos.)

Burkitt says: "Another religious office which they continued constant, was the breaking of bread; that is, receiving the sacrament.-

Bengel says: "The Lord's Supper is included in this expression." (Gnomon of New Test.)

Every instance of baptism in the New Testament confirms this view. The first duty after repentance and faith was baptism. As soon as the Samaritans believed the things Philip preached they were baptized both men and women. (Acts 8:12) The eunuch was baptized at once upon a profession of his faith. (Acts 8:36, 37) As soon as the scales fell from the eyes of Paul, he was baptized (Acts 9:18); and the Philippian jailer was baptized the same hour of the night in which he believed. (Acts 16:33) In none of these cases was there any time to celebrate the Lord's Supper between a profession of faith and baptism.

I read in Acts 20:7: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." The Syriac version, and well nigh all commentators agree that this passage refers to the observance of the Lord's Supper. We know that none but disciples were present, for the passage distinctly says this.

Gloag says: "That is to celebrate the Lord's Supper..'

Paul in writing to the Corinthian church says:

"For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it... For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye. as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

Paul distinctly says he was addressing the church, verse 18, at Corinth, There is not a word said about outsiders. Indeed the whole of this epistle is in regard to disorderly members in the Corinthian church. This passage proves beyond doubt that the Lord's Supper is a church ordinance.

In chapter 12:12, 13 Paul says that baptism precedes the Lord's Supper. Says he: "For as the

body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."

The argument is clear. They have all been baptized into the one body or church; and they have been made to "drink," or participate of the Lord's Supper, into one Spirit. Bloomfield says of this passage: "This is the interpretation adopted by almost all commentators, ancient and modern, who here suppose an allusion to the two sacraments."

Olshausen says: "The allusion in this passage to is unmistakable, so that we may see the epotistheemen point, to the communion." (Cum.. vol 4, p. 346.)

Burkitt says: "By baptism we were admitted into his church; and this union of ours, one with another, is testified and declared by our communion at the Lord's table, which is here called a drinking into the Spirit."

Dr. Charles Hodge says: "The allusion is supposed by Luther, Calvin, and Beza to be to the Lord's Supper."

Van Oosterzee, Presbyterian, says: "It is worthy of notice that baptism and the Supper are at least once mentioned by him in one breath, and placed upon a level." (TheoL of New Test., p. 328)

MacKnight says: "For indeed with the gifts of one Spirit, we all have been baptized into one body. or church, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slaves or freemen, and all are equally entitled to the privileges of that one body, and derive equal honor from them; and all have been made to drink in the Lord's Supper of one Spirit of faith and love, by which the one body is animated."

The priority of baptism to the Lord's Supper is likewise taught in 1 Cor. 10:1-3. The passage reads: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink."

Olshausen says: "Thus in this passage the history of Israel is typically conceived as referring to the sacramental rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper, which contain like holy vessels all the blessings of the gospels; and thus in this very passage lies a powerful argument for these two sacraments." (Corn., vol. 4, p. 309.)

Meyer says: "Just as all receive the self-same type of baptism (verses 1, 2), so too all were partakers of one and the same analogue of the Christian ordinance of the Supper, so that each one therefore stood on the very same level of apparent certainty of not being cast off by God."

Bishop Ellicott says:

"The spiritual food referred to was, it hardly need to be said, that which typified one part of the other sacrament." Godet says: "As the holy Supper serves to maintain in salvation those who have entered into it by the faith professed in baptism, so the Israelites also received, after the initial deliverance, the favors necessary to their preservation. These benefits, corresponding to the bread and wine of the Supper, were the manna daily received, and the water which God caused to issue from a rock in two cases of exceptional distress."

Afford says: "They had what answered to one Christian sacrament, baptism; now the Apostle shows that they were not without a symbolic correspondence to the other, the Lord's Supper."

Dr. Hodge says: "As the miraculous deliverance and miraculous guidance of the Israelites was their baptism, so being miraculously fed was their Lord's Supper."

Stanley says: "This is the natural expression for the voluntary pledge involved in Christian baptism. The food and drink are parallel to the Lord's Supper."

On this point the authorities are conclusive.

From these considerations we think the arguments for baptism as a prerequisite to the Lord's Supper are most conclusive. When once this proposition is admitted our argument is impregnable.

But we can go a step further in this argument. We are not only called upon to obey the ordinances of the Gospel, but we are required to obey them in the divine order. The Scriptures are unmistakable on this point. Notice the instructions to the churches.

To the church at Corinth Paul writes: "Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church." (1 Cor. 4:16, 17) "Be ye followers of me, even as I am also of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." (1 Cor. 11:1, 2) "For I have received of the Lord that which I have delivered unto you;" and he immediately gives directions in regard to the Lord's Supper. (1 Cor. 11:23)

To the church at Philippi: "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample;" and this exhortation: "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." (Phil. 3:16, 17)

To the church at Colosse: "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness in your faith in Christ... Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the

rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Col. 2:5, 8)

To the church at Thessalonica: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle." (2 Thes. 2:15) "And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you." (2 Thes. 3:4)

No comment on these Scriptures is needed.

The subject of the millennium was the next one presented in the textbook. Unfortunately the author did not believe in a literal millennium but instead tried to make the plain language of the scriptures figurative. This is not in accord with the teachings of the Scriptures. Therefore, this section of the textbook will not be included in this course. Instead, the student is referred to our prerequisite course on the Millennium.

Dr. Van