

THE PLAN OF SALVATION.

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ANTIQUITY OF THE GOSPEL.

It is not my intention to teach any plan of salvation except the plan which is taught in the Bible. I intend to show that that plan is the only plan by which man can be saved; that only one plan is taught in the Bible; that by it, and it only, could men be saved anciently, and that by it, and it only, can men be saved in this age.

This plan of salvation is called the gospel of Christ. We read that Paul said:

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."—Rom. i. 16.

As the gospel of Christ, is "the power of God unto salvation," it is the plan of salvation. In the following text it is also shown that preaching of the gospel is preaching the plan of salvation:

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain: for I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures."—1 Cor. xv. 1-3.

In the foregoing text it is shown that preaching of the gospel, the plan of salvation, is preaching the atonement of Christ, that He died for our sins, that He was buried, that He rose the third day, that "being made

perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

The Gospel was preached unto Abraham, for we read that,

"The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. * * * Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."—Gal. iii. 8, 16.

The same gospel was preached unto Abraham that was preached in the days of Christ and Paul, for neither men nor angels are authorized to preach another gospel, for we read that Paul said:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel: which is not another: but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."—Gal. i. 6-9.

Now if neither men nor angels could preach another gospel in the time of Paul without being accursed, how could they do it before or since the days of Paul? Moreover we read that it was "the gospel" which was preached unto Abraham.

We read that Paul said:

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise

was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."—Gal. iii. 19.

Unto what was the law added. As I have already shown, Paul had declared that the gospel was preached unto Abraham, and then he said the law was added because of transgressions. The law therefore was added to the gospel. He evidently had reference to the law of Moses and not the moral law, for the moral law was binding upon mankind before the gospel was preached or revealed. Before man became a transgressor of the moral law he could not obey the gospel. Christ said:

"They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—Mark ii. 17.

The gospel is the gospel of salvation. We read that Paul called it "the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation." When "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God," we read He said, "repent ye and believe the gospel."—Mark i. 15. The gospel therefore is for the benefit of repentant sinners. When man fell from a state of purity and righteousness, he needed the gospel of salvation. He was then driven from the presence of God.

"The Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."—Gen. iii. 23, 24.

Adam was driven from the garden of Eden because he had transgressed against the law of God. That law was not the law which was added because of transgressions. We read that "who-soever committeth sin transgresseth the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."—1 John iii. 4. Therefore when Adam became a sinner, he became a transgressor of the law, not of the law of Moses, but of the law of God—the *unchangeable* law of God—not the law

which was added because of transgressions, but the law which was given before there had been any transgression of the law. The transgression of the law could not precede the law. "Sin is the transgression of the law." "Where no law is, there is no transgression."—Rom. iv. 15. When Adam transgressed, he transgressed against the law, but not the law which was added because of transgression.

When Adam had transgressed against the law—the unchangeable law of the unchangeable God, he thereby became a fallen being and needed salvation from his fallen condition. This salvation he could not obtain, except by the atonement of Christ. Peter filled with the Holy Ghost, said,

"There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 12.

Therefore neither Adam nor any of his posterity could be saved without repentance and obeying the gospel, for without repentance and obedience to the gospel, the atonement of Christ could not atone for their sins.

"He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John ii. 2.

Christ alone therefore is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God."—Rom. iii. 23-25.

According to these testimonies, salvation in the first ages of the world was obtained in the same way as in later ages of the world. The savior said,

"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."—John iv. 6.

We read that Paul said:

"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all pas-

sed 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: (For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.) But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness."—1 Cor. x. 1-5.

In the foregoing remarks, the antiquity of the gospel is taught and the universality of its reception by the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt. It appears that they all obeyed the gospel and were baptized into Christ, but afterward God was not well pleased with many of them. They did not continue to drink of that spiritual Rock that followed them which was Christ. Then the law was added because of their transgressions. In reference to those who fell in the wilderness we read as follows:

"But with whom was he grieved forty years? Was it not with them that had sinned, whose carca ses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."—Heb. iii. 17-19; iv. 1, 2.

Having clearly shown that many in the early ages of the world, long before the advent of Christ in the flesh, obeyed the gospel of Christ, I will now show what the gospel is, and what its first principles are.

FAITH IN GOD

Is a necessary principle of the gospel. In Heb. xi. 6, we read that

"Without faith it is impossible to please him: [God] for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Faith in God's existence is thus shown to be indispensably necessary in

those who come to God. An unbeliever in His existence cannot come to Him. He that cometh to God must believe that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. We read that the Savior said:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."—John v. 24.

Jesus commanded men to "have faith in God."—Mark xi. 22. He that believeth not in God, believeth not in his Son, and he that believeth not in the Son, believeth not in the Father.

"He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."—1 John v. 10.

FAITH IN THE SON OF GOD IS ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION.

We read that Jesus bore this testimony concerning Himself:

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii. 16.

If we believe in Christ we will believe His testimony concerning himself. We will then believe what He taught and the gospel which he preached. This belief in His gospel will constrain us to obey the gospel. A genuine belief in, and understanding of the gospel, will constrain people to obey the gospel.

"Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. * * * As the body without the Spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."—James ii. 17, 26.

A dead faith is therefore a faith that does not live, as the body without the spirit does not live. Faith without works does not live, as the body without the spirit does not live, therefore when the Savior said, "he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." he

spoke of the "faith which worketh by love."—Gal. v. 6.

Faith in Christ includes faith in the authority of His ambassadors. He said unto his apostles on the eastern continent: "I have called you and ordained you." Unto these apostles He gave a commission, when He said unto them:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."—Mat. xxviii. 19, 20.

Now in that age of the world no person could believe in Christ who did not believe in this commission; and those who believed in it, believed in the authority which the apostles had received from Christ, otherwise they could not believe in Christ. Those who did not believe in the authority of the apostles, could not consistently be baptized by them, for an unbeliever in their authority, would be an unbeliever in Christ. If, instead of believing in the authority which the apostles received from Christ, any person should have been baptized by an impostor, or by a person who had not received authority from Christ, such baptism would have been invalid, and would have been performed without faith in Christ.

We read that Jesus said unto his apostles:

"He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me."—Mat. x. 40.

They baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, therefore they acted in the stead of Christ. We read that Paul said:

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."—2 Cor. v. 20.

These ambassadors of Christ had authority to ordain men as Christ ordained those twelve men who were

called and ordained by Him, therefore after Judas had betrayed Christ, the eleven apostles ordained another to fill his place. Afterward Paul, Barnabas and Silas were set apart to the apostleship, and we infer that they were ordained to fill vacancies in the apostleship. The apostles ordained elders and other officers to assist them in the ministry, and to baptize as they baptized in the name of, and consequently by the authority of Christ. He that received them received Christ, for they were Christ's ambassadors, acting in His stead. Those who received them as Christ's ambassadors were believers in Christ, and those who did not receive them as his ambassadors, were unbelievers. The Savior said:

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city."—Mat. x. 14, 15.

FAITH IN THE NECESSITY AND ADVANTAGE OF REPENTANCE,

Is a part of the faith of a believer in Christ. John the Baptist taught this doctrine, for

"When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance."—Mat. iii. 7, 8.

No person can repent of his sins unless he has faith in the necessity of repentance. If a person believes in the necessity and advantages of repentance he will repent, but if he does not believe therein, he will not repent.

Among the teachings of Peter on the day of Pentecost, to those who said unto him, "men and brethren, what shall we do?" we read that "Peter said unto them Repent."—Acts ii. 38. "They that gladly received the word, were baptized," (41 v.), therefore they

believed that it was their duty to repent, and there was a necessity and advantage in repentance. They gladly received the command to repent, because they believed in it. By receiving these teachings of Peter, they received Christ, for Christ said, "he that receiveth you receiveth me."

Jesus commanded people to repent. He said: "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Mat. iv. 17.

"I say unto you, That likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."—Luke xv. 7.

Concerning the apostles also we read that "they preached that men should repent."—Mark vi. 12. They commanded men to repent because they believed in Christ. They believed in His commandments to them, and to men generally. When Jesus rose from the dead He said unto them:

"Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things."—Luke xxiv. 46-48.

They made manifest their belief in Christ by obeying this commandment. If they had disobeyed it, they would not have been believers in Christ. They demonstrated their faith in Christ by their works, and this was a part of their works. They preached repentance and remission of sins among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. If the people who heard the preaching of Peter when he said unto them, "repent and be converted," (Acts iii. 19), had believed in his preaching, they would have repented. If Simon the sorcerer had believed in the teaching of Peter when he said unto him, "repent of this thy wickedness," (Acts viii. 22), he would have repented. We read that Paul said:

"I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you,

and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."—Acts xx. 20, 21

Those who were brought to repentance toward God, by the preaching of the apostles, became believers in God and consequently in the teachings and commandments of Jesus Christ. Repentance toward God is an abhorrence of all known sin, not because God will punish it, but because the goodness of God leadeth to repentance. We read that Paul said:

"Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"—Rom. ii. 4.

NECESSITY OF BAPTISM.

A believer in Christ is a believer in baptism, because Christ and his apostles taught the necessity of baptism. Jesus believed in the necessity of baptism to that extent, that although He was without sin, he was baptized. In Mat. iii. 13-15, we have the following account of His baptism:

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him."

If Jesus could not "fulfill all righteousness, without being baptized, how can any of the fallen race of man? If Jesus said, "thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness," how can we do so without being baptized? The testimony of Jesus is, that "thus [by being baptized] it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." How then can a man be a believer in Christ, who says that baptism by immersion is not necessary?

Jesus said:

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."—John iii. 5.

Now there are many professed believers in Christ who say that a man can enter into the kingdom of God without being baptized, but such people are not believers in Christ, for to be baptized is to be born of water. It is the bringing forth out of the water after an immersion therein. The Savior said, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." When a person has been immersed in water, they have been born again—born of water, and when they have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, they have been immersed in it—surrounded with it, therefore they have been born again—born of the water and of the Spirit. They then commence to live a new life, and are appropriately called new creatures, as follows:

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."—2 Cor. v. 17.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."—Gal. vi. 15.

A new creature is brought into existence when it is born, so a man is a new creature in Christ when he is born again—baptized by water and the Spirit. They who are thus "born of God," do thereby become sons and daughters of God.

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John i. 12, 13.

So when a man receives Christ by believing on His name, he becomes a son of God. By being born of God he becomes a Son of God. He is born of God by being born of water and of the Spirit—by being baptized with water and with the Spirit. We read that James said:

"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures."—James i. 18.

By obeying "the word of truth" the saints had been begotten. The words which Jesus spoke, concerning being born again, were a part of the word of truth. By obeying that word of truth they are begotten sons and daughters of God, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

When a child is born into the world a new life commences, so when a man is born again, by being born of water and of the Spirit, there is a "newness of life." The old man is put off and the new man is put on. It is thus described in these words:

"Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."—Col. iii. 9, 10.

The new man is put on by being born again. The putting on of the new man, or being born again, or being begotten by the word of God, or becoming a new creature, or being born of God, or becoming sons of God, is also called "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."—Titus iii. 5, 6, says:

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior."

This washing of regeneration can be nothing else but being born of water and the renewing of the Holy Ghost which is shed on the saints abundantly, can be nothing else but being born of the Spirit or baptized with the Spirit.

The essentiality of baptism by water is taught in Luke vii. 29, 30, as follows:

"All the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him."

Now if the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God by not being baptized, the counsel evidently

was that they should be baptized. If the counsel of God then was that they should be baptized, how can God give a different counsel to others. Christ's last great commission to His apostles contains indisputable evidence that he did not alter the counsel on this subject and that he did not expunge baptism by water from His gospel or plan of salvation. We read that he said unto them:

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."
—Mark xvi. 15, 16.

In this commission there is no promise of salvation to those who are not baptized. The apostles so understood the import of this commission, that they went forth into the world teaching the absolute necessity of baptism. When the first apostolic sermon was preached after this commission was given, we read that the people who heard it,

"Said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and Brethren what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ," &c.—Acts ii. 37, 38.

If people could be saved without being baptized, was Peter a faithful expounder of the plan of salvation when he answered this momentous question in this manner? His answer was entirely different from the answers of many so-called gospel ministers in our day, to such questions. Many of those ministers would say that baptism is not essential, therefore they would not say "be baptized," but they would say, "come to the anxious seat, (or mourners' bench), and let us pray for you, that you may get religion." No teaching of this kind can be found in the Bible, and yet these teachers say that the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice. The result of Peter's answer to the multitude was, that

"They that gladly received his word

were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."—Acts ii. 41.

Now if there was any other mode of adding to the number of saints, why should these three thousand be added by baptism? If baptism was not essential, why did not Peter tell them that they could be received into fellowship without being baptized, and that they could, if they chose, be baptized at a more convenient season; but instead of such a diversified way of receiving members into the church, the command of Peter to enquirers after the plan of salvation, was to "*every one*" of them, "repent, and be baptized every one of you."

The necessity of baptism was taught by Peter to Cornelius and his household:

"He saw in a vision evidently, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do."—Acts x. 3-6.

When Peter visited Cornelius and his household,

"He commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."—Acts x. 48.

Paul (who was then called Saul) was on his way to Damascus, to bring the saints bound unto Jerusalem. See Acts xxii. 6-16. It is there shown, that although Paul heard the voice of the Savior, and was checked in his persecuting career, yet the Savior did not tell him what he should do to be saved, but he told Him to go into Damascus, and that there it should be told him of all things which were appointed for him to do. Accordingly Ananias, a disciple of Christ, was commanded by the Lord in a vision, saying:

"Go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth."—Acts ix. 11.

When Ananias came to Paul, as I have shown, he preached Christ unto him, and said,

"Now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."—Acts xxii. 16.

This commandment shows the urgent necessity of baptism, and that it was an ordinance which should be attended to without delay.

Peter, after making mention of the saving of eight souls in the ark, in the days of Noah, says:

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God)." —1 Pet. iii. 21.

As Peter says that baptism saves us, who will presume to say that it does not? It is truly as he says, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God. How then can we have a good conscience toward God without being baptized?

The urgent necessity of baptism is shown in the remarks concerning the keeper of the prison into which Paul and Silas were cast. See Acts xvi. 25-33.

Of such great importance was baptism in the estimation of Paul and Silas, that after speaking unto the jailor and all his house the word of the Lord, the jailor and his house were baptized in the same hour of the night. Of course in the word of the Lord which was then taught, the indispensability of baptism was taught. This indispensability was shown in the answer to this question of the jailor, "What shall I do to be saved?" When in reply to this question Paul and Silas said unto the jailor: "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," they must have told the jailor what the doctrine of Christ was, that

Christ had taught that baptism is essential to salvation, when he taught that a man must be born of water. When they were instructed in this, and the other parts of the doctrines of Christ, they believed on Him, and consequently were baptized in the same hour of the night.

BAPTISM IS FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.

To prove the truth of the foregoing assertion, I will quote the following texts:

"John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sin."—Mark i. 4.

"And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."—Luke iii. 3.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."—Acts ii. 38.

These texts show that John the Baptist and Peter both taught that baptism is for the remission of sins. Both Mark and Luke say that John the Baptist preached "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," and when Peter said, "be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," he emphatically taught that baptism is for the remission of sins.

The instructions of Ananias unto Paul, when he said, "arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins," show likewise that baptism is for the remission of sins, for washing away sins and remitting sins are synonymous expressions. Some people say that baptism can not be for the remission of sins, because Christ forgave sins without baptism. Now it does not appear that they were unbaptized persons to whom Jesus said, "thy sins are forgiven thee," probably they had been baptized by John the Baptist. There is no evidence that these persons had not been

baptized, but if it could be shown that they had not been baptized, it would not thereby appear that baptism is not for the remission of sins, neither would it show that any man in this age of the world can obtain the remission of his sins without being baptized, or that baptism is not exclusively for the remission of sins. If, however, Jesus saw fit in a few cases to remit sins without baptism, He did not thereby change the purpose of baptism, for it was after he had said to certain individuals "thy sins are forgiven thee," that he commanded His apostles to baptize, and in obedience to this commandment, Peter commanded that men should be baptized for the remission of sins. He promised that if they would repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, that they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and in reference to this promise he said:

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

The promise is therefore unto all who repent and are baptized for the remission of sins—it is unto all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. This promise is unto all, provided that they will repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Those who will not comply with these conditions, have no promise that their sins shall be remitted, nor that they shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

THE SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

As baptism is for the remission of sins, the baptism of infants (is to say the least) useless. They need no remission of sins, because they have not sinned, therefore baptism is of no use to them.

Faith and repentance must precede baptism. The Savior said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."—Mark xv. 16. If the Savior had said, "he that is baptized and sub-

sequently believes shall be saved," His gospel would have been in accordance with many of the religious systems of the present day, and not in direct opposition to them, as it now is. Infants can not believe, therefore baptism is of no use to them.

In the history of the ministry of Philip, we are informed that he preached to the Samaritans and

"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 viii. 12.

They believed before they were baptized. In Philip's conversation with the Ethiopian eunuch, we are informed that he taught the eunuch that he must believe before he could be prepared for baptism.

"As they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Phillip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."—Acts viii. 36-38.

Thus it appears that the condition required by Philip was complied with. The eunuch said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," therefore Philip complied with the request of the eunuch and baptized him. The history does not show whether Philip had taught the eunuch the necessity of repentance before baptism, but he evidently had either taught him that he must repent of his sins before being baptized, or else Philip knew that he had repented, and that therefore there was no need of teaching him that principle of the gospel, for it is plainly taught in the New Testament that people must repent of their sins before they can receive a remission of them by baptism. We read concerning John the Baptist that:

"When he saw many of the Pharisees

and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." Mat. iii. 7, 8.

Thus John remonstrated against baptizing these people in their unrepentant state.

"John did baptize in the wilderness; and preach the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins." Mark i. 4, 5.

Baptism is called "baptism of repentance," because repentance is required before baptism for the remission of sins. Baptism of infants can not be called baptism of repentance, because repentance can not be connected with their baptism.

Peter taught the people on the day of Pentecost (after they had heard him testify that Jesus was the Christ) to repent and then be baptized.

BAPTISM IS IMMERSION.

Concerning John the Baptist we read that

"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan confessing their sins." Mat. iii. 5, 6.

The evidence is here clear and pointed that they were baptized IN the river Jordan. If John did not baptize IN the river, but only sprinkled a little water on those whom he baptized, why did he go to the river. Do any of the sprinkling clergy go to the river to sprinkle? Would they not be regarded as insane if they should do so?

"Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him." Mark i. 9, 10.

Jesus was baptized IN Jordan, not at Jordan. The declaration that He came "up out of the water" is very emphatic.

If it had been stated only that He came "out of the water," it would have been very evident that He went down into the water, but this fact is made more emphatically plain by the declaration that He came "up out of the water."

"John also baptized in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there." John iii. 23.

Much water was required, otherwise John would not have gone to Ænon to baptize "because there was much water there." Those who sprinkle do not go where there is much water for that purpose, because much water is not needed. When Philip baptized the eunuch

"They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him."—Acts viii. 38.

Would they have gone down into the water if a few drops of water would have been sufficient?

When Ananias said to Paul, "arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins," he could not mean that Paul should wash his sins away by being sprinkled with a few drops of water on his face. How can anything be washed away by being sprinkled?

We read that Paul in his letter to the Colossian saints, speaking of Christ said:

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."—Col. ii. 12.

Paul certainly did not mean that the Colossian saints had been buried in a few drops of water, or been sprinkled with water. No sane person would say that a corpse was buried when only a few particles of earth had been sprinkled upon it. How then could Paul say that the saints had been buried with Christ in baptism, if they had only been sprinkled with a few drops of water?

The following description of baptism also shows that baptism is immersion.

"Know ye not that so many of us as were

baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."—Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5.

It is here shown that baptism is a representation of Christ's burial and resurrection. The coming forth out of the water to walk in newness of life, is "like as Christ was raised up from the dead." It is thus shown that by baptism "we have been planted together in the likeness of his death." If the saints were only sprinkled, how were they planted together in the likeness of Christ's death? Is there any resemblance between sprinkling and planting? Would the sprinkling of a few particles of earth on a plant be called planting? I have shown that baptism is called a burial, and that it is called planting, but sprinkling is neither, therefore it is not baptism.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST

Is conferred upon the saints after baptism, by the laying on of the hands of men who are ordained to that authority. John the Baptist said:

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."—Mat iii. 11.

This text shows that baptism of the Holy Ghost follows baptism of water, and that John only baptized with water. The apostles did receive the Holy Ghost, and they received an extraordinary effusion of it, and were literally baptized with it on the day of Pentecost, as follows:

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto

them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."—Acts ii. 1-4.

"Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him."—Mark i. 9, 10.

This shows that the reception of the Holy Ghost by the Savior was after His baptism.

Peter taught the multitude on the day of Pentecost, that if they would repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, that they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. He did not tell them that they could receive the gift of the Holy Ghost before being baptized, or without being first baptized. I will quote his words as follows, to show that the foregoing assertions are true:

"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts ii. 38, 39.

As I have before shown, Philip went to Samaria and preached to the people there.

"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. Then Simon himself believed also, and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now, when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. (For as yet he was fallen on none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me

also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money."—Acts viii. 12-20.

Here it is distinctly shown that these people did not receive the Holy Ghost until after they had been baptized, and that they received it by the

LAYING ON OF HANDS.

Even Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given. He was not in error on this point, as are many of the so-called believers in Christ in our day. His heart was not right in the sight of God, because he offered the apostles money, saying, "Give me this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." The reception of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, after being baptized in water, was a part of the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, which was well understood, so that even Simon the sorcerer understood it.

Philip evidently had no authority to lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, but like John the Baptist, he only had authority to preach the gospel, and to baptize for the remission of sins. The foregoing quotation shows that the time for the reception of the Holy Ghost is after being baptized for the remission of sins, and that the manner of receiving it is by the laying on of hands, connected with prayer.

Additional evidence of the fact that the Holy Ghost is conferred by the laying on of hands after legal baptism, may be found in the following quotation:

"While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus, and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, That they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve."—Acts xix. 1-7.

It appears that these people were ignorant of the principles which John the Baptist taught, and that either on this account only, or because also that they had been baptized by a person who had no authority to baptize, therefore Paul instructed them in the principles of the gospel, for they were so far from having received the Holy Ghost, that they had not so much as heard whether there was any, therefore Paul informed them that John baptized with the baptism of repentance, and taught the people that they should believe in Christ. He evidently informed them that John taught the people before he baptized them, that they should understand that he only baptized with water, and that before he baptized them they should believe on Christ, as the person who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost. Paul must have taught them faith in Christ, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, for when they had heard him, "they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Then Paul laid his hands upon them, and "the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied."

Paul explained "the principles of the doctrine of Christ," and in his description of them after "the doctrine of baptisms," he spoke of "laying on of hands," as follows:

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of

repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."—Heb. vi. 1, 2.

The doctrine of laying on of hands is therefore one of the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and it is that principle which follows baptism by water, and it is that ordinance by which baptism of the Holy Ghost is received.

LAYING ON OF HANDS BY ELDERS.

Not the apostles only, but elders were authorized to lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, for the healing of the sick, and for the ordaining of men to office in the church. When Paul was blind, at Damascus, after Jesus had spoken to him, the Lord in a vision told Ananias to

"Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. * * * And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost."—Acts ix. 11, 12, 17, 18.

It is here shown that Ananias had authority to lay his hands on Saul that he might receive his sight. He was sent by the Lord to Saul, that he (Saul) might thus receive his sight, and that he might "be filled with the Holy Ghost." Saul received his sight by Ananias laying his hands on him, and as Ananias was also sent unto him that he might be filled with the Holy Ghost, he must have laid his hands on him for that purpose, for as it was required that the apostles should lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, how could Saul receive it without the laying on of hands of Ananias? Peter and John were sent to those who had been baptized in Samaria and they laid their

hands on them. The Lord sent Ananias to Saul that he might receive the Holy Ghost, therefore Ananias could not fulfill his mission without laying his hands on him for that purpose. He certainly could not confer the Holy Ghost without the laying on of hands when the apostles Peter and John could not.

It is shown in James v. 14, that elders have authority to lay hands on the sick, for there we read as follows:

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church: and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."

Now if elders had authority to lay on hands for the healing of the sick, it is reasonable to infer that they had authority to lay on hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost. Both elders and apostles laid on hands for other purposes besides for the reception of the Holy Ghost.

We read that Paul said unto Timothy:

"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of hands of the presbytery."—1 Tim. iv. 14.

Webster defines the word "presbytery" to mean "a body of elders in the christian church," and the American Bible Union substitutes the word "eldership" for presbytery in this text. It appears therefore that the elders had laid their hands on Timothy, and that thereby was given unto him the gift which was in him when Paul wrote to him. That gift was unquestionably a spiritual gift. It was either "the gift of the Holy Ghost," which Peter promised the multitude on the day of Pentecost should be given unto them if they would repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, or it was the gift of the Holy Ghost by which Timothy became an authorized ambassador of Jesus Christ. It is evident that elders had authority to lay on hands and that they had laid hands on Tim-

othy by which he had received a gift which was in him when Paul wrote to him.

The case of Cornelius is sometimes presented for the purpose of endeavoring to show that the gift of the Holy Ghost can be obtained before being baptized and without the laying on of hands. The Lord had a special purpose to fulfill in bestowing the gift of the Holy Ghost on Cornelius and those who were with him. Cornelius was "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house."

"He saw in a vision ** an angel of God coming in to him and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter; he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side; he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do."—Acts x. 3-6.

Although Cornelius was a man that feared God and received the administration of an angel, yet the angel did not tell him what he should do to be saved, but he told him to send to Joppa for Peter, who should tell him what he should do, and while the servants of Cornelius were going to Peter, he saw in a vision all kinds of four footed beasts let down in a vessel to the earth, and he was commanded to rise, kill and eat.

"While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them. Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?"—Acts x. 19-21.

After they had told Peter the object of their visit, he went to Cornelius,

"And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together. And he said unto them, ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a

Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?"—Acts x. 27-29

It was necessary that the prejudice of the apostles concerning the Gentiles should be removed, that the apostles might know that "God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."—Acts xi. 18.

Cornelius then told Peter concerning the vision which he (Cornelius) had seen, in which he was commanded to send for Peter, and in conclusion said:

"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."—Acts x. 34, 35.

Then Peter preached to Cornelius and his friends and convinced them that whosoever believes in Jesus shall receive remission of sins.

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."—Acts x. 44-48.

The fact that Cornelius and his friends received the Holy Ghost under such peculiar circumstances does not show that any other person or persons can receive it under the same circumstances, and no person can now receive it under such circumstances. By the vision of beasts, creeping things and fowls of the air which Peter saw, and by the pouring out of the gift of the Holy Ghost on Cornelius and his friends, Peter was convinced that God had also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. But although

Peter was convinced, and although "the apostles and brethren which were in Judea, heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God,"—(Acts xi. 1), yet

"When Peter was come up to Jerusalem; they that were of the circumcision continued with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning and expounded it by ~~orde~~ unto them."—Acts xi. 2-4

Peter then told them concerning his vision and the vision of Cornelius, and that Cornelius was commanded to send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, who should tell him words whereby he and his house should be saved. Peter further explained to the apostles the dealings of God to Cornelius and his friends. See Acts xi. 15-18.

These peculiar dealings of God to Peter and to Cornelius and his friends were necessary to convince the apostles that truly God had granted repentance unto life to the Gentiles, and that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him. The Lord has no need now to pour out the gift of the Holy Ghost on any person to convince the apostles whom he has chosen in our day of these facts. If any man shall receive the Holy Ghost in our day before he is legally baptized, he could not be saved without being legally baptized, otherwise Cornelius would have been saved without being baptized after he had received the Holy Ghost.

Although Cornelius did receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, he could not have been saved if he had not been baptized, for as we have shown, the angel told Cornelius that Peter should tell him words whereby he and his house should be saved, and Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord, therefore if a man could now receive the gift of the Holy Ghost before being baptized, he could

not be saved without baptism, neither is there any evidence that Cornelius did not receive the laying on of hands after he was baptized that he might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

THE EFFECTS OF THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST

Should be understood by us. The scriptures contain much testimony on this subject. The effects of it were made manifest on the day of Pentecost, when

"They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."—Acts ii. 4.

This effect of the Holy Ghost caused devout Jews out of every nation, who were dwelling at Jerusalem, to be amazed because they heard the apostles speak in all their languages the wonderful works of God.

Peter explained this subject on the occasion and said:

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."—Acts ii. 32, 33.

The effect produced by the reception of the Holy Ghost is spoken of in Acts xix. 5, 6, as follows:

"When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

Here are two operations which immediately followed the reception of the Holy Ghost after the laying on of hands. "They spake with tongues and prophesied."

"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal."—1 Cor. xii. 4-7.

In the foregoing quotation it is shown that the Spirit operates in various ways on those who have received "the manifestation of the Spirit," which is the gift or baptism of the Holy Ghost. The gift or manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man. The Spirit has diversities of operations. It does not operate always in the same way, and its operations are different on different persons.

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another, faith by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of Spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. 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."—1 Cor. xii. 8-12

This variety of gifts is inseparable from "the body," which is the Church of Christ. These gifts are divided to every man severally as the Lord will.—Every man who is united to Christ (as the members of the body of a man are united to his head) receives one or more of the gifts of the Spirit. He is operated upon by the Spirit in one or more of these diversified ways. Some have the word of wisdom, some the word of knowledge, some faith. The wisdom, knowledge, and faith, which are called manifestations of the Spirit, are different principles from what religious people generally call wisdom, knowledge and faith. They are special, peculiar and distinguished gifts of the Spirit. Many people imagine that they are in possession of great Biblical wisdom, who do not understand the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and can not give a correct answer to this question: "What shall I do to be saved?"

By the gift of knowledge the pos-

essor of it is distinguished from all people who have only an opinion concerning true religion. A knowledge of any principle in true religion can only be obtained by a revelation from God. Prefixed to the remarks I have quoted concerning "diversities of gifts," we read that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost," (verse 3,) therefore when a man knows that Jesus is the Lord, it is by the Holy Ghost that he knows it. It is the same with any and every principle in true religion, he can only know of the truth thereof by the gift of knowledge. This gift is universally bestowed on all saints in a limited degree, but in a more extensive manner it is bestowed on some.

The gift of faith is given to some, so that effects are produced such as are spoken of in Hebrews 11th chapter. This special gift of faith is a greater degree of faith than that which is the common attribute of all saints, otherwise how could Paul say, that to "another faith by the same Spirit" is given? So with the gifts of healing, the working of miracles, the gift of prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues; these are all divided to every man severally as the Lord wills. "As the body is one and hath many members," so Paul represents that all these gifts of the Spirit are members of the body, which is the Church of Christ into which all the saints are baptized

"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."—1 Cor. xii. 13.

The apostle then shows that all these gifts are as necessary in the church, as many members are necessary in the human body; that the foot can not say, "because I am not the hand, I am not of the body," that the ear can not say, "because I am not of the eye I am not of the body," that "the eye can not

say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you." Verse 21. The apostle thus explains the necessity of all the "diversities of gifts" which he had been describing, therefore if there can be a perfect human body without a head, eyes, ears, hands or feet, then the Church of Christ can exist without these diversities of gifts, otherwise it can not. If the human body does not need a head, "the gifts of healing" are not needed in the church. If the human body needs no feet, the church does not need the gift of the working of miracles. If the human body needs no eyes, then the church does not need the gift of prophecy. If the human body needs no hands, discerning of spirits is not needed in the church. If the human body needs no arms, the church does not need divers kinds of tongues. If the human body needs no ears, the church does not need the interpretation of tongues. As all the above mentioned members of the human body are needed by all men in all ages of the world, so these diversities of gifts are needed in, and are inseparable from the Church of Christ in all ages when His church is on the earth. As a man can not live without a head, so the church can not exist without these diversities of gifts. As all the members which were in the human body anciently are in it now, so all the members (gifts) which were in the true church anciently, are in it now. As "God set the members, every one of them, in the body as it hath pleased him," (verse 18,) so God has set the above mentioned gifts, every one of them, in the church as it hath pleased him. Every one of these gifts are set in the church:

"That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and mem-

bers in particular."—1 Cor. xii. 25-27.

As the gifts were set in the church anciently "that there should be no schism in the body," and as there is as much danger of schisms in our day as there ever was, therefore all the gifts are needed as much now as they were then. As the gifts were set in the church to prevent schism, and as the Lord has not substituted any other remedy for schism, and as every scheme which has been devised and tried by men to prevent schism has entirely failed, therefore God's plan is the only plan which will prevent it, and by these gifts the church will finally be saved from all schisms. Then will Zion know that these words of the prophet will have been fulfilled:

"Thy watchman shall lift up the voice with the voice together shall they sing for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion."—Isa. lii. 8

JOHN WESLEY ON THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

Inasmuch as the Protestant Reformers lived up to the best light they had, and did, to the best of their ability, honor God, and serve the highest interests of the human race; they did nobly, and are without condemnation in the sight of God. Rejection of light and truth brings condemnation. Who shall say that these men rejected light? Do not their whole lives witness that they sought after it, rather? If many who profess to honor the Wesleys, Luther, Calvin, and the other reformers, would emulate their zeal and humility in seeking after the ways of God, they would not only enjoy the blessing accruing from their labors to reform, or improve the moral and religious condition of the world, but would be the happy partakers in the kingdom of God, restored with all its ancient ordinances, offices, powers and blessings of the Holy Spirit; and they would not need to rely on the enlight-

ened opinion of John Wesley, in order to see the will and purpose of God, in the bestowal of the spiritual gifts upon the saints. The church, in the wilderness of confusion and spiritual darkness, has denied that it was the will and purpose of God, that the gifts of the Spirit, as promised by our Savior in Mark xvi. 17, 18, and as explained and enforced by St. Paul in 1 Cor. xii., and elsewhere, should continue except during the apostolic age. The scriptures teach that the promise of the gifts of the Spirit are to all believers, in every age and nation. John Wesley knew that it taught so, and the fact that the gifts did not follow in his day, nor before for many centuries, he saw must be accounted for, not by saying that God only intended them to continue for a short time and then to cease; but to the fact that there were no baptized believers as described by the Savior, and as were the Corinthians and others to whom Paul wrote. John Wesley had the boldness and good sense to attribute the lack to the true cause, viz., that there were no real christians. Having said thus much, let us hear his own words.

“Text—Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet I show unto you a more excellent way.—1 Cor. xii. 31

“In the preceding verses St. Paul had been speaking of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, such as healing the sick, prophesying in the proper sense of the term, that is foretelling things to come; speaking with strange tongues, such as the speaker had never learned, and the miraculous interpretation of tongues. And these gifts the apostle allows to be desirable: yea, he exhorts the Corinthians, at least the teachers among them, (to whom chiefly, if not solely, they were wont to be given in the first ages of the church), ‘Covet them earnestly, that

thereby they might be qualified to be more useful either to christians or heathens.

“‘And yet,’ says he, ‘I show unto you a more excellent way;’ far more desirable than all these put together, inasmuch as it will infallibly lead you to happiness, both in this world and in the world to come; whereas, you might have all these gifts, yea in the highest degree, and yet be miserable, both in time and eternity. It does not appear that these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were common in the church for more than two or three centuries, we seldom hear of them after that fatal period when the Emperor Constantine called himself a christian: and from a vain imagination of promoting the christian cause thereby, heaped riches and power, and honor, upon the christians in general, but in particular upon the christian clergy. From this time they almost totally ceased; very few instances of the kind were found. The cause of this was not (as has been vulgarly supposed) because there was no more occasion for them because all the world had become christian. This is a miserable mistake; not a twentieth part of it was then nominally christian. The real cause was, ‘the love of many waxed cold.’

“The christians had no more of the Spirit than the other heathens. The Son of man, when he came to examine his church, could hardly ‘find faith on the earth.’ This was the real cause why the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were no longer to be found in the christian church; because the christians were turned heathens again, and had only a dead form left.”

The foregoing is a *verbatim* copy from John Wesley’s sermon. No. 94, on “The More Excellent Way.”

W. W. B.