

History

of the Church of God

Sylvester Hassell

Chapter IX

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

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

Many errors had crept into the church from time to time in different parts of the world; but that system of discipline which had been established by Christ and his Apostles had proved effectual in removing these errors in faith and practice. "The Apostolic age is the fountain head of the Christian church, as an organized society separate and distinct from the Jewish synagogue. It is preeminently the age of The Holy Spirit—the age of inspiration and of legislation for all subsequent ages. Here springs, in its original freshness and purity, the living water of the new creation. Christianity comes down from heaven as a supernatural fact, yet long predicted and prepared for, and adapted to the deepest wants of human nature. Signs and wonders are extraordinary demonstrations of The Spirit, for the conversion of the unbelieving Jews and heathens, attend its entrance into this world of sin. It

takes up its permanent abode with our fallen race, to transform it gradually, without war and bloodshed, by a quiet leaven-like process, into a kingdom of truth and righteousness. In virtue of this original purity, vigor and beauty, and the permanent success of primitive Christianity, the canonical authority of the new testament, the single but inexhaustible volume of its literature, and the character of the Apostles, those inspired organs of The Holy Spirit, those humanly-untaught teachers of mankind, the Apostolic Age has an incomparable interest and importance in the history of the church. It is the immovable ground-work of the whole. It holds up the highest standard of doctrine and discipline."—*P. Schaff*.

The church of the first century forms the standard and example for the church of all future ages. Should there now exist on earth a body of professed Christians who occupy the same ground in faith and practice as that of the church of the first century, they are RIGHT; and if any should be found occupying a different position then they are WRONG. The true church of Christ and false or merely nominal churches are to be distinguished by a comparison with apostolic standard.

TWELVE MARKS OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

1. The apostolic church consisted only of those persons who had been convicted of sin by The Holy Spirit, and who had given signs of repentance towards God, and faith in The Lord Jesus Christ as The Son of God. Their faith was the faith of God's elect (Titus 1:1), a steadfast and earnest adherence to the doctrine of the Apostles and prophets (Acts 2:42; Eph. 2:20; Jude 3), including the total depravity of the human race in consequence of the fall of our first parents, the special eternal election of God's people to everlasting life, the particular redemption purchased by the blood of Christ for all of his people, the effectual calling and the final perseverance of the saints to glory. In all spiritual matters Christ was their Head, King and Lawgiver, as He spoke either personally or by His Spirit in the writers of the old and new testaments scriptures. One word of their Lord and Master was worth more than all the words of uninspired men. They chose to obey God rather than man. The Jewish and heathen doctrine of salvation by human works they utterly refused, while they heartily embraced

as their hope the Christian and Bible doctrine of a free and full salvation by the sovereign grace of God. In other words, this FIRST AND CHIEF MARK of the apostolic church was a *regenerated and converted* church membership, who had been born of The Spirit of God, who had a vital, revealed, experimental religion, who were quickened, the circumcised in heart, the new creation, saints, beloved of The Lord, children of God, the saved, added to the church by The Lord, the elect vessels of mercy, who worshipped God in The Spirit, living stones built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should show forth the praises of Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvelous light.

This mark utterly excludes the unregenerate world and unconscious infants from membership in the apostolic church. As Noah was a spiritual child of God, and all the human race since the flood are his descendants, infant membership, if fully carried out, would sweep the whole world into the church. Three of the evangelists inform us that some little children were brought to Jesus, who blessed them, though they were unbaptized; and who, though this was the occasion above all others for it, said *not one word about their baptism* or their admittance into His visible church. He uttered those forever precious and memorable words, "*Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.*" Mark says that He was "*much displeased*" when his disciples rebuked those who brought the children to Him. Bible Baptist have always believed that all children who die in infancy are regenerated by the almighty grace of God and go directly home to the loving arms of Jesus; and these with the adult believers compose more than one-half of the human race. As "Jesus is the same, yesterday, today and forever" (Heb. 13:8), it must still be "*much displeasing*" to Him that little children should not be suffered, but forbidden, to come to Him for any reason whatsoever, whether the lack of water-baptism or anything else. The language of Christ in Mark 16:16, "He that believeth not shall be damned," shows with perfect clearness that not want of water baptism, but want of faith, is the cause of damnation; and the grace of faith is "the gift of God" (Eph. 1:19; 2:8; Gal. 5:22; Phil. 1:29; Heb. 12:2), it is as easy for Omnipotence to bestow it upon a dying infant as

it is upon a living adult. The practice of infant baptism (or infant church membership) is a weak, thoroughly antisciptural, idolatrous superstition, which most probably arose in North Africa in the third century^[1] from the false idea of the magical, regenerating, saving power of water, and which did not become general until the fifth century, thus securing its triumph in the Dark Ages about the same time with the establishment of the papacy; and it is worthy of the Dark Continent and the Dark Ages. "It originated from that inborn human principle of self-righteousness which supposes it so necessary for man to do something to secure his acceptance with God that even the infant, who can not comply with the condition itself, must do it by substitute." It is a vain human tradition which makes utterly void the commandments of God—those commandments requiring baptism *after* repentance and faith, as fitly symbolical of those internal graces; while the human tradition requires the baptism of unconscious, impenitent, and unbelieving infancy. It is solemn mockery, substituting for the indispensable faith of the recipient the utterly unscriptural proxy-faith of humanly invented sponsors, god-parents and sureties. It is a cruel falsehood and deception, pretending that the unconscious infant is regenerated and grafted into the body of Christ church, and depriving him of the comforts of believers baptism should he ever believe. It is the quintessence of ecclesiastical corruption that would break down all distinction between the church and the world. It is the chief prop and pillar of Catholicism, sacerdotalism, and sacramentalism, totally subversive of the fundamental principle of Protestantism and the spiritual religion of the New Testament. "Romanist deny its biblical authority, and rest its validity upon the authority of the church; and they justly insist, therefore, that Protestants, in practicing the rite, abandon the great principle that the bible is the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice, and revert to the authority of tradition. The German reformers conceded its lack of New Testament authority. The profound and scholarly and impartial German theologians are emphatic in denying that it has either precept or example in scripture." It is absolutely certain that there is no command and no plain case of infant baptism in the bible. This is almost universally conceded. Hundreds of the most learned Pedobaptist scholars frankly admit the fact. Nearly all the standard Pedobaptist historians admit that infant baptism was unknown in the first two centuries after Christ. The last commission which Christ gave to his apostles (Matthew

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

The Apostles neither at this council at Jerusalem, nor on any other occasion, manifest any knowledge of the substitution of baptism for

circumcision. The basing of infant baptism upon circumcision has been abandoned by many of the ablest Pedobaptist scholars of Europe and America. And infant baptism itself is, in all Protestant countries, falling rapidly into disuse as an unscriptural and senseless formality. It is estimated that one twelfth of the infants born in the United States are baptized (or, rather, *rhantized*). A most terrible and all sufficient argument against infant baptism (and its historical and logical equivalent, baptismal regeneration) is its inconceivably horrible implication that all infants who die unbaptized, even though they die unborn, even though they be elected by God The Father, redeemed by God The Son, and regenerated by God The Holy Spirit, are, for want of a drop or two of natural water applied to them, consigned to everlasting torment or privation of happiness. No man who believes the bible can believe this diabolical doctrine. This horrid Catholic dogma, surpassing in monstrosity nearly all the errors of "heretical sects," has been well denominated "the entering wedge of tradition which, if driven home, will split Protestantism into fragments."

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

2. The second mark of the apostolic church was the *baptism, the immersion of believers in water*, in the name of The Father, The Son and The

Holy Ghost. Those giving credible evidence of a living personal faith in the Triune Jehovah were taken by the ministry, or by persons authorized by the church, and dipped, plunged, overwhelmed, or inundated in water, in the name of The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost. Thus were those already born of The Spirit born symbolically of the water and initiated into the membership of the visible church, entitled to all her privileges and exposed to all her persecutions. Thus was it clearly and beautifully and divinely indicated that they were thoroughly identified with Christ, made a part of His mystical body, "buried with Him in baptism, and risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead," "quickened together with Christ from the death of trespasses and sins, fully and freely forgiven and washed from their sins by the blood of The Lamb" (Col. 2:12-14; Rom. 6:4-5; Titus 3:5-7; Eph. 5:25-27). Thus were powerfully and comprehensively symbolized the central, vital truths of the gospel—regeneration by the purifying power of The Spirit of God and redemption by the atoning blood of The Son of God, and the identity, as shown by the words of the administrator, of The Father with The Spirit and Son—and the personal faith of the baptized in those truths. Thus does this one divine ordinance impressively preach the entire substance of the gospel of Christ. It was instituted and commanded by Christ, and practiced by the Apostles, and is to be observed by the church in all its primitive fullness and beauty down to the end of time.

The highly important apostolically established connection between the believer and the sufferings and triumph of Christ symbolized in the ordinance of baptism—ininitely more important than the temporal union of husband and wife—has been rationalistically and audaciously dissolved by the substitution of sprinkling, or pouring for baptism by the Roman Catholic society and her Protestant daughters. In all human literature there is not another word whose meaning *is more certain*, and yet *more disputed*, than the Greek word BAPTIZO. The history of this word presents the strongest demonstration of the willful and obstinate blindness and perversity of the carnal mind. Just as mankind had at first from Adam a natural knowledge of the true God, but soon willfully departed from that knowledge, as shown by Paul in the first chapter of Romans, and greedily plunged into idolatry and vileness, and were given over by God to a reprobate mind; so the true

meaning of *baptizo*, as all lexicography and church history prove, was perfectly well known to the world for more than thirteen centuries after Christ, but, for the last few hundred years, the meaning of this word has been most unblushingly and industriously perverted, not so much by Romanist, as by Protestant theologians, for the purpose of suiting carnal ideas of human expediency, convenience and decency. "The Romanist (as also the Romanizing Protestant) bases the change from baptism to sprinkling, not on an altered view of the original form of the rite, but on the authority of his 'church' to alter rites and ceremonies; "but, as Protestants generally claim to adhere strictly to the Bible, *they* seek, in order to justify their change of the ordinance of baptism, to explain away the *ineradicable ground-idea of the word baptizo, and make it the most general term imaginable for the application of water in any form.* This religious error, because of the headway which it has made in English-speaking countries, is embodied in the latest Unabridged Dictionaries of Webster and Worcester. A later and higher authority on etymology than either of these works is Walter W. Skeat's "Etymological Dictionary of the English Language," in which the only meaning of baptism is "*a dipping;*" baptist, "*a dipper;*" baptize, "*to dip.*" The derivation of all these English words is from the Greek word *baptizo*, for the meaning of which word we must of course consult the Greek Lexicon. Now every respectable Greek scholar in England and America will admit that there is *only one standard Greek English Lexicon published in Europe or America, and that is the seventh edition of Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon, published in 1883.* It unquestionably represents the latest and highest combined scholarship of Europe and America. This Lexicon is now before the present writer, and gives absolutely *but one meaning of baptizo, "to dip in or under water."* with several subordinate but like meaning applications, as follows: "of ships, to ship or disable them; (metaphorically) of the crowds who flocked into Jerusalem at the time of the siege; to be drenched (metaphorically), soaked in wine, over head and ears in debt, drowned with questions or getting into deep water; to draw wine by dipping the cup in the bowl; to baptize; (in the middle-voice) to dip one's self, to get one's self baptized." Here it is seen that dipping or immersion is the essential meaning of the word, The meaning "bathe" given in the sixth edition, is omitted, because found to be erroneous. The meaning "repeatedly" ("to dip repeatedly"), given in the second edition, is omitted

because erroneous—the word *baptizo*, from *bapto*, to dip, being frequentative in form, but not in meaning, having an active or causative meaning, to make or cause another to dip; by a common tendency in language the strong form of a word gradually takes the place of a weak form, with no essential difference in meaning. The meanings “pour, steep, wet,” given in the first edition, published in 1843, were *abandoned* and *expunged* as *untenable* within a year and a half after their publication. The compilers of this standard Greek-English Lexicon are Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, both of them being deans, clergymen and “Doctors of Divinity” in the Established (or Episcopal) “Church of England;” not their sympathy for the Baptists, but their knowledge and reputation as scholars, have compelled them to give *baptizo* its only proper meaning of *dipping* or *immersion*. “Immersion, as the proper significance of *baptizo* and the original form of the rite, has been affirmed through all the Christian ages, and is still affirmed by the highest scholarship of Christendom, Oriental, Roman Catholic and Protestant.” The Greek Catholic “Church,” which certainly ought to understand the meaning of the Greek word *baptizo*, has always immersed and still immerses, even in the severe climates of Russia and Siberia, all its members, both infants and adults, and uncompromisingly declares that every other form of the rite is essentially invalid. Contrary to Ephesians 4:5, triple or trine immersion is practiced by the Greek “Church,” and was the usage of the most Christendom from the end of the second to the end of the twelfth century. The Roman Catholic “Church” at first allowed sprinkling or pouring only in the case of sick persons (*clinici*)—the first recorded instance being the case of Novatian, of Rome, about A.D. 250; but the sprinkling of well persons “gradually came in,” says the Encyclopedia Britannica (ninth edition), “in spite of the opposition of councils and hostile decrees. The Roman Catholic Council of Ravenna, in A.D. 1311, was *the first council* of the ‘Church’ which legalized baptism by sprinkling, by leaving it to the choice of the officiating minister.” The first pope that sanctioned sprinkling for baptism was Stephen II., A.D. 753. In England and Scotland immersion was the ordinary practice till after the “Reformation.” “What principality tended to confirm the practice of affusion or sprinkling,” says the Encyclopedia Britannica, “was that several of our Protestant divines, flying into Germany and Switzerland during the bloody reign of Queen Mary, and coming home when Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, brought back with

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

As God is unchangeable, so is "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever," and his ordinances, like those of God in nature, are unchangeable. It was a terrible sin visited by a terrible punishment, for a man to presume to alter an ordinance of God under the old dispensation (Lev 10; Num 16; 1 Sam 13; 2 Sam 6);" the ordinances of the new testament, though fewer in number, are not of less solemnity and authority, nor is there any scriptural evidence that they may be altered by man." He who instituted these ordinances can alone change or abrogate them. No theories or traditions or precepts of men are to allowed to make void or modify the commandments of God. By an examination of the ancient and modern versions of the new testament, we find that when the word *baptizo* is not simply transferred, but translated, the translators employ a word which signifies to immerse, except in a few modern versions. They never

translate *baptizo* by "sprinkle" or "pour." AS Mr. T.J. Conant says: "Translation decides the controversy, and ends it; for only one translation can be given the word *baptizo*." In his exhaustive work entitled "*Baptizein*," this able New York scholar examines 175 instances of the use of *baptizo* through the entire period of the existence of Greek literature, and finds that "the ground-idea expressed by this word is to put into or under water or other penetrable substance, so as to entirely immerse or submerge; that this act is always expressed in the literal application of the word, and is the basis of its metaphorical uses; that *from the earliest age of Greek literature down to its close, not an example has been found in which the word has any other meaning*." Now, as the word *baptizo* invariably involves the idea of immersion, and never means pouring or sprinkling, it is as obvious as the noon-day sun in a cloudless sky that *every objection to immersion, and every argument for pouring or sprinkling, as scriptural or apostolic baptism, sink into total insignificance—are indeed, annihilated*; and so in every case has the most recent and accurate scholarship found every such objection and every such argument to disappear.

Before proceeding to examine these objections and arguments, let us briefly inquire why Christ and his apostles did not use *some other word* from the copious Greek vocabulary to designate the ordinance of initiation into His church. "*Bapto* is found *three* times in the New Testament, and this also means to dip, but is never applied to baptism. Why not? Because, besides being sometimes intransitive, it also means to dye, and therefore with this word the ordinance might have been misunderstood. *Louo* is found six times in the New Testament, and means to wash, to wash the whole body, *to bathe*. If as some say, baptism means to wash, here was just the word to express it. But this word is never applied to the ordinance. *Nipto* is found seventeen times, and means *to wash extremities*, but is never applied to baptism. Why not, if a little water applied to the head may be baptism? *Rantizo* means to *sprinkle*, and is found in the New Testament *four* times. This would have been the very word used to designate baptism if, as some say, that ordinance is properly performed by sprinkling. But this word is in no instance so used. Why not? Because sprinkling is not baptism. *Cheo* means to *pour*, and is found eighteen times in various combinations, but is never applied to baptism. If baptism is pouring water on the candidate, why was not this word used some times to express it? *Katharizo* means to *purify*,

to cleanse, and is found thirty times, but never applied to the ordinance of baptism. If, as some say, the ordinance signifies nothing but purification, this word would have expressed it. Christ and his Apostles baptizo to designate the ordinance of baptism, because baptism is essentially a dipping or immersion."—*E. T. Hiscox*. A dipping in water is both a washing or cleansing and a temporary burying. The immediate immersion or uplifting of the body out of the water, which was always done by John and the Apostles, fitly symbolized both the birth of the Spirit and the resurrection with Christ to newness of life. Mr. E.D. Barclay, in his full, clear and interesting work entitled "A Comparative View of the Words Bathe, Wash, Dip, Sprinkle and Pour, of the English Bible, and of their Originals in the Hebrew Septuagint (or Greek) Copies," shows that while in the old testament the Hebrew has fifteen words, and the Greek thirty-one words, translated in the English "*pour*;" and the Hebrew two words, and the Greek sixteen words, translated in the English "*sprinkle*;" and the Hebrew four words, and the Greek eleven words, translated in English "*wash*;" and the Hebrew two words and the Greek two words, translated in the English "*bathe*;" no one of these twenty three Hebrew words and sixty Greek words is ever translated in the English Bible *dip*, or *immerse*, or *plunge*. In the Hebrew old testament two words, *tabal* and *machats*, and in the Greek old testament three words, *bapto*, *baptizo*, and *moluno*, are translated in the English old testament "*dip*" or "*plunge*;" *tabal* occurs sixteen times, and is translated fourteen times by *bapto*, once by *baptizo* (2 Kings 5:14), and once by *moluno* (Gen 37:31); *machats* occurs one time (Ps. 68:23), and is translated *bapto*; *tabal* is translated "*dip*" fifteen times and "*plunge*" one time (Job 9:31); *machats* in its one occurrence is translated "*dip*," but is rendered by Gesenius, the ablest Hebrew lexicographer, "to shake, to move to and fro, to stir;" *moluno* is not defined by Liddell and Scott to *dip*, but, "*to stain, sully, defile*." The passage in which *tabal* is translated by the Septuagint *baptizo* is in regard to Naaman, who "went down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God." Mr. Barclay's conclusion is that "the Hebrew Septuagint and English copies of the old testament, taken together, do not furnish the slightest authority for translating baptizo by either 'sprinkle' or 'pour;' but all three copies authorize '*dip*' as the translation of this Greek verb." He also shows that the closest and most searching examination of the old and new testaments, in the Hebrew, Greek

and English, does not find a single instance of the sprinkling or pouring of unmixed water on any person or thing for any religious purpose whatever, and therefore such sprinkling or pouring is not by Divine but by purely human authority." Jesus says of the unbelieving, tradition observing Jews: "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). Jesus himself was, says Mark (1:10), "baptized (*eis*) *into* the Jordan." John baptized in the Jordan and in other places where there was "*much water*." "In the vast crowds attending Christ's preaching, no allusion is made to the need of water; it is mentioned only where baptizing is referred to. 'Much water' certainly could not have been necessary for sprinkling or pouring, as it is not necessary for such a purpose now; "nor do men now go to rivers for sprinkling or pouring. Paul twice alludes to baptism as a burial (Rom. 6:4 Col.2:12). Where our English version has the words "baptize with water," the Greek has "baptize (*en*) *in* water." The Greek preposition *en* occurs, it is said 2,720 times; in about 2,500 places it is correctly rendered in; in over 20 other places, out of 2,720 does it necessarily mean *with*. "How clear and edifying is the testimony of The Holy Spirit to the method of our salvation in the Divine ordinance of baptism, properly performed! How is it that a vile sinner can escape the wrath of God, and obtain eternal life? How is it that Christ's work is available for him? Why, when even Christ paid our debt, we ourselves have paid our debt, for we are one with Christ. We have died with Christ, and have risen with Christ; Christ's death is our death; Christ burial is our burial; Christ's resurrection is our resurrection; Christ's sitting in heavenly places is our sitting in heavenly places."—*Alex Carson*. Baptism is not, as virtually represented by the prevailing Catholic and Protestant theories, a magical, material, mechanical, chemical or electrical means and instrument of grace and salvation; but it is simply and beautifully the divinely-ordained outward symbol or emblem of the inward spiritual cleansing of our guilty souls by the saving application which The Holy Spirit makes to us of the atoning blood of The Lord Jesus Christ. No ordinance of Christ must be put idolatrously in the place of Christ. The statements in the new testament about our being "sprinkled" and "washed with the blood of Christ" are allusions to the sprinklings and washings under the law; *they are no where called baptisms*. In the phrase "born of water," water is figuratively represented as the womb from which we come. Christ, after having been baptized "came up straightway out of the

water" (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10). So the eunuch, who had "gone down into the water, came up out of the water" (Acts 8:38-39). Along each one of the three roads from Jerusalem to Gaza, modern travelers tell us that there are occasionally streams, or pools, or fountains, or wadies, containing amply enough water for immersion. As for a sufficiency of water in Jerusalem to immerse the 3,000 on the day of Pentecost, the city contained, besides a countless number of large and deep and private cisterns, six immense public pools, with shelving, descending sides, affording the most extensive bathing or swimming accommodations—the Mosaic law and the traditions of the Elders requiring a vast quantity of water for ceremonial ablutions. During none of its numerous sieges did the city suffer from the lack of water. It is not stated that the 3,000 were all actually baptized on the same day; but it could have been easily in a few hours by either the twelve Apostles or by the seventy disciples helping them. Immersion takes very little longer than sprinkling or pouring if the baptismal formula is repeated with each, as is always done. Allowing one minute for each immersion, which is sufficient, twelve could have immersed 3,000 in two hundred and fifty minutes, or four hours and ten minutes; Eighty-two persons could have immersed 3,000 in thirty seven minutes. As Peter began preaching about the third hour of the day (Acts 2:15) or nine o'clock in the forenoon, and it is not probable that he spoke more than two or three hours, but apparently much less time than this, there was abundance of time left for the baptism of 3,000 persons by twelve or eighty two administrators on the same day. The Philippian jailer (Acts 21:33) was immersed as the ablest commentators think, in a tank or pool or cistern in the court of the prison—such a reservoir as ancient houses usually had for the receiving the rain from the slightly inclined roof; or the immersion may have taken place in the neighboring river, Gangas, beside which, "prayer was wont to be made" (Acts 16:13) In Acts 9:18 it is not said that Paul was baptized in the house of Judas, but he may have been, as "Damascus now abounds in water, and all the better houses either have a reservoir in their court, or stand beside a natural or artificial stream." Paul's remark in 1 Corinthians 10:1-2 "that our fathers were under the cloud, and passed through the sea, and were baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea," shows that the Apostle Paul had in view, as an image of baptism, not a mere sprinkling or pouring, but a complete immersion or investment.

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

was to be plunged, covered and overwhelmed (see Ps. 69:1-2; Isa. 43:2). — “The baptism in the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5-Greek), which Jesus promised his disciples, was fitly represented on the day of Pentecost by a complete immersion in the wind and fire, the emblem of The Spirit (Acts 2:2-4); the sound as of a rushing mighty wind filled all the house where they were sitting, and tongues as of fire sat upon each of them. They were thus surrounded by the wind and covered by the fire. The Spirit is not material, but spiritual; and we cannot understand the methods of His operation upon the soul in the new creation, any more than we can understand the methods in which God created the material universe out of nothing. The descriptive terms used in connection with the emblems of The Spirit are special accommodations to the particular emblem employed, and do not denote the mysterious manner of the communication of The Spirit. Natural things cannot explain the method in which The Spirit acts. The Spirit is not like water; but the effects of the two are similar. He is said to be poured, because He is supposed to dwell above, and His influences are like those of water; on the same principle on which God is said to have come down from Heaven, or to look down from Heaven, in accommodation to our ways of thinking and speaking. The ordinance of baptism was not intended to represent the mode of The Spirit’s communication. If baptism can be represented by pouring water out of a cup, it can just as scripturally be represented by the falling of water in rain, its springing out of the earth, its running in a stream, its distilling in dew, or by the drinking of water, or the anointing with oil, or the blowing of the wind, or the blazing of fire, or the flying of a dove, or the exhalation of breath. These various terms are adapted to each special emblem, and do not explain The Spirit’s mode of operation. Baptism, then, can not be either pouring or dipping for the sake of representing the manner of the conveyance of The Holy Spirit; for there is no such likeness. Pouring of The Spirit is a phrase, which is itself a figure, not to be represented by another figure. Baptism is a figure, not of the mode of The Spirit’s operation, to which there can be no likeness, but of the burial and resurrection of Christ, which may be represented by natural things, because it respects the objects of sense. Baptism or immersion in the Spirit does not represent the mode of The Spirit’s conveyance, but such complete subjection to The Spirit’s influence as an object immersed in a fluid experiences from the fluid.” —*Alex Carson*. —Not water-baptism, but the Holy

Spirit, is the seal of the new covenant (2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30). The salvation of the dying thief was no doubt meant to be one strong proof that water baptism is not a saving ordinance. —The erection of numerous large baptisteries, or great circular or octagonal buildings with immense cisterns in them for baptism, in Greek and Latin Christendom, from the fourth to the ninth centuries, proves the practice of immersion during that period. As for some of the cisterns being only about three feet deep, it was common at that time for the candidate alone to enter the water and kneel down, and for the minister, who stood outside, to bend the head of the candidate forward into the water; besides infant baptism had then become common, and for the immersion of infants but little depth of water was required. Certainly these large cisterns were never intended for mere sprinkling or pouring. As for baptism being represented sometimes by pouring, in some old mosaics and frescoes and in the Roman catacombs, pouring was sometimes used by the Catholics in connection with immersion; the dates of the representations are quite uncertain; and it is known that additions have been made by modern hands. A deep and lasting impression was made some years ago upon my mind by the solemnity and emotion of a remark addressed to me by a humble, lovely and exemplary gentleman, now deceased, who had been a Presbyterian, but was then a Baptist minister, Mr. Thomas R. Owen, of Tarboro, N.C., well known to hundreds of the readers of these pages. He had visited my native town of Williamston, N.C., some years before the war, while a Presbyterian, and had preached; and now, being a Baptist, he had come again and preached. I heard him both times; and, after the last sermon I approached him, and alluded to his former visit. *"Ah! Then,"* said he, with deep earnestness and feeling—*"Ah! Then I was in darkness on the subject of baptism."* More than three fourths of the professedly Christian worlds are still in darkness on that important subject. More than three hundred out of four hundred millions have abandoned the original and Divine ordinance of immersion, as instituted by The Lord Jesus Christ, and as practiced by the apostolic church, and have adopted in its stead a feeble human counterfeit. "There can be no question," says Mr. A. P. Stanley, late "Dean of Westminster Abbey," that the original form of baptism, the very meaning of the word, was complete immersion in the deep baptismal waters, and that for at least four centuries any other form was either unknown or unregarded, unless in the case of dangerous illness, as an exceptional,

almost a monstrous case." In the early centuries baptism was an entire submersion in the deep water, a leap as into a rolling sea or the rushing river, where for the moment the waves close over the bather's head, and he emerges again as from a momentary grave. This was the part of the ceremony on which the Apostles laid so much stress. It seemed to them like a burial of the old former self and the rising up again of the new man. So St. Paul compared it to the Israelites passing through the roaring waves of the Red Sea, and St. Peter to the passing through the deep waters of the flood. Immersion followed, no doubt, the examples of the Apostles and of their Master. It has the sanction of the venerable churches of the early ages, and of the sacred countries of the East. Baptism by sprinkling was rejected by the whole ancient church (except in the rare case of death-beds or extreme necessity) as no baptism at all. The change from immersion to sprinkling has set aside the most apostolic expressions regarding baptism, and has altered the very meaning of the word." No wonder that, on this and many other accounts, Chevalier Bunsen should declare that Protestantism, as well as Catholicism, needs, in order to restore to primitive Christianity, a "*Second Grand Reconstructive Reformation.*"

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

3. The third mark of the apostolic church was that the members, being baptized believers, came frequently around The Table of The Lord, and commemorated the suffering and death of their precious Redeemer, by partaking of common bread to represent His body broken, and common wine to represent His blood shed for them. The two practices of Baptism and The Lords Supper, or Communion, were called ordinances of the church, and were strictly observed. Baptism represented the initiation into the Divine life by an identification with Christ in His death and burial and resurrection, and by the regenerating and cleansing efficacy of The Holy Spirit; while communion represented the continued support of the new internal heavenly life by spiritual food, even the body and blood of The Son of God, thus assimilating the children of God more and more to the perfect image of Christ. Life must not only be *begun*, but it must be *supported with proper food*; and the Christian life is *both spiritual in its origin and spiritual in its continuance*, and *all is of God*. Only those persons who made a credible profession of faith in Christ were baptized (that is, immersed in water in the name of The Father, The Son and The Holy Ghost by the apostles; and only those persons thus believing and thus baptized were admitted by the apostles to the ordinance of The Lord's Supper. Life cannot be supported before it is begun. The apostles, to whom Christ first gave the symbols of His broken body and shed blood, were themselves baptized believers, several of them having been previously disciples of John the Baptist. Christ's commission to the apostles authorized them first to preach or teach or disciple, then to baptize, then to teach to observe all his commandments, one of these commandments being the ordinance of His Supper. On the day of Pentecost, accordingly, after Peter had preached the gospel, those "gladly receiving" it, were baptized; and "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and in fellowship, and in *breaking of bread*, and in prayers" (Acts 2:41-42). At Troas only the "disciples" came together to break bread (Acts 20:7). It was not upon the unbaptized or unbelievers, but upon "the church of God" (1 Cor. 1:2), that Paul enjoined the observance of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-34); and he praised the brethren for keeping the ordinances as he had delivered them to them (1 Cor. 11:2). If "brethren" walked "disorderly," the apostle commanded the church to "*withdraw*" from such (2 Thess. 3:6) and "not to eat or commune with a man called a brother, but really a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or

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

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

Unfermented juice of the grape is but a mass of leaven—it is *must*, and not wine; fermentation is the natural clarification of the juice. Paul exhorts the Corinthian church to “keep the feast”, not with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Cor. 5:8). Paul’s expression is figurative; and Christ seems to have used unleavened bread because it was on hand during the Passover. It is probable that the disciples in Acts 2:46 and 20:7 used common, that is leavened bread; this, however is not certain. The Greek Catholics used leavened, and the Roman Catholic unleavened bread, the latter being in the form of small, thin, round wafers, introduced in the eleventh century, and bearing upon them either the initials of Christ or the initials I.H.S. (IESUS HOMINUM SALVATOR, Jesus the savior of men); the Greek loaf is stamped with the characters I C X C N I K A (*Iesous Christos Nika*, Jesus Christ Conquers). These are human devices of an idolatrous character, utterly unknown to the apostolic church. The Greek “Church” gives in a spoon the eucharistic bread and wine sopped together; beginning in the twelfth, and fully establishing the innovation in the thirteenth century, the Latin “Church” gives the wine to the priest only, on the pleas that the body (represented by the bread) contains the blood, and that there is danger of spilling the blood if passed from one communicant to another, and that the “church” only sanctioned that which had become a custom, and that the priest being, as they pretend, successors to the apostles, should drink the wine. But the Apostles, at the Last Supper, represented the whole church; and Christ, speaking of the wine, says, “Drink ye *all* of it” (Matthew 26:27); and Mark says “They all drank of it” (14:23); and, instead of the body containing the blood, the very *separation* of the two elements, the bread from the wine, the body from the blood, indicates the *death* of Christ. This withholding of the wine or cup from the “laity” or private members caused the Hussite War in Germany (A.D.1420-1433). Men thus make the commandments of God void by their traditions. —As infant baptism was introduced in the third century, so was infant communion; and the latter continued in the Latin “Church”; the Pedobaptist Protestant “Churches,” through professedly baptizing (but really rhantizing or sprinkling) infants, inconsistently withhold communion from infants—every argument for or against the one practice is equally valid for or against the other; there is no reason or scripture for either. Through the fascinating eloquence of Robert Hall (1764-1831), an Arminian “Baptist”

preacher of England, the most of the English churches called Baptist practice open or general communion; but the "Strict Baptist" in England practice close communion. In America the Baptist who first settled here suffered so much from the persecutions inflicted upon them by other denominations that they were at first compelled to observe close communion; and those adhering to the scriptures and the apostolic precepts still practice, not a general or open, but a strict close communion.

4. The fourth mark of the apostolic church was the maintenance of strict discipline. Christ was the only perfect being that ever lived on the earth in human form. Neither the apostles or the apostolic churches attained perfection in the flesh (Phil. 3:12-14; 1 John 1:8), but all intelligent students of the bible and church history admit that the strict precepts of the Apostles were more faithfully observed by the apostolic than they have been by any succeeding churches. The church in the apostolic age, especially feeling herself to be the bride of Christ, the temple of The Holy Ghost, earnestly sought to show her love for her Lord by keeping His holy commandments. In that glorious springtime of love, but little comparatively of the dust of the earth seemed to soil her shining garments; and but few cases of rigid discipline occurred or were recorded. The infidel historian Gibbon considers "the pure and austere morals of the early Christians" as among the causes of the rapid spread of their religion. To show the great importance of prompt and strict discipline, God Himself directly interposed in the case of the first offense in the apostolic church, and struck both the joint offenders, Ananias and Sapphira, with instant death (Acts 5:1-11). The offense was falsehood, hypocrisy, covetousness—an outward semblance of devoting all to God, and yet a real heart worship of mammon. Men "cannot serve both God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24). "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15). This prompt and rigid act of Divine church discipline caused "great fear to come upon all the church and upon as many as heard these things" (Acts 5:11); and "of the rest durst no man join himself to them" (Verse 13). There can be no doubt that, after this, hypocrites were kept out of the church at Jerusalem for a considerable time. The second example of church discipline is mentioned as having occurred at Corinth (1 Cor. 5). A member of that church was guilty of incest, Corinth, being at that time the most licentious city in the world. But the general

prevalence of this or any other vice is no sort of justification for it being tolerated and retained in the church; a little of the leaven of wickedness soon leavens the whole lump. When Paul, at Ephesus, heard with deep grief of this scandal, he wrote the Corinthian church, and as united in spirit with the church, though bodily absent, he, in the name of Jesus Christ, judged that such an offender should be "delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" —that is, excluded from the church, given over to Satan, the god of this world, for the infliction of bodily affliction, and more the mortification of the sinner's carnal nature, and for the ultimate repentance and restoration of the offender (1 Cor. 5:13; 2 Cor. 4:4; Job 2:4-7; Luke 13:16 & 22:31; 2 Cor. 12:7; 1 Peter 5:8; Matthew 5:29-30; 1 Cor. 11:30-32; Rom.8:13; 1 Peter 4:1-2). The church at Corinth, according to the Apostles solemn admonition, when they were met together, excluded the offender, and we learn that he afterwards repented and was restored to their fellowship (2 Cor. 2:1-10 & 7:8-12). Even the inspired Apostle did not exclude, but he simply called upon the church, which alone had the authority, to exclude or put away that wicked person from among them (1 Cor. 5:13). It is the church not merely the pastor or Deacons or any other body, to which Christ directs that a trespass shall be finally told (Matthew 18:15-20). Christ alone has the key of the house of David—He alone can open and shut (Isa. 22:22; Rev. 1:18 & 3:7). When the church acts by His Spirit, its course will be ratified in Heaven. The keys given to His Apostles relate, not to church discipline, the admission and exclusion of members, but to gospel doctrine—not whomsoever, but "whatsoever ye bind," etc. (Matthew 16:19 & 18:18); the doctrine of the Apostles, and not church discipline, is alluded to in John 20:23 (compare Mark 16:16), for none but God can forgive sins (Ex. 34:7; Isa. 43:25). In the conference at Jerusalem, the brethren took part with the Apostles and Elders in the deliberation and decision (Acts 15:23). The third recorded case of discipline in the apostolic church is that of Hymeneus and Philetus, doctrinal errorists, who withstood Paul's words and denied the resurrection of the body (2 Tim. 2:17-18), and who were "delivered unto Satan that they might learn [be disciplined by chastisement and suffering] not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1:20). A pervading spirit of genuine brotherly love, springing from genuine love and loyalty to Christ, is the best preventive of offenses in the church. Cherishing this spirit, the members should tenderly watch over one

another, and, by mutual Christian encouragement, counsel, admonition, and reproof, provoke one another, not to wrath and evil, but to love and good works (Eph. 6:13; Heb. 10:24; Ps. 141:5; Gal. 6:1; Col. 3:12-14). The affectionate subjection of one to another was a marked feature of the simple, unworldly apostolic church. This mutual loving watch-care should be active; it was while the men or servants slept that the enemy sowed tares (Matthew 13:25). —Private or personal offenses are to be adjusted in strict accordance with Christ's directions in Matthew 18:15-17. Christ lays down four distinct steps, which are always to be taken in the order given by Him, and not in a reversed order. First: the aggrieved party, if the other does not, is to take the initiative in seeking a private interview with the supposed offender; if he fails to do so, he himself becomes an offender, as he has violated the law of Christ. The privacy of the interview is highly important; the object is, not altercation, but to gain an offending brother. Perhaps the offending brother is laboring under a mistake; the other brother may not have intended to offend him, and may not be conscience of having done so, or he may not have had an opportunity of explaining his conduct. A private interview conducted in a calm brotherly spirit may and should give full mutual satisfaction. If in such an interview the offense is denied, and there are no witnesses of the offense, the next step cannot be taken; for then the complaining party would become an offender, having published a charge which can not be proved. Absence of proof will leave him no recourse but in private admonition and the patient committal of the matter to Providence. Second: If the first step fails, and the offense can be proved, then one or two other disinterested and judicious members are to be chosen as witnesses and mediators, and the whole case is to be considered before them. They may be able to discover what is right between the members at variance, and the latter may be willing to yield to their decision. If the "one or two more" consider the offense as not real or as satisfactorily removed, the aggrieved party, though unsatisfied, can not take the third step; for the offender has "heard them," and the accuser ought to be satisfied with the judgment of the brethren selected by himself. Third: if the second step fails, the case, after due notification of the parties, is to be laid before the church, the proof adduced, and the opportunity given for defense. Here the united wisdom and influence of the whole church is brought to bear to reconcile the difference and judge between parties. Fourth: If the party judged by the

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

are not enough to be required of this class of offenders. They should, for the honor of Christ, be at once cut off; and, if they afterwards, by a godly conduct and conversation, bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and prove genuineness of their sorrow and reformation, then they may be restored (2 Cor. 7:8-12; Matthew 3:8; Acts 26:20). The rule in Luke 17:3-4, plainly applies only to personal or private offenses, which do not bring scandal upon the church—not to public or moral offenses which seriously reproach the cause of Christ. The latter are offenses which the church can not forgive; but, when assured that God has forgiven the offender, she may then receive him back into membership. —In the apostolic church the Elders or presbyters are sometimes called Bishops or overseers or rulers of the flock, and therefore had the special responsibility of maintaining the discipline of the church (Acts 20:17 & 28; 1 Tim. 3:4-5 & 5:17; Heb. 13:7, 17, & 24). Against an Elder an accusation was not to be received but before two or three witnesses (1 Tim. 5:19), because his office is a very presumption in his favor, and because, as a minister, he is peculiarly exposed to malice. An Elder, to be efficient, must be “blameless” (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6-7). A tender, faithful, scriptural discipline, like that observed by the people of God in the apostolic age, is of the highest and most vital importance for the welfare of the church; the neglect of such discipline is the most potent cause of evil in the church. “The object of faithful church discipline is threefold. First: The glory of God, whose great and holy name is dishonored by the evil principles or evil practices of church members, and whose honor is vindicated by their prompt and proper correction. Second: The preservation of the church from corruption and destruction; the old leaven of wickedness must be purged out, to preserve the whole body from infection; evil communications corrupt good manners; lepers were to be put out of the camp, so as not to infect others, and so erroneous persons, whose words eat as a canker (2 Tim. 2:17), must be removed from the communion of gospel churches; a church of Christ is like a garden or vineyard, which if not cared for, will be overrun with thorns and nettles and weeds, but, by a proper and timely discipline, the weeds eradicated, and the withered branches are gathered and cast out. Third: The good of the offending parties, who, if real children of God, are, by proper discipline brought to shame and repentance for their sins, and an acknowledgment of them, when they are to be

received again with all love and tenderness, and to be comforted, that they might not be swallowed up with over-much sorrow."

5. The fifth Mark of the Apostolic Church was the independent or congregational polity or government of each local church, subject only to the Headship of Christ; all the local apostolic churches being united, by no outward bond of force, but by an inward bond of love. The Greek word rendered "church" in the New Testament is "*ekklesia*," which is derived from the verb *ek-kaleo*, to call out, and denotes an assembly called out, a select body separated from the mass of the people. In ancient Greece the *ekklesia* in each State was the assembly of the free born, native, self-governing citizens, the highest legal body in the land, from which there was no appeal; slaves and foreigners were excluded from the *ekklesia*. In the Septuagint *ekklesia* is the usual rendering of the Hebrew word *kahal*, "the congregation" of Israel or of The Lord, from which were excluded the uncircumcised, the unclean and the "mixed multitude." *Ekklesia* occurs in the New Testament 115 times; twice referring to the Hebrew "congregation of The Lord," three times referring to the Greek assembly, and 110 times referring to the Christian church. In 92 of these last cases the reference is to a special, local, visible society of Christians; in the remaining 18 cases the reference is to the entire body of the elect in Heaven and on earth, or what is sometimes called the invisible church (as in Eph. 5:25,29; Col. 1:18, 24; Heb. 13:23). The word is never used in the New Testament to designate a universal (or catholic) visible church, a national church (as the church of Judea or England), or a denominational church (as the church was not divided into different denominations in the Apostolic Age, and there was not then any great organization, like the Presbyterian Church, or the Methodist Church, including in it self a large number of local congregations). A visible church is always in scripture a local body; and every local church, acting by a majority of it's members (in 2 Cor. 2:6 "*ton pleionon*" is literally, not "many," but "*the more,*" *the majority*), *is invested by Christ with the exclusive and final power of receiving, disciplining, excluding and restoring it's members, electing it's officers, and transacting all other necessary business* (Rom. 14:1; Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:4-7 & 11-13; Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:16; Acts 1:15-26; 6:1-6; 1 Cor. 16:3; & 14:23). In this last passage the Greek verb "*cheirotoneo*" rendered "*ordained,*" means, according to Liddell and Scott, to

stretch out the hand for the purpose of giving one's vote in the Athenian ekklesia, to appoint an office in the church; the same word used in 2 Cor. 8:19; and, in accordance with the analogy of Acts 6:2-6, the word *cheirotoneo* in Acts 14:23 is explained by the latest and ablest German scholars to *denote the election of Elders in each church under the supervision of Paul and Barnabas*. Especially does the language of Christ in Matthew 18:15-18 demonstrate that *the church is the highest and last ecclesiastical authority on earth*; that there can be no appeal, under the law of Christ, from the decision of the church to a presbytery, or synod, or general assembly, or conference, or convention, or priesthood, or prelacy, or papacy, or Association, or any other earthly authority. After a church has excluded one of its members, and classed him with the heathens and publicans, it is not only thoroughly unscriptural, but also thoroughly absurd, to suppose that any man or set of men can, by any exercise of authority, put back such an offender in the fellowship of that church. With true repentance, confession and reformation the fellowship will be restored; but without these exercises gospel fellowship can never be restored. Each gospel church is a separate and independent republic, having Christ as its only Head and Lawgiver, and not subject, in any ecclesiastical matters, to any outside jurisdiction; such, according to the ablest scholars and historians, was not only every apostolic church in the first century, but also of the second century (see works of Gibbon, Mosheim, Neander, Coleman, Whately, Burton, Barrow, Schaff, etc.). The church is repeatedly declared in the New Testament to be the body of Christ (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 6:15; 10:17; 12:27; Eph. 1:23; 4:12; 5:23,30; Col. 1:18,24; 2:17); the only Head therefore, of this body, is Christ, who guides and controls and preserves the church as His body. Hierarchies and synods are unscriptural, tyrannous usurpations, which have, through the ages, inflicted grievous wrongs upon the people. It is openly and proudly claimed by the advocates of these ecclesiastical monarchies and oligarchies that these systems are *the fruit and product of the greatest worldly experience and wisdom*; very few scholars, among these advocates, even pretend now to base these systems upon the New Testament. The apostolic church, or church of the first century, they say, was "a strictly supernatural organization, a stranger in this world, standing with one foot in eternity, and longing for the second coming of her heavenly bridegroom; but afterwards, finding that Christ did not come, she, in her

new constitution, planted foot firmly upon earth, yet thus became secularized and finally Romanized, and this necessitated a reformation on the basis of apostolic Christianity." Bible Baptists believe that, not only in the first, but also in every succeeding century, God has had on earth faithful, spiritual, unworldly, un-Romanized apostolic churches, each one of which, in its divinely established individuality and independence, has presented an insurmountable and indestructible breakwater against the countless tides of error, strife, and corruption setting in from every quarter; and all of which have been united by no mechanical, outward, worldly, usurping and oppressive bond of force, but by an inward, heavenly, spiritual, emancipating, purifying and elevating bond of Divine love and peace and fellowship, such as The Lord Jesus Christ, their Ever-Living, Unchangeable and Omnipotent Head, in the last solemn moments of His suffering earthly ministry, tenderly enjoined upon them and earnestly besought His Father to grant them (John 13:34-35; 15:12-13; 17:20-23). Born and taught by God, being one body, and having one Spirit, even as they are called in one hope of their calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all, they, not in word only, but in deed and in truth, love one another, and endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (John 1:13; 6:45; Eph. 4:1-6; 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 John 2:27; 3:14-18; 4:7-21). They have always corresponded with each other by brotherly letters and messages, and have from time to time met in a general or associational way, not to lord it over God's heritage, but to worship God, and to edify, exhort and confirm one another in the most holy faith once delivered to the saints (Acts chap. 13-15; Phil. 2:25; Heb. 10:23-25; 12:22-29; 1 Peter 5:3-5; Jude 3:20). Scriptural Associations are only general meetings of churches, or brethren from different churches, for the purpose of Divine worship and mutual edification; and, while no church should, either in a private or general way, maintain fellowship with a church which persists in heresy or disorder, yet there is not a particle of New Testament or apostolic authority for any such general meeting assuming the functions of an individual church, such as admitting, disciplining, or excluding members of a church, or electing or disciplining church officers. It cannot be repeated too often that each gospel church is, according to Christ and His Apostles, the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth. While all gospel churches should always so live as to maintain peace and fellowship

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

people are made by Him, kings and priest unto God (Rev. 1:5-6; 1 Peter 2:5,9); Christ alone is the High Priest of our profession (Heb. 3:1; 5:5-6)—He alone is the King of kings and Lord of lords. It would be disloyalty to Christ for any church to alienate from itself and delegate to any other persons or set of persons the rights and functions which Christ has committed to her; a gospel church can not have delegates, but may have messengers. But the sisterhood relationship of churches involve sisterhood obligations. They are all members of the same mystical body of Christ, permeated by the same Divine Spirit, and should be sweetly constrained by the same heavenly love to maintain the strict faith and order of the gospel, to have tender regards for one another's feelings, and to keep the unity of The Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:1-6). In temporal things each church is subject, and should be quietly submissive, to worldly powers (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-25); but in spiritual things each church is subject only to Christ (Matthew 23:8-12; 17:5; John 13:13-14).

6. The Sixth Mark of the Apostolic Church was religious liberty, soul-freedom, a complete separation of church and state, the entire independence of each church from all state control so far as regarded the membership, ministry, organization, faith, worship and discipline of the church. Jesus declared to Pilate "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom was of this world, this would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews" (John 18:36). Peter and John answered the Jewish rulers: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, Judge ye" (Acts 4:19). Those made free by the Son of God are free indeed (John 8:36), and are to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free (Gal. 5:1). Those experiencing the glorious and righteous ministration of the Spirit of God have a Divine liberty from the unscriptural traditions and commandments of men (2 Cor. 3:5-11, 17, 18; Jer. 1:25; Matthew 15:3-9). The church is in *ekklesai*, an assembly of God's people called out from the world. The Jewish theocracy was unique—it was specially instituted and prophetically directed by God for a preliminary, typical and preparatory purpose; and, when that purpose was accomplished more than eighteen centuries ago, the Jewish church—state, in accordance with the original design and by the providence of God, passed forever away, and was perpetually superseded by a superior, personal, internal, spiritual

dispensation (Jer. 31:31-34; John 3:1-8; 4:21-24; 16:7-14; Acts 2&7; 2 Cor. 3; Gal., Eph. and Heb). Like the ancient heathen, the modern governments exercise both political and religious powers; and the corrupt and ferocious natures of these governments are fitly indicated by the term "Beasts," applied to them in the apocalyptic language of scripture (Dan 7:3-27; 8:3-25; Rev. chap. 13&17). In the same manner the alliance of church and state in professedly Christian countries has always been productive of corruption and persecution. Worldly-minded religionists have thus sought to increase their influence, number, wealth, power and patronage. Ever since Constantine, the Roman Emperor, in A.D. 313, established "Christianity" by law, national establishments of religion have existed and still exist in Europe, and such an establishment is "A discrimination among religious beliefs, and assumption of infallibility, and a denial of religious liberty." The Roman Catholic "Church," ever since Pope Theodore I., in A.D. 648, assumed the title of "Sovereign pontiff," has denounced as a blasphemous heresy the doctrine that the conscience is free, not to be forced by human legislation; and it is estimated that, in order to enforce conformity to her religious creed and ceremonial, she has murdered fifty million human beings, with every imaginable device of diabolical cruelty - thus shedding enough martyr blood to fill a stream ten feet wide, ten feet deep and twenty-five miles long. The Papal Syllabus of Errors, issued by Pope Pius IX. December 8, 1864, in article 24, still affirms the right of the Romish "Church" to avail herself of force or temporal power, and there can be no earthly doubt that she will use force and repeat the horrors of the Dark Ages when ever she regains the power to do so. In article 55 of the same syllabus she declares that the church and the state ought not to be separated. It is "One of the anomalies of history that Protestants, coming out of the Roman Catholic church and protesting against her tyrannies, should so readily copied and emulated her repressive measures. All the reformers adopted the theory and brought it into universal and oppressive practice that the state ought to legislate for the church. The Greek, the Lutheran the Reformed, the Presbyterian, the Congregational, the Episcopalian, and every other church, except the Baptist, organized previous to the eighteenth century, were organized and governed with this as a recognized and enforce principle, that state governments ought to support and regulate the church, and enact and exact penalties against all who disbelieved the state creed or neglected the state

ritual. This was the universal teaching of statesmen and clergy; and is to this day, though with somewhat modified phases, in every country on the globe except the United States of America." Doves and lambs and sheep are proverbially inoffensive, and do not make war upon other animal tribes; and so the people of God, who are in Scripture represented by these innocent creatures, do not persecute and destroy other people, but have always, since the ascension of Christ, been zealous advocates of religious of religious liberty. This fact is plainly seen in the history, especially of the Donatists, the Waldenses, and the Baptist. "The first published confession of faith asserting the right of all men to religious liberty was published by English Baptist in A.D. 1611; and in all Baptist documents since there has been no contradictory utterance." Baptists have always advocated, not simply religious toleration, but religious freedom, and that too, not simply for themselves, but for all men. This is one of their fundamental and unchangeable principles, and has begun to be more or less recognized everywhere during the last hundred years, although previously denounced by statesmen as rebellion, and by theologians as abominable heresy. Bancroft, the historian of the United States, declares that the first instance, in the history of the world, of the establishment of a civil government whose cornerstone was absolute soul-liberty was the little Baptist colony of Rhode Island founded in A.D. 1636 by the Welsh Baptist, Roger Williams, who, flying from religious persecution in Massachusetts, bade adieu to wife and loved ones at home, and, in the middle of January, the coldest month of a New England winter, betook himself to the wilderness, inhabited by wild beasts and savages, and was for fourteen weeks, he says, "sorely tossed, not knowing what bread or bed did mean." The Baptist had opportunity to secure state patronage for themselves in Rhode Island in 1636, in Holland in 1819, and in Virginia and Georgia in 1785; but they emphatically refused to do so because they believed and maintained the great Apostolic principle that Christ's kingdom is a spiritual and not a worldly one, and that the alliance of church and state is destructive to religious purity and liberty. By the influence of the Baptists, the first Amendment to the Constitution of the United States was adopted in 1789, forbidding Congress to make any law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. Even the very idea of the local independence of the state governments is believed to have been derived by Thomas Jefferson from a

small Baptist church whose monthly meetings he attended for several months in succession about ten years before the American Revolution; Mr. Jefferson declared that their form of church government was the only form of true democracy then existing in the world. The Roman Catholic nobleman, Lord Baltimore, under whom Maryland was settled in 1633, was obliged, in consequence of the Protestant form of the English government, to tolerate Protestants in his colony; but the toleration was partial and poor—anti-Trinitarians, including Jews, Arians and Unitarians, were condemned to death, and respect for the Virgin Mary was encouraged by fines and whippings, confiscation and exile. The Episcopalian state glebe lands of Virginia were not ordered to be sold until 1802; and offensive religious discriminations were not removed from the laws of the Congregational State of Massachusetts until 1834; the Baptists and Quakers suffered dreadful persecutions from the established “churches” of these two states in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. President Washington declared that “the Baptists had been, throughout America, uniformly the firm friends to civil liberty;” just as Mr. Locke had said that “the Baptists were from the first the friends of just and true, equal and impartial liberty;” and as Sir Isaac Newton had said that “the Baptists were the only denomination of Christians that never symbolized (held the same faith with) Roman Catholics.” “In the code of laws established by the Baptists in Rhode Island,” says Judge Story, “we read for the first time since Christianity ascended the throne of the Caesars, the declaration that conscience should be free, and that men should not be punished for worshiping God in the way they were persuaded He requires.” In all the States and Territories of the United States there is now an entire separation of church and state, accompanied by universal liberty of conscience. This is a peculiar and inestimable boon, which we at present enjoy, and for which we should be devoutly thankful to the merciful providence of God. The time will come, no doubt, when the blessed privilege will be denied even to the people of this now free country (Dan. 7:25; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; Rev. 11:7-13; 13:11-18). The apostolic churches did not persecute human beings on any account, much less for their religion; and the true successors of those churches have never engaged in persecution.

7. The seventh mark of the apostolic church was that, although there were a few exceptions, the members were generally poor, obscure,

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

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

membership in their churches-thus insisting upon a spiritual or regenerated church membership, the First and most important mark of the apostolic church. The "wilderness" (*eremos*, desolate, lonely, solitary region) into which the people of God have often fled has been found in the wild forests and mountains of Asia, Europe, and America, especially the mountainous districts of the Alps, the Pyrenees and Wales. Like Lazarus, in the parable of Christ, they had evil things in this world, but comfort in the eternal world (Luke 16:25). As the poet has truly said;

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

again:

**Trials make the promise sweet
Trials give new life to prayer
Trials bring us to Christ feet
Lay us low, and keep us there.**

8. The eighth mark of the apostolic church was the fraternal equality, the essential priesthood, of all the members, in accordance with which fact they chose to office among them those of their number whom they perceived to be already qualified thereunto by the Spirit of God-there being but two classes of officers, Bishops, or Elders, or Pastors, and Deacons; the fraternal equality of all the members involving the fraternal equality of the ministry. All the members were received upon credible profession of their being children of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, born of the same divine Spirit, branches of the same heavenly vine, members of the same mystical body, made by Christ kings and priest unto God, a royal priesthood, a chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar nation, living stones built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ. Their right to choose their own officers has been shown under the fifth mark. The only classes of distinct and permanent officers in the church were Bishops and Deacons (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-3). The apostles were extraordinary foundation officers (Matthew 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:10-11; Eph. 2:20; Rev. 21:14), princes sitting upon twelve thrones,

judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Isa. 32:1; Matthew 19:28). The qualifications of an apostle were a special commission from Christ in person (Matthew 10:5; Gal. 1:1) an actual sight of Him in the body after the resurrection (Acts 1:22-23; 1 Cor. 9:1); the power to work miracles, and confer the ability upon others to work miracles (Matthew 10:8; Acts 8:14-17; 19:6); and the authority to teach with inspired infallibility (Matthew 16:19; 19:28; John 16:13; 20:23). In their carefully preserved writings they are their own successors; and both scripture and reason inform us that others, "who say they are apostles, are liars" (Rev. 2:2). Modern scholarship has thoroughly demonstrated to every candid mind the utter baselessness of all claims, whether papal or episcopal, scriptural or historical, to authoritative succession from the apostles. These claims are founded upon deplorable perversions of scripture and forgeries of history. Every spiritual, nay, every intelligent and unprejudiced mind, will be entirely convinced of the unscripturalness of such claims by a simple reference to the scriptures adduced to sustain them (Matthew 16:18-19; Luke 22:32; John 21:15-17; 20:21; Matthew 28:18-20; Rom. 10:15; 2 Cor. 5:20; 2 Tim 1:13-14; 2:2; Titus 1:5; 2 John 9-10; Jude 3; Rev. 1:20), especially after learning that nothing in this world is more certain, as admitted by all scholars of today, that the terms "Bishop" and "Presbyter" or "Elder" and "Pastor" are in the new testament perfectly interchangeable or synonymous, designating but one class of church officers, the ministry of the word, without the slightest difference of order or rank; and that even the apostles called themselves "Elders" (Acts 20:17,28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim.3:1-13; 5:17-19; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3; 2 John 1; 3 John 1; 2 Tim 1:6 compared with 1 Tim.4:14). Liddell and Scott, in the seventh edition of their Greek English Lexicon, the very latest and the very highest, define "*presbuteros*, an Elder of the Jewish council, an Elder of the church, presbyter;" and they add, "Even the apostles call themselves by this name." They define "*episcopos*" (of which the English word "Bishop" is a corruption), "one who watches over, an overseer, guardian, an ecclesiastical superintendent, in the apostolic age equal to *presbuteros*, but from Ignatius downward. a Bishop." This absolutely settles the question in the mind of every scholar, no matter how much ignorance and bigotry and arrogance may rave; there is not a particle of apostolic authority for distinguishing the Bishop from the Elder, much less for elevating the Bishop over the Elder, and still less for elevating one Bishop,

as the Bishop of Rome or Constantinople, over all other Bishops to the blasphemous position, distinctly predicted and denounced by Paul, of the sole and supreme and infallible vicegerency of God on earth (2 Thess. 2:3-4). The history of the ecclesiastical hierarchy has well been called "the history of triple abdication: first the community of believers committed their powers to the presbyters; then the corps of presbyters abdicated to the Bishop, and last, the Bishop to the pope (in the Vatican Council. A.D. 1870)." —Renan, as quoted approvingly by P. Schaff in the latter's "History of The Apostolic Christianity." "This subject," adds Mr. Schaff, "may be regarded as finally settled among scholars." "The episcopate," says "Bishop" Lightfoot, one of the ripest Episcopalian scholars in England, "was formed, not out of the apostolic order by localization, but out of the presbyteral by elevation; and the title "Bishop", which was originally common to all, came at length to be appropriated to the chief among them." Clemens Romanus, or Clement of Rome, supposed to be referred to in Philippians 4:3, and to have lived from A.D. 30 to 100, and claimed by the Roman Catholics as one of their popes, is the only uninspired Christian writer of the first century whose undisputed writings have come down to us. He wrote a letter for the church at Rome to the church at Corinth, and urges the Corinthian brethren to peace, humility and love. He uses the terms Bishop and Elder as perfectly synonymous. The next so-called apostolic father is Ignatius, of Antioch, the dates of whose death ranges from A.D. 107 to 116. The latest scholarship admits only three of the epistles attributed to him to be genuine, those to Polycarp, to the Ephesians and to the Romans. He addresses Polycarp, not as a diocesan, but as a congregational Bishop, as the Bishop of the church of Smyrna; he exhorts the Ephesians to humility, meekness and mildness; and he tells the Romans that he does not command them like Peter and Paul, for they were apostles, but he is a condemned convict, as a slave. And so in other writers of the second century the Bishop is simply the presiding officer among the presbyters of a church, the first among equals, the pastor of a single congregation. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage A.D. 248-258, was the father of diocesan episcopacy and of Romanism. He represented "the Bishops as the successors of the apostles, the chair of Peter as the center of episcopal unity, and the church at Rome the root of all (*radix et matrix ecclesiae Catholicae*, root and mother of the Catholic church, Epistle 45)." But Cyprian conceded only an ideal precedence to the Bishop of Rome, for

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

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

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

The exclusive high church doctrine was first intimated by Bishop Bancroft, of London (in a sermon, 1589), then taught and rigidly enforced by Archbishop Laud (1633-1645), the most un-Protestant of English prelates,

who made such a near approach to Rome that he was offered a cardinal's hat, and this doctrine was apparently sanctioned in 1662 by the cruel act of Uniformity. Since the Synod of Dort (1619) Arminian and High-Church principles have spread rapidly in the church of England. The Anglo-Catholicism of the nineteenth century is simply a revival of Laud's system, which un-churched all non-Episcopal churches, and regarded the Anglican church as an independent sister of the Latin and Greek communions. It is a contradiction of the standards of the body, the consensus of its fathers down to Hooker, and an utter misstatement of the historic position of the church of England." Macaulay says that in 1688 "the Low and High church parties, among the laity, were not unevenly balanced, but that the average of intellect and knowledge was higher among the Low church clergymen than among their order generally; that, though only one-tenth of the priesthood, there were among them as many men of distinguished eloquence and learning as could be found in the other nine-tenths." Macaulay is the greatest English historian of the nineteenth century; and, though himself an Episcopalian, he declares, in regard to possession of the apostolic succession by the church of England, that it is utterly incapable of proof, that the transmission of ministerial orders is for 1500 years (before the reformation) "buried in utter darkness." It has been well remarked that " the only apostolic succession that is worth anything is the succession of the apostolic truth (doctrine), of the gospel, as apostolic men proclaimed it." Instead of devoting our attention to "fables and endless and unedifying genealogies" (1 Tim. 1:4; Titus 3:9), we do well to leave these vanities to those who have nothing better, and to obey the direction of Christ's to go at once to the scriptures of Divine truth to inquire concerning the will of God and the way of salvation (John 5:39).-The priestly or sacerdotal idea of the ministry, with the power of meditating between God and man, of offering sacrifice to God (in the "mass"), and of pronouncing absolution from sin, is not found in any ecclesiastical writer until the third century, and is altogether inconsistent with the sole mediatorship and eternal priesthood of Christ, and the power of God alone to forgive sins (1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 8:1-6; 7:15-28; Ex. 34:7; Isa. 43:25; Matthew 6:12; Acts 5:31). The Apostles themselves never claimed these high Divine powers, which their pretended successors ambitiously and covetously claim. On the other hand, they were clothed, like their Divine Master, with humility; "they always paid tender regard to the rights feelings

and freedom of all the saints; they recognized in every believer, even in a poor slave like Onesimus, a member of the same body with themselves, a partaker of their redemption, a beloved brother in Christ; they labored for the spiritual interests of churches with meekness and love and self-denial; Peter humbly calls himself a fellow-presbyter, and raises his prophetic warning against the hierarchical spirit which so easily takes hold of church officers and alienates them from the people (1 Peter 5: 1-3).” In the last-named verse the Greek word rendered “heritage is *kleros*, from which is derived the English word clergy (compare the Septuagint in Num. 18:20 & Deut. 18:2); so that we have inspired authority for calling all God’s people “the clergy,” instead of limiting this title to a few proud lords. —The ordination of Elders and Deacons was the solemn setting apart, by the church through it’s Elders, of those members already called and qualified by God for those offices (Acts 6:1-6; 13:1-3; 1 Tim.1:6; Heb. 5:4); it was accompanied with prayer and the laying on of hands of the presbytery or Elders, and sometimes with fasting. Instead of the Spirit being communicated by the hands of the presbytery, the person ordained already had the Spirit before ordination, or else he was not qualified for the ceremony (Numbers 27:18,23; Acts 6:3-6; 13:2-3; 2 Tim 1:5-7 compared with Galatians 5:22; Heb. 5:4). The miracle working power of the Holy Ghost were sometime conferred on private members at the same time with the laying on of the hands of the Apostles (Acts 8:17-18; 19:6); but this was essentially different from ministerial ordination.

There are six different Greek words used in connection with a sacred office, and translated “*ordain*” in the English New Testament (*picō* in Mark 3:14; *ginomai* in Acts 1:22; *cheirotōnco* in Acts 14:23; *orizo* in Acts 17:31; *tithemi* in 1 Tim. 2:7; and *kathistemi* in Titus 1:5); only the last two of them. *tithemi* and *kathistemi*, are defined “*ordain*” by Liddell and Scott, the word “*command*” is given, under the same head, as the equivalent meaning of *tithemi*; *kathistemi* is rendered “*appoint*” in the new version in Titus 1:5, and so is *poieo* correctly rendered in Mark 3:14, as we have no record of Jesus putting His hands on His apostles to ordain them; nor can we suppose that, in Acts 17:31, Paul meant that God put His hands on Christ to ordain Him to the Judgeship of the world. The imposition of hands upon Deacons and Elders was but the solemn and expressive symbol of the designation of

them to their sacred offices. —As for ordination to the office of Bishop in distinction from that of Elder, and allowing only such ordained Bishops to ordain, and having such ordained Bishops lay their hands (for confirmation) upon every baptized believer, there is absolutely no New Testament proof of any of these things; they are all the inventions and traditions of men, practiced from the third century by Catholic and similar communions.— “Elder ” is a Jewish term applied to the ministry of the word, and denotes the gravity or dignity or wisdom of the office, and was especially used in the Jewish churches; “Bishop” is a Greek term applied to the same persons, and means overseer, and was especially used in the Greek churches; these officers are also called pastors or shepherds, as those who are to guide, feed and care for the flock. The scriptural obligations of the ministry of the word are to be ensamples or patterns to the church by their godly walk and conversation, to preach the gospel, to watch over the members, to preach, exhort, admonish, reprove and rebuke as needed, to preside in the meetings of the church and see that all things are done decently and in order, to administer the ordinances within the church (1 Peter 5:1-3; Titus 2:7; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 4:16; Matthew 28; 19-20; Mark 16: 15-16; 2 Tim 4:2; 1 Tim.5:17; Heb. 13:7,17,24; 1 Cor. 14:40). The qualifications of the ministry are given in 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9. Instead of one Bishop presiding over several churches, there was, it would seem, a plurality of Elders or Bishops in each of the apostolic churches, as at Jerusalem, at Ephesus, at Philippi, and at the ordination of Timothy (Acts 6:30; 14:23; 15:2,4,26; 16:4; 20:17,28; 21:18; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 4:14; Jam 5:14); But the distinction between teaching Elders and ruling Elders, observed by Presbyterian and some congregational and some Baptist churches can not be proved by the New Testament or from antiquity; it was invented by Calvin, not in the first or second, but in the third edition of his institutes (A.D. 1543). Very few Congregational or Baptist churches now retain the distinction; and many of the ablest Presbyterian writers have abandoned the scriptural defense of it. Only three New Testament texts have been adduced in proof of this distinction (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:28; 1 Tim. 5:17—the chief stress has been laid upon the last text). If in Romans 12:6-8, ruling marks a distinct office, then there must be six different offices in the church, and prophecy, and ministry, teaching and exhortation are all distinct offices, and giving and showing mercy are offices in the church. So in 1 Corinthians 12:28, if

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

Besides Elders or Bishops, Deacons were elected to office in the apostolic church (Acts 6:1-6; Phil. 1:1). Their qualifications are laid down in Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Their duties were to attend especially to the temporal interests of the church, to serve tables—the table of the Lord, of the pastor or minister, and of the poor (Acts 6:2; 1 Cor. 10:21; 9:9-14; Gal. 2:10). Deacons are not, like Bishops, required to be “apt to teach;” but, as they were to be “full of the holy Ghost and wisdom,” and to serve the Lord’s table, and the sacred feast was not to be eaten with the disorderly (1 Cor. 5:7-11), and the “wise” brethren were to “judge” between brethren at variance (1 Cor. 6:1-5), and the deacon, like the Bishop, must “rule his own house well” (1 Tim. 3:4-12), it would seem that deacons ought to exercise a special regard for the order and peace and spiritual health of the church. In this manner they can be valuable “helps” to the pastors (1 Cor. 12:28). Phillip was not only a deacon, but an “evangelist” (Acts 21:8), a traveling preacher of the gospel, like Timothy, and probably like Titus, Luke, Mark, Silas and Apollos (Acts 8:4-40; 2 Tim 4:5; Titus 1:5; 2 Cor. 8:18-19; Acts 20:6; 2 Tim 4:11; Acts 15:40; 18:24); more a founder or planter, than a pastor or waterer, of churches (1 Cor. 3:6)—rather the doer of a temporary work than the occupant of a settled office (2 Tim. 4:5). The term evangelist, as “an inspired writer of one of the four gospels,” was not used in the apostolic age, but this was a later custom. The offices of “Arch-Deacon” and “Sub-Deacon” are unscriptural, and were invented in the third century; the title and office of “Arch-Deacon” were invented in the fourth century. As for deacons being a lower order of priests or of the ministry of the word, as in the Catholic and some Protestant communions, there is no scriptural authority for this or any other instance of hierarchy in the church of God, where all are brethren; the New testament writers are especially careful never to use the Greek verb *archo*, implying *despotic* rule, to the officer of a Christian church, but they uniformly apply this term to the rulers of the Jews and heathens. “It is certain,” says Mr. Stanley, “that in no instance before the beginning of the third century was the title or function of the Pagan or Jewish priesthood applied to Christian pastors.”
