



THE PIONEERS ON WORSHIP

Presenting the views of Alexander Campbell,
Dr. Robert Richardson, Moses E. Lard,
and a number of others

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DEDICATION.

This volume is affectionately dedicated to the able British Leader of the "Old Paths" brethren, Brother W. Crosswaite, Editor of the Scripture Standard, Blackridge, West Lothian, Scotland, who for so many years has faithfully carried the banner for the apostolic order in the United Kingdom.

JOHN ALLEN HUDSON

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For some time there has been a demand for a book on worship from the pioneers; also, a clamor from many for more "Old Paths" material. This volume will serve both purposes.

All the spade work was done by Brother Earl West, Brother Hubert Roach, Brother Fred Custis, Brother W. B. West, Jr., and Brother Nyal Royce. Brother Earl West had the facilities of Butler University School of Religion, Brother Fred Custis the complete works of Moses E. Lard, and the Abilene Christian College Library, Brother Hubert Roach a complete set of the Millennial Harbingers, and other pioneer works, and Brother Nyal Royce and Brother W. B. West, Jr., the George Pepperdine College Library. These men did all the research work, and made all the selections, with the exception of the section on prayer, which came from the biography of David King, English preacher of the same general period.

There has been no editing of the material, with the exception of an occasional deletion of a short portion here and there. All the original punctuation, Scripture notations, et cetera, have been preserved. Some will notice that the punctuation in the writing of the pioneers seriously overworked the comma, as in the writing of Brother Longan. But we have preferred to leave the writing as we found it. Of course, the fluency, the power and the thoroughness of these men of another day will especially make a profound impression. They "thought," no mistake about it. There was a rugged dynamic, a driving originality about them.

While some may have portions of this book accessible to them, and may not therefore feel to admit the great service of this volume, let it be pointed out that no one person would have all these things where he could get to them. Besides that, to have a complete volume on the various items of worship

from the pens of the pioneers makes this book serviceable in an unusual degree. And there is the added thought that even if a number of these pieces are accessible, the added emphasis given by incorporating them in a single book will help to make them impressive.

INTRODUCTION

The worship of mankind, in any case, whether true or false, springs from the realization that the spirit of man, in the thralldom of sin, mortality and disappointment, needs something permanent in deity, something stable and sure. It is an indirect but powerful testimony also that the spirit of man is immortal. Whatever the posture of the body, whatever the acts of worship, this suppliance of spirit in worship elevates man as nothing else that he ever does. And the implanted sense of need, plus the accruing sense of frailty from living experience, causes worship to be universal among the sons of men, all the way from the burning tropics to the frozen tundras of the lands toward the poles, from the islands of the seas to the greatest continents, from burning deserts to the lush valleys of the great rivers. Language, culture, geography and time form no barriers against the rising of the souls of men and women in religion. Why? Because basically man is a spirit being, while incased in mortal frame.

From the standpoint of the Bible, however, in spite of man's need, and his recognition of it, worship is designed to take certain forms. Among the patriarchs it was the worship of a family, with only an occasional sacrifice beneath some tree, at an altar erected by a venerable patriarch. In the Jewish economy worship took on a liturgy and a ceremonial that gave the people visible acts through which they honored God. Of course, what they did was typical of an order later to come that would dispense with the crudities of animal sacrifices and would have a spiritual significance instead.

Worship to God under the teaching of the Man of Galilee, Jesus Christ our Lord, takes certain specified acts, and is to be done only in these acts. It is a prescribed worship. It is a divinely inspired worship. Christ, being in the form of

God, revealed God to the world, and set up a perfect way of return to Him. This first of all took redemption through the blood of Christ. Man being cleansed from his sins by obedience to the Gospel of the Son of God, in faith, repentance, the acknowledgment of his faith in Christ, and baptism into His death and a resurrection to walk in newness of life, now standing as a son of the eternal God, has outlined for him in the New Testament the prescribed acts of worship which are calculated to keep him in union with God, as he makes a journey back to his celestial home.

The worship of God through Christ, as set forth in the New Testament, is comprised of five things—prayer, singing of songs, the Lord's Supper, teaching and admonition, and giving of one's means as he has been prospered. Each one of these rests upon a divine precedent to be found in the New Testament in the congregations of the disciples of the Lord. Since these are divinely inspired acts of worship, or acts performed in the congregations of early disciples of the Lord, it certainly is of the utmost importance to study to see how they can be properly done. They are the media through which God has ordained that the soul shall rise in communion with Him; they are a Jacob's ladder from earth to heaven. Since God through Christ has arranged them, or prescribed them, it is of the utmost importance that we shall know all that can definitely be known about them.

The pioneers who strove for a return to the church of the first century, in the great work that has been denominated the Restoration Movement, came to grips with the matter of divine worship. They came on the scene when Christendom was in utter confusion, with a welter of sects, preaching and practicing all kinds of things. They rejected all human creeds, and all doctrines of men. They proposed a return to the church as at the beginning. This led them into a close study of the New Testament to determine just exactly what the will of Christ was, and is. Anything that could not be determined by Scripture was rejected, on the ground that it did not exist by

divine warrant, but was a thing of the will and judgment of man. This led them to reject many things that they had practiced in days gone by. They gave up infant sprinkling, and other extrascriptural practices, and took up other things which had been neglected, such as the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper. Truly this was one of the most remarkable movements in all history. A careful study of the findings of these men on worship, as set forth from their own pens, will be a privilege to every thoughtful person. We are glad the Old Paths Book Club has been given the opportunity to present this volume.

It is not the thought of the Old Paths Book Club that there should be any diminishing of the fervor of worship, or that any of the genius of it should be forfeited, but rather that, through a careful study, the power of public worship upon the souls of man may be increased. While this volume has much to do with the purity of worship, it pleads at the same time for increasing fervor, guided by intelligence, removed from purely human passions.

The spiritual character of worship is ably set forth from the pen of Moses E. Lard. Then there is a discussion of what the pioneers were pleased to call social worship. By this they evidently meant the impact of worship upon the body social in worshipping assemblies, whether correctly guided or not.

The order of the presentation of the various phases of worship is in no sense meant to convey any thoughts as to the priority of one over the other, or the importance of one in comparison of the other. Nothing is designed on that score. In fact, a careful study will convince one that the pioneers did not, for the most part, believe that an order is prescribed in the New Testament. The items are given, but no order is laid down. This of course prevented the establishing of a liturgy which would have become set for all generations, and which would, in the very nature of the case, have had an enervating effect upon the souls of men in public worship. The spiritual character of worship can be perpetuated in the

divinely prescribed acts without a deadly routine. Also, this freedom from form leaves the worship of God through Christ very adaptable to circumstances, and plastic enough to meet conditions.

We have presented in these pages a study of each item in the public assembly of the saints as at the beginning.

We hope this volume will be received as one of the best we have had the privilege of sending forth. It is sent with a prayer for great good.

JOHN ALLEN HUDSON

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PART 1

THE CHURCH—ITS WORSHIP

(General Discussion)

PRIMITIVE WORSHIP*

By JOHN THOMAS

"The simplicity of Gospel truth ill accords with a farrago of rites and ceremonies. Nothing could be more unadorned than the primitive worship. A plain man, chosen from among his fellows, in his common garb, stood up to speak, or sat down to read the Scriptures, to as many as chose to assemble in the house appointed. A back room, and that probably often a mean one, or a garret, to be out of the way of observation, was their temple." *Haweis Hist, of the Church*, p. 150.

Such is the impartial Rector of Aldwinckle's account of the "Sanctuary," in which the disciples, in the early part of the second century, assembled to do homage to their Lord and Master. Down to the reign of the Roman Emperor Severus, A.D. 211-19, the Christians knew of no other temple, church, or sanctuary, than that which they themselves composed. The idea of a wooden, brick, or stone church, had not as yet entered their heads. Their want of temples was one cause of their being accused of atheism by the pagans; who could not conceive of a religion without its temples made with hands. A back room in a common house, or an obscure garret afforded sufficient accommodation to the Disciples of Christ, when Christianity was first planted in its original simplicity and purity. It was in an "upper room," that the apostolic ambassadors of the Great King, first convened after his ascent to the right hand of power; and it was "in the same place" that Peter stood up with the eleven, and delivered the first gospel address that was ever spoken to Jew or Gentile; and it was this unpretending apartment that was honored by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. But as Christianity became cor-

* *Apostolic Advocate*, Richmond, Va., 1835, pp. 257-261.

rupted, rites, ceremonies, decorations, and formality increased in a corresponding ratio with the decline of the power of godliness; until this was entirely subdued, and the Christian institution metamorphosed into a hydra of unmeaning shape. We know of nothing so calculated to keep up those dangerous distinctions which crept in soon after the death of the Apostle John—the separation of the disciples into clergy and laity—as the arrangements which exist in the meeting-houses of the present day. Instead of a room fitted up for the purposes of *primitive worship*, in which the SHOWING FORTH THE LORD'S DEATH was the grand feature, our rooms are so ordered as to consult the convenience of "hearing preaching, and the economy of BREAKING THE LOAF, for which the society of disciples comes together, is made a matter of mere secondary import. When we enter a house of the sectaries what is it that stands in a bolder relief than other objects before us ? Is it not a man called a "Reverend Divine," boxed up in a pulpit, called also a "sacred desk" ? And in a Christian congregation, what ought to be the first thing to arrest the attention of the unbelieving world who come to witness its worship? Most unquestionably, the bread and wine on the table of the Lord. We contend, therefore, that inasmuch as the Disciples of Christ come together every first day of the week to break the loaf, in other words, to show forth the Lord's death, all arrangements ought to be made subservient to it; and every impediment to the full, free, and apostolic exhibition of Christian worship removed. Now the Lord's death cannot be shown forth when the table of the Lord is obscured from the view of all, except a few in its immediate location. It is our conviction, therefore, that the wooden thrones, called pulpits, ought to be pulled down and cast out of all our meeting-houses, as the worthless symbols of anti-Christian lordship over the heritage of God. This conviction is founded on the following facts: First, however large the assemblage addressed, the apostles never used such things

nor did the disciples for 186 years after the death of the Master—and why not? Because they were not needed. Secondly, their use prevents those arrangements which ought to obtain where there is a plurality of elders or presbyters, and tends to elevate one of their number above the rest, which ought to be especially guarded against in every particular. Thirdly, they are pagan in their invention, antichristian in their adoption, and ridiculous in their perpetuation among those who profess to endeavor to restore the Christian institutions to what they were in the days of the apostles. That pulpits are of diabolical invention will appear from this, that "that part of the theatres where the actors recited their parts .was called *pulpitum* or the pulpit. The Roman play-houses were divided into five parts, of which this was one. It was the loftiest stand in the whole building having the orchestra, where the performers danced, about five feet below it. Hence, a pulpit being the place of buffoons, Pliny uses this expression to characterize anything contemptible, *ludibria scena et Pulpito digna*, buffooneries fit only for the pulpit. They are anti-Christian in their adoption. . . .

Thus about the end of the second century a new tribe arose, completely separated from their brethren, of clergy distinct from laity. "Men sacred by office, exclusive of a divine call and real worth." Among these aspirants for worldly honors—ambition and worldly mindedness were the characteristic features. The ancients being passionately fond of eloquence, oratorical talents too often conferred on their possessor pre-eminence over his fellow-presbyters. Thus, by common consent, he took the lead; and at length claimed superior dignity as *the* bishop. This man, then, the bellwether of the flock, the sole mouth-piece of the faithful, as he became after the cessation of spiritual gifts, was the dignitary, already prepared, to fill the *pulpitum* when the vanity of the projectors should succeed in translating it from the theatre to the "Church." The elevation of an ambitious presbyter to the

highest place in a Christian assembly, was the signal for the stoppage of all mouths but his own.—Reading the Scriptures and mutual exhortation gave place to the delivery of an oration upon some philosophical or scholastic topic; and thus the sincere milk of the word, and the good seed of the kingdom was superseded by the "orthodox" buffooneries of "consecrated" pulpits. But some superficial thinkers in regard to these matters may suppose the use of these wooden boxes can do no harm. This was precisely the principle upon which every abuse crept into the church. But to this flimsy opinion, we would object, that whatever is not inculcated by precept or example in the New Testament, if introduced into the Christian religion does infinite harm; and is calculated to open a door to innovation of every kind. If it is lawful to supersede the institution of the eldership by the one man system, then it will do no harm to set up all the conveniences of pulpit, sermons, and salaries for his accommodation. But we pretend to aim at the restoration of the primitive worship, so that when our assemblies are visited by the unbelievers they may have a fair exhibition thereof presented to them; and that they may thus be enabled to contrast the simplicity and dignity of the Christian institution with the miserable counterfeits of the age. It ought, therefore, to be enough for us to know what was the apostolic custom, and knowing to practice it. We cannot pretend to be honest disciples unless we act by this rule. How the world would like it, or what unbelievers would say or think, expediency or common usage, ought not to weigh with us for a moment. We are not to succumb to the world, but the world to us. Do you not know, Christian reader, that the true believers will reign with the Prince of Peace over all nations? Let us not then, truckle to mortal men of times; but, let us maintain a courteous, though dignified and independent bearing, and compel them to desert their own ranks, and crowd around our standard by the proclamation of gospel truth in practice as well as speech.

The eldership of the apostolic assemblies consisted of many members. They were all equal, though they might not be all equally gifted. They were called presbyters or elders, and sometimes bishops or overseers. They were all entitled to equal respect from the brethren provided they all conducted themselves equally well; and, although true eloquence is a noble talent, wisdom and knowledge are equal. Peter, who was also an elder, stood up with the eleven, who were as much elders as he. He was surrounded by his brethren, from the church and from the midst of whom he addressed 3000 unbelievers. So, as the church in Jerusalem was the model of the apostolic assemblies, when the disciples came together into one place to break the loaf, the elders, therefore, ought to sit together in such a manner as to oversee the disciples. In order to effect this, as we have said, the pulpits should be cast out, and a platform constructed, about 18 inches from the common floor, and of sufficient dimensions to contain the table and seats for six or eight persons. Here, then, let the presbytery sit; and, if one of their number, more able than the rest to teach, shall feel disposed to exercise his talents for the edification of the brethren, and the persuasion of unbelievers, let him stand forth and say on. This arrangement would be attended with the happiest results. For, as the order of a Christian assembled in sectarian temples, so, by this means, it would be forcibly exhibited to the eye of the spectator, and his attention could not fail of being arrested, especially as the exhibition is of divine appointment. Thus, on entering our doors, the most remarkable object would be, not a man in black, on a wooden throne, but the divinely appointed memorials of the death of our Royal Master. There though in silent but expressive language, he would behold a monument perpetuating the fact, the astounding fact, that 18 centuries since, the crucified, but risen, at last revealed, and fell a victim to the cruelty of man, for whose redemption he bled and died.

And around this monument he would see a brotherhood of believers, with their elders, who had submitted to the government of this unseen Personage, in confidence of reconciliation by him to God; and in the full and earnest expectation of his speedy and promised return. Then, and not till then, shall we be able to reflect the light of the ordinances of God's house, and shine like a city set upon a hill, which must and ought to be conspicuous. Remember, brethren, our object is a REFORMATION OF MORALS, and a full and entire RESTORATION of the CHRISTIAN INSTITUTION, as left among men by the holy apostles. Nothing short of this will satisfy a right hearted subject of the King of Kings; therefore, let every citizen of his kingdom awake as they ought, and make ready to receive his Lord.

NON-WORSHIP FAMILIES*

By WALTER SCOTT

The practice of calling upon God night and morning in their families, is awfully neglected by parents and the heads of houses. There are thousands who never think of such a matter, and this is not the worst of it. There are professing populations of one thousand in which there is not a family that calls upon the Lord night and morning. This matter must no longer be slurred over. The disciples themselves require to be reformed. The true Gospel is abused by such a profession of it. Such people trample its divine honors under their feet. It is pressed down to the ground. Christ Jesus is put to an open shame by such professors. The Bible is of course seldom and in some instances never read in such houses and families.

Now we entreat our brethren to reform and pursue the things, and manners, and customs, that make for their perfection in their most holy profession. Let us be a prayerful and a praying people; let us be full of the spirit of praise. We beg our readers not to deceive their own souls and to make a barren and unfruitful profession of the Gospel of Christ. If you will return, God will heal your backsliding and love you freely, He will take away your iniquities and receive you graciously. He will be as the dew to Israel; He shall grow as the lily and cast forth His roots as Lebanon; they who dwell under His shadow shall return to God; they shall revive as the corn and grow as the vine; the odor thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

**The Evangelist*, Cincinnati, April 1, 1840; Vol. 8, No. 4, pp. 89, 90; "Non-Worship Families."

PUBLIC WORSHIP OF THE LORD*

By J. B. FERGUSON

The duties of the Christian Religion should never be placed in opposition to each other. Each one has its appointed place in the life of the Christian, and serves to shed a glory over his perfecting character. For example, the duty of giving to the poor and of relieving the necessities of our race, when exhibited in the life of a man habitually pious, is far more pleasant to look upon than when performed by hands that have kept back the hire of the laborer, have defrauded, and dealt unjustly, or by the man who knows not God, and whose motives originate only in a fellow-sympathy or a personal interest, of which even brutes are not incapable.

The public worship of God should not be arrayed against the necessary and active duties of life. The one is important, so is the other; and with a mind properly enlightened the one will grow out of, and be promoted by, the other.

Some suppose that if they are benevolent and charitable, no matter whether with a motive or without a motive, they are fulfilling the purposes of life. That they are commendable for every exercise of a charitable disposition, we do not deny, but to suppose that the whole duty of man is embraced in this, is | absurd and deceptive.

Religion is such an all-pervading sentiment, that it requires a manifestation from the whole man. His lips must speak what his heart believes; and God must be acknowledged in all his ways. Does he give; he gives what God has given, and although he may feel his right to what he gives as better than that of his fellow's, yet he must give to God or he throws away what he gives. But it is not upon acceptable charity we

**Christian Magazine*, Nashville, Vol. 1, pp. 42-43.

wish to speak; we only desire to enforce the universal duty of worshiping God publicly, as a duty not isolated but connected with all duties, and dependent on the same moral obligation.

Solomon speaks of the good works of a woman, as the "fruit of her hands," and as the result of the fear of the Lord; and so also, Paul speaks of the public praise of God and the declaration of his perfections and benefits by our lips, as the "fruit of our lips," which he calls an acceptable sacrifice and connects it with the necessity of good works and the obligation to communicate of our substance for the glory of God. All our actions to be acceptable to God must be performed from a sense of obligation to him, and when thus performed, they are regarded as proper fruits of the faculties and opportunities he has bestowed upon us, whether of the lips or hands.

The obligation to praise God and publicly make known his perfections and beneficence, which we ordinarily perform by psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, by the keeping of the ordinances, by prayers and discourses, is not always felt as it should be. True the Apostle has given a positive injunction to this effect, and requires that we should teach and admonish one another, and make melody in our hearts to God, by singing his praise—but our natural indolence and indisposition often leads us to God-forgetfulness; and so his praises are sung or spoken, no matter with many, whether they participate or not.

Now, if it is the duty of one man to worship the Lord publicly, it is the duty of another; that is, it is the duty of each so far as he may have ability, and consequently, a neglect to discharge the duty or a lack of interest in the exercises when conducted by others, give evidence of a deficiency in spiritual desires, and a lack of a proper appreciation of the majesty and goodness of God. For who can pretend that he possesses the lively sensations which ought to animate a Christian's bosom, who delights not in the hymn expressive

of the honor of God, the psalm that recounts his Almighty power, and opens up to the pious mind the spiritual history of the world, or those songs expressive of devout affections? Who can claim to be ardent in the pursuit of Christian perfection, and anxious for his advancement in heavenly knowledge and qualifications, who can give little or no attention to the attributes of God, the rewards of piety, the vanity of earthly cares and dependencies, the deceitfulness of sin, as they are enforced and exposed in the public worship of a religious assembly? And more than all, who can sing with the spirit and the understanding, who is indifferent as to what he sings, how he sings, or whether he sings at all?

This most instructive, edifying, interesting part of divine worship, has never yet received that attention which it deserves amongst a people claiming to walk in the footsteps of the primitive Christians. Indeed, old Judea before the days of Christ, had more of true devotion, with her psalms of solemn sound and her hymns and songs of ecstatic rapture, whilst under the rigors of a Siniatic covenant, than many who now claim to live under the light and glory of a new and everlasting Institution.

But the way to secure a reformation is for every one to feel his responsibilities in the case. Each professor of the religion of Christ, should regard himself as responsible for the character and conduct of the worship of God wherever his lot may be cast. Whether he can sing or pray, or preach, or whether he can do neither to edification, he should do all in his power to see that they are performed as becometh the house of the Lord. Thus, when conducted according to the best of our ability—and more cannot be asked—the public worship of our assemblies would always be entertaining and edifying. And our psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, filled with sublime conceptions of the supreme majesty and glory of the Almighty God, of the purity of the government and laws, and the universal dominion of our Messiah—his advent,

and triumph, his condescension and love, his surpassing glories and future return to visit his people, would no longer languish upon our tongues; but our devotion will spring up with new fire upon every return of the day of the Lord or the meeting of his people, and cause us to say in truth to Jehovah,

"A day in thy courts is better than a thousand other days, And I would rather sit down on the threshold of thy house, Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Ps. 84:10

WORSHIP*

By ISAAC ERRETT

From what has already been said of the intimate spiritual relations established by the Christ between God and his people, it will have been inferred that Christianity must be marked by an intensely devotional spirit and a peculiarly spiritual worship. This is fully sustained by the example and the teachings of Jesus, and by the history of the apostolic churches. The whole life of Jesus was devotional. He was constantly girt about, as it were, with the Father's presence. Not an act of his, life, nor a word from his lips, partakes of a spirit of levity or of worldliness that would mar the solemnity of a scene of worship. Indeed, the act which seems most nearly to betray passion—that of scourging the money-changers and traders in the temple—was an act in which his zeal for a pure worship is most strikingly manifest. "It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." His pious ejaculations in his discourses; his constant recognition of the lessons of providence in the sunshine, the shower, the flowers, the vines, the grass, the birds and the flocks of sheep; his frequent resorts to the solitudes of the forest and the night, for communion with his Father; his public prayers and thanksgivings; his habitual attendance on the worship of the synagogue; and, more than all, the breaking of his heart when the Father's presence was withdrawn from him, attest the loftiness and steadiness of devotion that filled his spirit. In his childhood days he longed for his Father's house. His public ministry began and ended with prayer, and was sweetened and hallowed all along with fervent prayer and praise. His prayers were remarkable for their *simplicity*. They were

**Evenings With the Bible, Vol. III, p. 327.*

set in no pompous phraseology. He addressed God simply as "Father," or "My God," and talked to him as a child to a loving parent. They were remarkable for their *trust*. He never doubts—not even in the garden, when his extremest agony of soul is on him, nor on the cross when all the Furies are let loose upon him, His bitter cry, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" was not the language of doubt, but the revelation of a tremendous fact—that in dying for the sins of the world, he sank into a thick darkness of anguish unilluminated by a single ray of the light of his Father's presence. They were remarkable for their *spontaneity*. His heart bubbled forth its emotion freely, spontaneously. It required the aid of no ritual to lift him into an atmosphere of devotion. He *lived* in that atmosphere. They were remarkable for the *nearness to God* which they expressed. He addressed Him as ever present, and as One with whom he lived on the most loving terms. They were remarkable for their *directness*. He prayed for what he wanted just then. They were, above all, remarkable for their *profound reverence for the divine will*. They were not the utterance of selfish desires. Even when driven to the last extremity by the tempest of terrors that broke upon him in the garden, he did not forget to say, even when untold anguish pressed from him the sweat of blood, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." When we come to his teaching, we find it in accord with his life. Very significant is his language to the woman of Samaria, when she raised the question whether Jerusalem or Samaria was the place where men ought to worship: "Believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 22-24). The Jews worshiped in *letter* and in *symbol*; Christian worship was to be in *spirit* and in *reality*: not a worship dependent on *time*, *place*, or *form*,

but the outpouring of a reverential and grateful heart, enlightened by the truth that Jesus taught. Take along with this his appeal to parents: "If a child ask bread, will ye give him a stone? or if he ask for fish, will ye give him a serpent? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Add to this his comment on the prayers of the Pharisee and the publican, and his parable of the unjust judge and the widow. Then consider the prayer he taught to his disciples, and his instructions to them to go into their closets and pray where none but God could see and hear. To all these add his warnings against the unforgiving spirit which would bar the heavens against their prayers. The sum of it all is: "God is your Father. He loves you. He knows your wants. Go to him with all your needs. Approach him reverently and humbly, but trustfully, as children go to a father. Be not anxious about worldly good, but be very anxious for spiritual good. Seek first his kingdom and its treasures of righteousness, peace and joy. Seek the forgiveness of sins. Seek deliverance from the power of the evil one. Seek your daily bread. Always pray, and never faint, and joyfully trust your Father to do what is best for you."

We must not fail to add that the piety of Jesus was *cheerful*. It spoke in *praise* as well as in *prayer*. He gave thanks for all that he received. And even in that solemn and painful hour when Judas was about to betray him, and the rest of his disciples to forsake him, and the chill shadows of Gethsemane and Calvary were creeping over him, he raised his voice in a hymn of praise to God. "After supper, they sang a hymn, and went out to the mount of olives."

If, now, we look at the spiritual life of his disciples, we shall see that the piety of the early church bore the same characteristics. The hundred and twenty that waited in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, after the Master had been carried up into heaven, continued with one accord in prayer

and supplication. The first converts in Jerusalem continued steadfastly in prayers, and were continually praising and blessing God. In every time of need they united in prayer. In every time of deliverance, they united in thanksgivings. In their public assemblies prayer and praise were prominent features of their worship. This worship, while it was intended to be orderly, was not marked by formality. They prayed and sang with the spirit and with the understanding, but all who were capable of praying or singing to edification bore a part, and when one prayed or gave thanks, as the mouthpiece of the assembly, all the congregation said *Amen* at the conclusion. Their prayers and thanksgivings were the "spiritual sacrifices" which, as a royal priesthood, they brought to the altar, and offered in the name of Jesus Christ.

A ripe Christian is described as one who "trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day" (I Tim. v. 5). There was in this no spirit of asceticism. This same person is described as having brought up children, lodged strangers, washed the saints' feet, relieved the afflicted, and diligently followed every good work. Paul combines these again, when he says, "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." This is a worthy characteristic of primitive Christian piety. It was joined with high activity, and permeated the entire life. It shrank not from busy scenes, nor from contact with the world; but went everywhere into the toils and conflicts of life, tempering the speech, restraining the passions, regulating the actions, sweetening the cares, and sanctifying the sorrows of daily life—thus making the whole life a "living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God." Our Lord himself led a very busy life, yet it was, as we have seen, deeply and loftily religious. It was so with the apostles. It was meant to be so with all the disciples. They were to work without ceasing as well as to pray without ceasing—for their worship was in spirit and in truth, and did not locate itself in days and moons and years, but entered into all the life. Not

that there were no special seasons of worship. There were such seasons in the church (Acts xii. 5), in the family (I Cor. vii. 5), and in individual life (Acts x. 9). But these were not seasons set apart and fixed by church legislation, as exhaustive of the demands of piety, leaving the rest of the time to be devoted to merely secular concerns; they were simply times of need, when special supplies of grace were required, to meet an exigency, in addition to the ordinary supplies that were daily and constantly sought.

That which especially distinguished this worship was, that it was the *offering of the heart*—comprehending in that term alike the understanding and the affections. "I will pray with the spirit, and will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." "Singing and making melody *in your hearts* unto the Lord." "Let us draw near *with a true heart*, in full assurance of faith."

This pure, spontaneous, enlightened, fervent, cheerful worship kept up a continual current of sympathy between heaven and earth, and enabled the disciples to "walk with God." They recognized Him as ever-present. They committed all their ways to Him. The darker the world grew to them the closer they drew to God for protection and guidance. He was in their homes and in their hearts. When labor failed, and earthly wisdom was exhausted, and human help was vain, and they could do no more—they prayed and waited. In perplexities so intricate as to confound the understanding, when they knew not what to pray for as they ought, they bowed their stricken souls in silence before God and trusted the Holy Spirit within them to translate the inarticulate groanings of their troubled spirits into intelligible prayers which Heaven would hear and answer.

The whole of life, and each of its blessings and trials, was thus "sanctified by the word of God and by prayer." There can be no restoration of primitive Christianity that does not restore this prayerful spirit which makes it holy ground

wherever the Christian lives, a temple of God wherever a pure heart presents its offerings, and a holy sacrifice wherever a true life shows forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

THE WORSHIP AND CO-OPERATION*

By J. S. ROBERTSON

Washington Co., Ark., May 2, 1856.

Bros. Fanning and Lipscomb.—The Gospel Advocate comes to us, laden with good things. You are striking at the right points, first principles and practical Christianity. This is the great want of all our churches, and I am pleased to see that you are directing the attention of the brotherhood to those all important objects. Nothing short of a correct understanding, and a humble submission to the will of the Lord, can redeem our fellow-creatures from sin and death. Much, very much depends on our brethren of this reformation; but alas, how few think of these things. Great and weighty matters are at issue. None should be idle if they wish to meet the approbation of their master at his coming. There is among us too much conformity to the present world, too great a desire to have the praise of men, instead of God; to follow the footsteps of Jesus is too humiliating to some, the cross too heavy; but it must be borne, if heaven is ever gained. Jesus says, "Deny yourselves, and take up the cross and follow me." This is the way to heaven marked out by the "Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Your plan for the co-operation and evangelizing is to some rather new, but I think it will work well. It is much to my mind; and as I learn them from the Bible, I have had some experience in these things, and have come to this conclusion; that a church which cannot, nor will not, attend to all the duties of the house, only when an evangelist is present, deserves not the appellation of "the Church of Christ." We need co-operation in Arkansas, and evangelists too. I am gratified

*Robertson, J. S., *Gospel Advocate*, Nashville; Vol. 2, No. 6, June, 1856, pp. 187, 188; "The Worship and Co-operation."

to see that some of our brethren, in some parts of the State, are alive to the work. I would be pleased to open a correspondence with those brethren in our State favorable to co-operation. Something should be done in and for Arkansas. I would suggest the propriety of the brethren in this state adopting the "Gospel Advocate" as their medium of communication, until we can have a paper of our own. But my scroll is growing too long. More hereafter.

THE TRUE WORSHIP OF GOD*

By MOSES E. LARD

That the same Greek word should be uniformly rendered by the same English word, so long as practicable, is, as a principle of translation, justly held sacred by all real scholars. The principle, however, is not of universal application. But this grows out of the fact that in the Greek, as in all other languages, words often occur in more senses than one. We are hence required to apply the rule only in all cases where practicable. Accordingly we should, without doubt, retain the word kingdom in all cases where we can. But I much incline to think that the word reign would, in some instances, be the better word. For example, in Luke 17:20, 21, it would perhaps be better to say the reign of God is within you, than the kingdom of God is within. The word kingdom seems to apply more appropriately to something without us, to something material and visible, and hence to something incapable of being within us. Strictly speaking this may not be correct; but so we seem to feel. On the other hand, the word reign, denoting control by the will of another, would seem better suited to express whatever is within us. Whether, however, the distinction really exists, and therefore should be marked, is not here dogmatically said. The distinction is suggested, not decided.

But should we read, the kingdom of God is within you, or among you? I unhesitatingly answer, the former. The original is *entos*, the strongest word in the language to express the notion of being within or inside. The question does not admit even the semblance of doubt. We should hence translate, the reign of God is within you.

Christ's reign, therefore, has primary reference to the inner man, not to the outer. In other words, it is the spirit and

*Page 391 of *Lard's Quarterly*, Volume IV, October, 1867, issue.

not the body which is to be subject to his will. And this serving God in mind, or with the spirit, I denominate the true worship of God. All else is secondary and partial. This alone is primary, and possibly in a sense, and in certain cases, deserves to be called complete. At least, if to any service we can apply the term complete, it is to this.

When the Savior uttered this language, the time had fully come for the change which it implies. In the providence of God the necessity had matured, and at once the initial step is taken. All antecedent religions had had reference chiefly to the flesh; and if to the spirit they had spoken at all, they had spoken in language shadowy and hieroglyphic, and hence understood by few, perhaps at the time by none. This, beyond all question, was right at the first. Sin was introduced into the world by a temptation addressing itself to the eye. "Eve saw the fruit that it was good for food." If she had had no eyes we have no evidence that Satan could ever have succeeded with that fruit. Whether he could have accomplished his end in some other way, we have no means of knowing; but through means of the inhibited fruit the presumption is he could not. Consequently, since sin began through the flesh, it seems proper that through the flesh an effort should have been made to redeem man. Through flesh came the ruin, let it now be tested whether through flesh can come the remedy.

Besides, had not religion at the first addressed itself to the flesh the world would never so readily have accepted one addressing itself to the spirit. We should always have felt that had the divine procedure been different, the results might have been better. Flesh and sense claim our first attention, and to what extent they control us under all circumstances need not be made a question here. We should have felt that religion, to be successful, must lay hold of these great controlling principles, and through them effect its objects. The conviction would have been that, by appealing to reason or the inner man, the heavenly Father had neglected the stronger,

and availed himself of the weaker power in man to save him. Nor do I see how the case could have been otherwise. As a matter of fact, we know that flesh controls man more than reason. Naturally, then, we should have concluded that to the flesh the first appeal should be made. The result would have been that life with us would have been a perpetual murmur, and been spent in distrusts of the divine wisdom. All this God forestalled by the course he adopted. He did at the first precisely what man *a priori* would have asked him to do—address religion to the flesh rather than to the spirit. In all this God was working out one splendid conclusion; namely, that a religion of the flesh, though the very thing human nature clamors for, is the very thing to ruin it. This conclusion, it was necessary to work into the very soul of humanity by the most overwhelming experience before proceeding further; and this conclusion was thus worked in. By the procedure man has been left to see, what it appears he is still determined never to see, that a religion purely of the spirit is the only religion that can save him.

But how did God work this conclusion out, and render it obvious to all who desired to see it? This question will be best answered by considering the effects of a religion of the flesh in the human family. These effects are chiefly three.

1. To engender and foster pride. Of the truth of this, the universal history of religion is one mournful proof. Nor does it matter whether the religion be true or false, the effect is the same. In the case of a true religion, however, this reservation is to be made, that the effect is not intended. In no case can God intend what is injurious to his creatures. Still, the effect follows, and not the less surely because not designed. It follows from the nature of that to which the religion relates—the flesh, and hence certainty. As a specific illustration of the truth of what is here said, I may cite the example of the Jews. Never since earth began was there so proud a people as were they in the days of their greatest prosperity. Other

nations were looked on as dogs in comparison with themselves. Even the touch of a stranger polluted them, in their esteem. In their vanity they even felt that God was, in some special case, their own. This swelled high their fleshly hearts. Indeed, there was nothing that belonged to them or pertained to them of which they were not proud. They were proud of their ancestry, and proud of their history; proud of their laws, and proud of him through whom they had received them; proud of their priests, and proud of their splendid ritual; proud of the memory of the past, proud of the wilderness, proud of the manna, proud of the pillar of fire, proud of the victory of the Red Sea, proud of the Tabernacle, proud of its service, proud of their prophets, proud of their poets—proud, I repeat, of everything. Their glory, as they deemed it, and their shame were alike their pride. Such was the effect of a divine religion, severe and sternly just, on a people in no sense naturally worse than other people; and this because it "stood in meats and drinks and diverse washings, even fleshly ordinances." Preeminently, in its most imposing features, was it a religion of the flesh; hence the effect just amplified.

2. To multiply sin. This is another effect sure to happen under a religion pertaining to the flesh; not necessarily, I grant, but still sure to happen. "Moreover," says Paul, "the law entered that the offense might abound." The law, pertaining primarily to the flesh, and only in its deep typical sense to the spirit, entered that the offense or transgression might abound, and thus show what the flesh is when the subject of religion. Promote the pride of the human heart, and thereby you multiply the chances of sin. Pride must be gratified. This gratification it will seek both in lawful and unlawful ways. It is not the normal state of man. Its wants, therefore, for the most part are unnatural and criminal. But these wants it will satisfy, and thus sin increases. Besides, pride is a state of perpetual excitement. Under its influence the system is constantly kept strung up too high. Chafing and irritation are easy here; and

these again lead to sin. Restraints, moreover, become intolerable. Pride will break them. Right is thus disregarded, and crime ensues. But pride itself is sin, and God is against it. It is hence doubly wrong, wrong in itself, and leading to wrong.

3. It induces blindness. A religion of the flesh not only produces pride, but also selfishness. A proud man thinks himself better than his neighbors. He hence feels that something is due him which is not due them. Not only does he feel that he must live wholly for himself; he feels that others also should live for him. This is the very essence of selfishness. He hence grows exacting and ungenerous. This blinds him to the wants of others and to his obligations. As a result, he is true to neither. The selfish man is never clear-sighted in questions which involve the rights of others. By him justice is bribed, and never keeps her balances level. A right decision robs him, and he hence fears it. He is never to be trusted. Give him the chance, and he either cheats his soul or cheats his neighbor. But of all the things that blind him, give the foremost rank to his religious pride. It blinds him to defects in his own creed, and blinds him to excellences in the creed of his neighbor. Indeed, he sees little good in man except in himself, no good in any creed except his own. He is supremely selfish, supremely proud, supremely bigoted, and supremely silly. Blindness promoted by their religion, or rather by their abuses of it, so blinded the minds of the Jews that they saw not in Jesus their long-expected Christ. What blindness did for them, it is doing for countless thousands now. These see the true religion of Christ only in their traditionary heresies, and heresy only in the true religion of Christ. For this blindness there is no cure. Men die in it and are lost. This is its end.

And just here emerges the danger to Christianity. Man naturally delights in a religion which ministers to the flesh, ministers to its pride, its love of show, its love of ease. Hence, in all ages since its origin he has been repeating efforts to carnalize Christianity. In Roman Catholicism his success has

been complete. Here few restraints are imposed upon the flesh, save in the case of the humble toilers whose industry is necessary to the support of privileged superiors; while in these the flesh is pampered in every way which human cunning can devise. In the flesh and its lusts, Christianity has its worst human foe. As in time past its corruptions issued from this source, so will it be in time to come. Let us hedge against the lusts of the flesh, and all is safe; let us not, and all is lost.

Here, my brethren, let us pause and take an account. Stand we fast, and do no perils threaten? "Watchmen, what of the night?" Comes there up to the surface no sign of restlessness, none of discontent? See we no indication of relaxing the rigor of the ancient discipline? I wish it were in my power to answer these questions exultingly with an emphatic no; but it is not. While, for the most part, all goes well, I see a speck above the horizon which augurs evil. An ill-omened bird sits on a smitten tree, and troubles me with her note. "To arms," she croaks, "the foemen storm the wall." I repeat, then, let us take an account.

Do not deem me timid when I tell you that men stand among us, not with us, who are seeking at the moment while I am uttering this to popularize the Gospel. These men are not satisfied with the primitive order of things. They love the uppermost seats at feasts, and delight in new things. The simple discipline of the church is not enough for them. They would like to be tried only by their peers. A council of clergymen would suit them better. Baptism for the remission of sins is offensive to them. They do not believe it. They extol the parties of the day, and covet the honors of orthodoxy. Their brethren they do not like; sectarians they fondly love. A creed would be no shock to them; and they delight in the tones of an organ. The solution of all this is easy. Christianity is a severe religion of the spirit. To the flesh it allows nothing but servitude. It is intolerant of error and lust. It is hence oppression, and must be thrown off or modified. We live in a progres-

sive age. Old things suit not us. The Gospel in which fishermen delighted needs reconstructing. It must be softened a little. It is too stern and must be humanized. It needs adjusting to the world, to be made agreeable to its tastes; and this work on a small scale is now in its incipiency. The old grand spirit of the early champions of the primitive gospel is relaxing. There is a dangerous yielding to earthly and fleshly vanities, which, if not checked, will prove disastrous. Church fairs, bazaars, and picnics are now looked upon by many brethren with an exceedingly lenient eye. Social dancing is feebly opposed by some, while by others it is openly advocated. It is now perilous for a preacher to breathe its name in disapprobation. It must be winked at, at least, or he is politely requested to resign. These things must be opposed. Every man among us must stand nobly up for the following position: In all acts of worship we must do only what is prescribed in the New Testament, or was done with divine sanction by the primitive Christians. Not the semblance of innovation must be allowed on this sacred principle. This will exclude the offensive and dangerous practices just named; and the sooner it is known that they are intolerable in the churches of Christ, the better. But a few hints, and not an amplification, are all that I designed.

By first addressing religion to the flesh, God wrought out another great result—that human flesh, while sin is in it, is not improvable. Be not startled, my brethren, but the flesh never grows better. It is as lawless at the moment of death as at the moment of birth, and this in the saint as in the sinner. We may bit and rein it, may hold it in check, or keep it under, but we never improve it. Paul's flesh, at the moment when writing "I have fought the fight," was not one whit better than mine, nor better than even his own when breathing out threatenings against the disciples. He "kept his body under," but it never grew better; and he himself tells us that in his flesh dwelt "no good thing." This is strong; but, according to every

Christian man's experience, not too strong. By disuse, the flesh and fleshly appetites may be weakened, but that never ceases to be lawless, nor these to clamor for gratification. Still, in simple disuse, we have our only remedy against them. Deny them, the food they seek; you can do no more.

And herein, by the way, lies the philosophy of fasting. It is not, as many would seem to think, the mere arbitrary imposition of a hardship. Very far from it. It has a deep significance for the Christian. It is to be to him a discipline, the object of which is the control of his flesh. For the presumption is that he who can wholly abstain from food and drink can be master of himself in all other respects. This mastery is the object of fasting.

But now, what conclusions do the preceding premises warrant? They are meager, I grant; still they are enough for my purpose. Clearly, then, they warrant the following conclusions:

1. The solemn obligation to maintain the simplicity of the Gospel. It is not enough that we keep it simple for the sinner; we must keep it simple for ourselves. An elaborate and showy religion is precisely the religion in which the flesh rejoices. Give the flesh forms, give it ceremonies, give it pageant—these are its delight. But these are not the characteristics of Christianity. They are its corruptions. The sinner, who smites on his breast, and in the anguish of his heart cries, What must I do to be saved? is in no mood to be amused with long recitals of ceremonies. An answer brief, pertinent, and intelligible is what he seeks. This the Gospel provides for him; it is hence his right, and he is robbed of Heaven's highest blessing when it is withheld from him. With holy emphasis, then, I repeat, keep the Gospel simple for the sinner. Insist with all the vehemence of one standing on the margin of the pit, and warning against it; insist that faith, use no epithet, that repentance, use no epithet, and immersion, use no epithet—that these, in all cases where the Bible is, are Christ's own

appointed conditions of remission of sins. Admit no exceptions, nor give any license to disobedience. These conditions proclaim, in a bold, manful spirit; proclaim them without apology, without stint. With them we have fought the fight, with them gained the victory. By them now, let us bravely stand.

But we must keep the Gospel pure for ourselves. Hence every semblance of show and parade, not demanded by the severest construction of its provisions, must be withstood. For the sake of the holy joy caused by giving, for the sake of the deep gratitude awakened by beneficence, let us squander no funds uselessly on fine churches. Let these, with all their appointments, be severely simple. Thus shall we save large sums for deeds of charity.

2. That apostasy takes its rise in the flesh. Between flesh and spirit under Christ there is a never-ending antagonism. The one is forever at war against the other. The spirit is completely subject to the will of Christ; the flesh is the very reverse. This keeps up an endless strife. The soul is thereby harassed and fretted. Of this, in the course of time, it becomes weary. It now finds it easier to yield than to resist. In yielding, moreover, it exchanges a present restraint for a present pleasure. The temptation to do this is often hard to resist for a present pleasure. The temptation to do this is often hard to resist. Indeed, too often it is not resisted at all; and when once the spirit begins to yield to the flesh, the work of ruin goes rapidly on. This work looks to two ends—the removal of restraints, and worldly gratifications. On both these I must dwell a little.

The most difficult task assigned the Christian, in the present state, is that of duly restraining the flesh. The wants of the spirit are few; the wants of the flesh countless. In regard to those, the Christian soon learns that no full provision has been made to meet them in this life. Whether this can not be, or should not, it is needless to inquire. We know it to be so.

The gratification of the spirit is something to be looked for in a state beyond this. But as to the wants of the flesh, the case is the very reverse. For these the future state makes no provision. The present alone is left to them. If not here and now gratified, they never will be. Besides, their gratification is mostly attended with highly intoxicating present pleasure. The opportunity for this once lost may never return. How hard, under these circumstances, is the task of fleshly denial? But this denial the Gospel imposes as a most solemn duty. Hence the wants of the flesh and the restraints of the gospel stand always strongly opposed. To bear these restraints is in itself not agreeable; while not to gratify those wants is very hard. The temptation, therefore, to throw off the restraints is double. Few men are proof against this pressure. All are ready to yield to it more or less; many, wholly. Thus the tendency constantly is to fleshly victory and spiritual bondage. Such is the Christian's strife. But already I have mentioned the work of ruin, when once the spirit begins to yield to the flesh, as looking likewise to worldly gratifications. By these I mean such gratifications as the man of the world delights in, or as the unregenerate heart seeks. These Christ denies to his followers. Of course, I speak not of those fleshly gratifications which, being kept within proper limits, are lawful. I speak only of those which are wrong in themselves, or are wrong from their evil tendencies. Boldly the Christian must withstand these. To yield to them even once may prove fatal. Persistent, obstinate resistance alone is safe; for when once the soul's firm resolution to resist is broken, life is half wrecked. A broken will against evil is more to be lamented than all the mere temporal disasters which can befall man. Here it is, moreover, that the danger of sensual pleasure comes out. It endows the flesh with the control over the spirit. Where this is complete there is positively no hope. It must hence be resolutely withstood, especially in its incipient stages. When far advanced, the chances of successful opposition become few

and feeble. Subdue the flesh in the very outset of the Christian life, otherwise it is almost certain to triumph till death. It must be kept constantly under. Hence all attempts to make Christianity minister to it are both criminal and dangerous, and must hence, by the true disciple of Christ, be disused. Great temples, therefore, as places of worship, with gorgeous appurtenances which feed only the lust of the eye, together with the select voluptuous music of organs and hired choirs, which excites only the languid carnal emotions of the heart, are to be reprobated and utterly shunned. Better that the cause of Christ should never again be advocated beneath a roof constructed by human hands, and that another note of cultivated music should never be heard, than that it should be enfeebled by these things, and its power of control thereby weakened. At best, it is not too certain that the flesh will be kept under; at worst, it is certain not to be.

But the necessity for the change implied in the Savior's language, upon which I am now commenting, will become still more apparent by considering the difference between the Christian man and the sinner. Wherein, then, consists the great material distinction between them? The Christian man is a man whose mind is controlled by the will of Christ, and whose body is controlled by his mind. The man of the world is a man whose body Satan controls, and whose mind is controlled by his body. In other words, Christ controls the mind, and the mind the body—this makes the Christian. Satan controls the body, and the body the mind—this makes the sinner. Herein lie all the differences, partial and complete, between the two. Hence, whatever ministers superfluously to the flesh, as flesh, helps Satan; while, on the contrary, whatever ministers to the spirit, enlightening and strengthening it, helps Christ, Surely in view of this no Christian man can get his consent to work merely for the flesh.

From this, moreover, it can be still more clearly seen how it is that a religion of the flesh tends rather to ruin man than

to save him. Such a religion by ministering directly to the flesh greatly strengthens it. Of this increased strength Satan avails himself to subjugate still further the spirit. Besides, increasing the power of the flesh relatively diminishes that of the spirit. As that grows stronger, this becomes the less adequate to the task of controlling it. This is another advantage to Satan. Just as he perceives the controlling power of the spirit decreasing, his exertions are redoubled to gain the complete mastery over it. For with the Christian man when this is once done, the case is about hopeless. This end, therefore, gained, and Satan feels that he can rest easy, as his work is about done. In the case of too many, indeed, it must be pronounced effectually done, since from it no recovery ever takes place.

All the antecedent religions to Christianity sought to control man by acting upon him from without, inwardly. They hence failed. Christianity reverses the order of procedure, or the direction in which the force acts. It seeks to control man by acting upon him from within, outwardly. Its seat is the spirit. From this, as from a centre, its power radiates. Christ seeks the mastery of the soul; the devil that of the flesh. The true worshipers are they who worship God in spirit and in truth. The spirit is the fountain whence the worship springs; the truth is the law which regulates it. This marks the great radical difference between Christianity and all other religions. Christ begins his work in the spirit among the very springs and roots of life itself. Here he seeks to establish his supremacy, here to inaugurate and carry on his reign. It is within a man, over his spirit, that he rules.

First give Christ the complete control of the mind, then comes the case of the body. This, not Christ directly, but the mind itself controls. "I," said Paul, "keep my body under." It was the true Paul, the inner man, the spirit or mind which did this. It was not the Savior; for otherwise it would be difficult to account for its being incomplete. And what Paul

here says of himself is true of every other saint. Each keeps his body under. The work of subduing the flesh is left with the Christian. If not by him it will go undone. The task is difficult indeed; and is never attended with complete success. But so important is the dependent result that the most heroic effort should be made to accomplish it. Here, as elsewhere, God requires perfection. He cannot require less, though he knows he will never realize it. To do so would be so far to license imperfection. This he can not do. His plan is sternly to require a perfect life—perfect in spirit, perfect in flesh, and to forgive the deficiencies. This is better than to require a life only partly correct. It is better to forgive sin than to license it.

Previously in this piece it was suggested that the service of God in spirit might in certain cases be perfect. The present seems the place to amplify that suggestion. It doubtless struck the reader as novel, and perhaps as false. Certainly it needs qualification. By the expression, it was not meant that any man while in the flesh ever attains a state of sinless perfection. No such state is attainable. But it was meant that the devotion of the spirit may be unbroken to the end of life. Paul says, "with the mind I serve the law of God." This is the service of which I speak; and I hold that it not only is continuous through life in many cases, but that in all it must be, if eternal life is attained. In the case of the true Christian, the mind in its fealty to Christ now relaxes. In its attachment and intent it is permanently true. In these it varies not. The Christian need only consult his own consciousness to find the verification of this. He knows it to be true. That is, he knows that it never occurred that in spirit he gave Christ up and let him go. From the instant of his becoming a Christian down to the reading of this, there has never been a break in his faith, nor one in his attachment. Not only has he purposed to be true to Christ; he knows that in will he has actually been so. This is the highest and best service. When a man in the whole breadth of his will is held in obedience to Christ,

he can rise no higher while in the flesh. All his other service will be unsteady and full of breaks. Failures will be constantly occurring. These will give him keen recurring pain. His pleasure will spring from the devotion of his mind. In this he will find his delight, and not in the acts in which the flesh can play a part. In all these, imperfection will be found. Nothing here is faultless. Sin is constantly emerging. Hence, when the Christian, in cases where the flesh is involved, has done his best, his comment must be—an unprofitable servant.

Not only is the real Christian constantly true to God in his spirit; but he cannot be otherwise. If he fail here, in my candid judgment, he is lost, and lost forever. When his faith parts, his case is hopeless. This is the fatal "falling away" of Paul. After this, renewal to repentance never takes place; that is, the apostate can never be brought to repent a second time. He is gone, forever gone. When a man in his soul gives up Christ, lets him go, and ceases absolutely to believe in him, there is no more chance for his salvation than for that of Satan. It is a mockery to pray for him, or over him, or even to seem to hope for him. He has now counted the blood of Christ an unholy thing, and trampled it under his feet. He is consequently left without remedy and without hope. Certainly it is to be hoped that few such cases occur; but so frightful are they in their end, that no effort should be spared to prevent them. Hence the care that should be taken to check apostasy in its beginning. It may rapidly run to the wrecking of faith; then all is over.

On the contrary, so long as a man remains true to Christ in faith, and will, it is difficult to say how numerous and how great his departures must become before his case is to be pronounced hopeless. It is questionable, whether it ever can so become. Not that he is to be licensed to sin, nor not put away if he do not desist; but only that it is difficult to determine when he crosses the line beyond which hope reaches not. Unless I read the spirit of Christianity amiss, God looks into the

soul for faith and purpose, rather than into the outer life for excellency. It is the inner state more than the outward record which avails with him. That, he will have right; this, he would. Hence, in all our dealings with the erring children of God, while we are to be most careful to show no countenance to sin, we should be slow to decide them lost, while the will and faith still remain unbroken and entire. Aided by these we may save, but without them it is worse than idle to parley even a moment. When they have failed, instantly exclude.

Here I must again advert to the warfare which, in the case of the Christian, is perpetually going on between the flesh and the spirit. This I do for the mental relief of brethren whom the fact often troubles. When they have made their best effort to master the evil inclinations of the flesh, they find they have not succeeded. The flesh is still flesh; and its appetites and propensities remain unsubdued. Brethren become alarmed at the fact, and begin to question the reality of their conversion. For this not the slightest necessity exists. The test of conversion is not the extinction of all fleshly desires. To the spirit, and not to the flesh, we must look in determining this question. Is the faith in Christ real, also the will strong to forsake sin and live a pure life?—these, not absence of fleshly feeling, are the proof and the fact of conversion. Hence, where they are, no fear need be felt as to the soundness of the conversion. As already stated in this article, the flesh never grows better. The most we can do is to deny it the gratification it seeks. In this way we may curb it, and thereby diminish somewhat its controlling power. But the sinful propensities will forever remain. They are never extinguished. Gradually, by culture of the spirit, they grow more quiet; but they are asleep, not dead. Give them but half a chance, and they are wild again in lawless revels. Let the Christian, then, not be alarmed at the fact that after conversion he still finds himself in the body, and with the flesh serving the law of sin. Only let him be constant in his purpose

to serve God in spirit truly and always; and with heroic will let him deny the flesh, if in his power, even one twitch of gratification. This will require sleepless vigilance. Moreover, it is endless. But it must be done; otherwise all is lost.

Another important fact here presents itself, which finds its explanation in the views now in hand. When sinners are appealed to, to obey the gospel, they at once, where deeply concerned, set about the task of self-examination. They desire to determine beforehand, if possible, the probabilities of success should they take the solemn step. They now look closely into their hearts. They know they believe, they know they are penitent; they know they love Christ and want to obey him. Here they have not a doubt. But they also feel that they are still in the flesh, and that its power over them is not yet wholly broken. They now erroneously conclude, because this is the case, that they are not fit to take the step; and deem that they must further wait till these evil fleshly propensities have died within them. They hence decline to act. But this is not correct. The preacher must now be faithful and careful to explain the matter to them. Let them know that these fleshly propensities never will leave them; and that all they can do is to watch them and keep them subdued; that faith in Christ, and not a change in flesh, is the ground on which he is to be obeyed. Great good will result from the procedure. I verily believe that today some of the best men in the land are kept out of the church by the very cause here named. Let preachers see that the obstacle is removed, and the correct view presented. Neither in the saint nor in the sinner does any change ever take place in the flesh. This great truth once fully known, and Satan's power, first, to keep men out of the church, and, second, to trouble them when in it, is much weakened.

THE CHURCH—ITS WORSHIP*

By FRANK G. ALLEN

Each dispensation has had its peculiar worship. The worship of the Jew differed very essentially from that of the Patriarch. The worship of the Christian differs radically from both. The worship which justified a Patriarch would condemn a Jew; and that which would justify a Jew would condemn a Christian.

Religion, at first, was individual; and this, in a certain sense, it must ever be. For the first twenty-five hundred years of the world's history it extended not beyond the family. Every one was his own priest. He could build his own altars and offer his own sacrifices for himself or for others.

But when the priesthood was changed, and confined to the family of Aaron, this worship was no longer permitted by those included in the Sinaitic covenant; hence no longer acceptable. It is likewise true, that the sacrifices offered *by* the Aaronic priesthood ceased to be acceptable after the death of Christ and the establishment of the Church. When Christ ascended to the Father the priesthood was again changed. The high priesthood then passed into the hands of One belonging to a tribe "of which no man gave attendance at the altar." "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood" (Heb. 7:14). The priesthood being changed, a change in the worship follows as a necessity. "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12). While the worship of the three dispensations had some things in common, that of each had its distinctive features. Since Christianity is distinguished from

**Old Path Guide, July, 1879, pp. 258-63.*

every other religion by its institutions and worship, it follows that, in order to its preservation, these must be strictly observed. Substitution here is the highest arrogance and the deepest crime. What God has ordained must be observed without compromise or hindrance by man's device. Nothing short of this can preserve the Church from degeneracy and final extinction.

A fundamental feature of the worship in the Church of God, is the

UNIVERSAL PRIESTHOOD

of Christians. Since the Levitical priesthood has passed away all God's people are again priests. The whole family of God have become a "royal priesthood." They no longer offer the bloody sacrifices of the law, but they offer their "bodies as living sacrifices," and "the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of the lips, giving thanks to his name." Since all were priests, all worshiped God without a mediator, save that of the Lord Jesus. They could all come with equal boldness to a throne of grace. All exclusive priestly functions have come of the apostasy. There was nothing of the kind at the beginning. There was then no clerical distinctions, consequently no clerical arrogance. This is also one of the abominations of the apostasy. In the apostolic churches all were preachers. Those who were scattered abroad from Jerusalem went everywhere preaching the word. It does not follow that all were equally qualified to teach and to preach, or that they actually assumed this prerogative at all times, but this was a right to be exercised when occasion demanded, by virtue of their priesthood.

"This idea that the whole church constituted a spiritual priesthood, that each believer was entitled to exhort, to teach, and to preach, continued for some time in the church, as may appear from the extracts below."—*Ancient Christianity Exemplified*.

We shall give a few of the extracts to which Dr. Lyman Coleman refers in the above quotation. Says Tertullian:

"We are priests called thereto by Christ. The Supreme High Priest, the Great Priest of the Heavenly Father, even Christ, when he clothed us with that which is his—for as many of you as are baptized have put on Christ (Gal. 3:27), did make us kings and priests to God and his Father" (Rev. 1:6). We are deluded if we imagine that that is allowed to the layman which is not permitted to the priest. Are not we laymen all priests?" Says Irenaeus: "All the righteous have the sacerdotal dignity."

In the work above referred to, the author, who is very high authority, further says:

The reasoning of Tertullian, in the treatises from which these citations are taken, (All of which we have not quoted —Ed.) is that the distinction between the clergy was only conventional, and originally unknown. For the sake of order, he would have the ordinances administered only by the clergy; but, in their absence, he contends that any private Christian, as being himself a priest, may assume to teach and to preach, to baptize, and to administer the Lord's Supper. The pride of rank was wholly unknown in the age of the apostles and of their immediate successors; and, until the establishment of Christianity as a State religion under Constantine. The ministerial office neither conferred any personal superiority nor claimed any official distinction.

Much more testimony of the highest order might be given on this point, but space will not permit, neither do we regard it as necessary. The present distinctions in the sectarian world between "clergy" and "laity," and the priestly arrogance assumed by the former, had no place in the Church of Christ at the beginning, and are contrary to both the letter and the spirit

of New Testament Christianity. The priestly claims in the Roman Catholic Church are simply blasphemous, and much of those in Protestantism are good imitations. Had they as much of the spirit of Christ as they have of the Pope of Rome, we should have high hopes of living to see the millennium. Clerical caste was one of the leading causes of the apostasy, and it is the greatest obstacle today in the way of the restoration of the Church to its former purity and simplicity.

Pride of distinction and the love of power will withstand . a flood of divine truth. While we are laboring, then, to break down this popish idea among others that has filled the Church with ruin, we can not be too careful that it is not developed to some extent among ourselves.

One item of worship in the churches in the apostolic age was

READING THE SCRIPTURES.

When we consider the scarcity of copies of the Scriptures, the Bible knowledge of the early Christians is astonishing. Their constant study of the Holy Scriptures and their profound reverence for them, were recognized traits of their character. They had the Word of God dwelling in them richly. Not only was reading the Scriptures a part of all the public worship, it was a daily custom in private life—in the family, the social circle, and even at their toil. On this point we have the testimony of one who has gathered up a vast amount of information with reference to the daily life of the first Christians. He says:

Those who could read never went abroad without taking some part of the Bible with them. The women in their household labors wore some portion of the sacred roll hanging about their necks; the men made it the companion of their toils in the field and the workshop. Morning, noon, and night, they read it at their meals. By recitals of the narratives of sacred history, by constant reading, by paraphrase,

by commentary, and by sacred song, they taught the Scriptures diligently unto their children; talking of these heavenly themes when they sat in their house, when they walked by the way, when they laid themselves down, and when they rose up. One has related, with great delight, that he never sat at meat with Origin, A.D. 225, but one of the company read to the other. They never retired to rest without first reading the Bible. So diligent were they in this divine employment, that prayer succeeded the reading of the word, and the reading of the word to prayer.—*Ancient Christianity Exemplified*.

In our efforts to restore primitive Christianity we need to return to a more devoted study of the Holy Scriptures. We are now evidently losing in this respect. We do not study the Bible as did the pioneers in this Reformation. If we had the Word of God dwelling in us as it did in the first Christians, so that from the abundance of the heart we would be speaking it on all occasions, how soon would we carry the light of the Gospel to every benighted creature, and the balm of Gilead to every wounded heart!

Another important item in the worship of the first Christians was their

SINGING.

Their singing was a real *heart-service*, and consisted of "psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs" (Eph. 5 :19, 20; Col. 3 :16). In this delightful service, the whole congregation doubtless took part. "The psalms of David were chiefly used in the ancient Church."

It has been contended recently, that the singing of the first churches was not congregational, and therefore our congregational singing is as unauthorized as any musical performance in the worship. The facts of history are clearly against this statement. In his *Ancient Christianity Exemplified*, than which no

work known to us contains more reliable information with reference to the primitive Church, Dr. Lyman Coleman says:

The prevailing mode of singing during the first three centuries was *congregational*. The whole congregation united their voices in the sacred song of praise in strains suited to their ability. . . . The most ancient and the most common mode of singing was confessedly for the whole assembly, men, women, and children, to blend their voices in their songs of praise in the great congregation. Such is the testimony of Hilary of Augustin and Chrysostom. "Formerly all came together and united in their song, as is still our custom." "Men and women, the aged and the young, were distinguished only by their skill in singing, for the spirit which led the voice of each one, blended all in one harmonious melody."

Artistic singing was not cultivated till the fourth century. This took the singing from the congregation and confined it to a class of trained musicians. This effectually destroyed that part of the primitive worship. The congregation *could* not worship in the song, and singers *did* not. *Nor do they yet*. This artistic and theatrical singing led, in the sixth century, to the introduction of the organ. On this point the author above quoted says:

For the cultivation of this style of sacred music, singing-schools were established, the leaders of which rose to great distinction. Instrumental accompaniments were introduced, and especially that of the organ; which was transferred from the theatre to the church as an instrument of sacred music. . . . The devotional tendency of sacred music was lost in the artistic style of its profane and secular airs.

There is in all this a lesson for us of profound interest. That which corrupted the worship of God at first cannot be ignored in our efforts to restore it from that corruption. Christianity needs to be restored in *spirit* as well as in letter. To

interfere with its spirituality is to interfere with its life. To whatever extent artistic singing does this it is pernicious. We behold it to be the duty of all God's people to cultivate their voices in His praise, but when it is carried to the extent of an *entertainment* for a congregation, instead of worship by it, whether with or without an instrument, it is not of God, but of the Devil. In the leading fashionable churches of this age, both Catholic and Protestant, the Devil has completely stolen this part of the worship of God. In our efforts at restoration, we must pay especial attention to the *spirituality* of our singing, else, in this respect, our work will be a failure.

PRAYER

Simplicity characterized everything in the primitive worship. Consequently the prayers of the first Christians were of the most simple and artless character. "The Christian Church," says Neader, "regarded prayer as a quickening spirit, drawing forth the inward aspirations of the soul after God." Another very high authority says:

Even the most learned of the apologists and early fathers, such as Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, Clement of Alexandria, Origin, Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, and Lactantius, who were no strangers to the graces of diction, refused all ornamental embellishments in their addresses to the throne of grace, alleging that the kingdom of heaven consists not in word, but in power. Their prayers were accordingly offered in the greatest simplicity, and as far as possible in the phraseology of Scripture. This artlessness and elegant simplicity appear in striking contrast with the ostentation and bombast of a later date. This contrast appears equally great also in the brevity of these prayers. It was a maxim in the primitive Church, that many words should never be employed to express what might better be said in a few.

This simplicity of prayer has been greatly corrupted. One reason why so many people refuse to pray in the public worship and in the family, is because of a false standard of prayer. For this preachers are largely responsible. An oration is not a prayer. Flowers of rhetoric are for ears human, not divine. There is a wonderful reformation needed at this point; and it must begin with the preachers. With a restoration of the simplicity and brevity of primitive prayer will come a restoration of its prevalence—*not before*. We must get our *hearts* into our prayers as well as into our songs, else we shall have a form of worship without its power. The more heart we have in our worship the more it will have of childlike simplicity. Without the restoration of this, the restoration of *forms* is too insignificant to lift it above contempt.

Another item in the worship of the primitive churches we must briefly notice before closing—

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

That it was the custom of the first churches to meet on the first day of every week to partake of the Lord's Supper, is well established. In Acts 20:7, we learn that the disciples met on the first day of the week; and the *purpose* for which they met was to break the loaf. We, therefore, have apostolic example for breaking the loaf on the first day of the week; and we have neither precept nor example for its observance on any other day.

On this point, Mosheim, in his Church History, says:

All Christians were unanimous in setting apart the first day of the week, on which the triumphant Savior arose from the dead, for the solemn celebration of public worship. This pious custom, which was derived from the example of the Church of Jerusalem, was founded upon the express appointment of the apostles, who consecrated that day to the same sacred purpose, and was observed *universally* throughout the

Christian churches, as appears from the united testimony of the most credible writers.

In this worship on the Lord's day, he tells us, was observed the Lord's Supper. The testimony of Justin Martyr, who is held to be contemporary with the apostle John, is very clear as to the practice of the churches at that time:

On Sunday we all assemble in one place, both those who live in the city and those who dwell in the country, and the writings of the apostles and prophets are read so long as the time permits. After the reading, the president of the assembly makes an address in which he recapitulates the glorious things that have been read, and exhorts the people to follow them. Then we all stand up together and pray. After prayer, bread, wine, and water are brought in. The president of the meeting again prays according to his ability, and gives thanks, to which the people respond Amen. After this, the bread, wine, and water are distributed to those present, and the deacons carry portions to such as are necessarily detained from the meeting. Those who are able and willing contribute what they please in money, which is given to the president of the meeting, and is appropriated to the support of widows and orphans, the sick, the poor, and whomsoever is necessitous.

Biblical scholars, without regard to denomination, generally concede that in the early history of the Church the Lord's Supper was observed every Lord's-day. Dr. Carson, one of the ablest and best men the Baptist Church has ever produced, not only contended that this was the practice of the first Christians, but, unlike the rest of his brethren, who have to concede the same fact, observed the Lord's Supper in his congregation every first day of the week.

As a result of the apostasy, when the Lord's-day now comes we see multitudes going in all directions to places dedi-

cated to the worship of God, for anything and everything except *the one thing* for which the disciples of Christ met in the golden age of the Church! This, therefore, becomes an essential item in the work of restoration. Let the observance of the Lord's Supper be the primary object of meeting on the first day of the week, and let this meeting be by *every* congregation of the disciples of Christ. While primitive practice is disregarded to the extent of making the Supper a matter of secondary importance where it is observed weekly, and in many congregations attending to it only when there happens to be a preacher, we are substituting human for divine wisdom, and may expect therefore to reap the bitter fruits of our folly. With the restoration of primitive Christianity there must be a restoration of the Lord's Supper on every Lord's-day as the prominent feature of the worship, by every congregation of Disciples.

WORSHIPPING ASSEMBLIES—No. 1*

By ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

THE APPEARANCE OF THINGS

God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all that are about him.—Psalms 89:7,

A deep and radical reformation of all things connected with religious meetings, whether ordinary or extraordinary, is indispensable to the edification of Christians and the conversion of sinners. Our meetings of all sorts are greatly defective in many respects, and in none more visibly than in the dress and manners of the professed worshippers. The present costumes and general display are in extremely bad taste. They are so in the judgment of all well informed men of sense, out of the church; and certainly of all persons in the church of unquestionable piety.

There is a congruity between persons, places, and employments, which never can be violated without detriment and disgust, if there are any persons of good education present. To see worshippers appear in church as at a marriage feast, a presidential levee, a theatre, a dance—either in dress, manners, or general demeanor—strikes all persons of reflection as snow in summer, or a plaudit in the midst of a prayer.

We Americans are in advance of our English and European ancestors in this general apostasy from good taste and good sense. In the political and fashionable church of England at home—even in the metropolis of the empire itself, whither the grandees of the earth resort, there is not such a revolting incongruity between the dress and general appearance of noble lords and ladies as is found in many of our backwoods meet-

**Millennial Harbinger, 1839, p. 439.*

ing houses. On the Sabbath and in the cathedral the nobility dress in their plainest garb. They reserve their splendid equipage, their courtly attire, their gems and coronets, their glittering decorations for courts and carnivals, for tilts and tournaments, and appear in the sanctuary as though they sought not to be worshiped, but to worship God. But we frequent the houses of prayer and the places of worship with all our "finery" upon us, as though our synagogues were theatres of fashion—and the "Ladies' Book," rather than the New Testament, was the guide of our devotions

If, then, the outward garb be an index to the soul, or resembles the ruling passions within, how unwelcome are such worshippers at the footstool of the Almighty; and how unfit to offer acceptable sacrifices upon the altar of Christian worship ! Can any one imagine that the sacrifices of such persons are the offerings of an humble mind, a broken heart, a contrite spirit, that trembles at the word of God? May we not rather say with the Prophet of Israel, "The show of their countenance doth witness against them"; for the daughters of Zion thus attired "are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a tinkling with their feet" ? Surely this is not "the beauty of holiness,"—"the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, in the sight of God of great value."

Kings and Prophets, the saints and martyrs of other times, were oftener seen in sackcloth and ashes than in the gaudy fashions of a flippant and irreverent age. Their sense of propriety forbade that soul and body should disagree—that the outward man should betray the inward, and falsify the state of the mind. The Jews' religion taught men congruity, and especially that the exterior attire should always correspond with the inward plainness and simplicity of the heart.

"Slovenly neglect and rustic coarseness," though also incongruous with good Christian taste, are nevertheless more

tolerable in Christian assemblies, than the gaiety and style now in vogue amongst the American communities: for, as a chaste and sensible Christian poet has said—

"A heavenly mind

May be indifferent to her house of clay,
And slight the hovel as beneath her care;
But how a body so fantastic, trim,
And quaint in its deportment and attire,
Can lodge a heavenly mind, demands a doubt."

A very strong doubt, indeed! We trust, then, that among all the disciples of Christ there will be a very great restoration in this particular. They are by no means generally more exemplary than others in their dress and manners, or in their marked reverence for the institutions of religious worship. Gravity, sincerity, simplicity, humility, and spirituality are not more comely than requisite to our spiritual attainments and happiness. It is impossible to grow in grace, to improve in any of the Christian virtues, or to increase in the rational and moral enjoyments of our Christian profession, unless there is a perfect harmony in all our actions and professions. We are necessarily much influenced by external circumstances: our spirits are in our bodies, and our bodies are in our apparel; therefore, what we see and feel upon our persons must quite as much affect ourselves as our neighbors. Let any one who doubts try a few experiments upon himself: let him dress himself in the proud costumes of the reigning fashions in Paris, London, or New York, and approach the sanctuary of the Lord: let him enter into his closet and shut the door, and pray to his Father who sees him in the secret place, and ask himself how he feels in communion with God, caparisoned with all the vain trimmings and blandishments of dissipated fancy upon him. Or let him approach the Lord's table in company with the saints who celebrate the Christian passover; and while he muses on the sufferings and death of the Son of

God, hanging almost naked on the cursed tree, ignominiously expiring between two noted malefactors, let him look into his ruffled bosom, upon his golden trinkets, and fantastic apparel, and ask himself how this comports with all the affections of his heart absorbed in the contemplations of the judgment hall, the pretorium, and Mount Calvary. Then let him change his apparel, sell his finery, and gold to those who can afford no higher honors, no brighter glories—give the proceeds to the poor, and dress himself according to the Christian mirror, in the plainest and most unassuming garb, and try himself kneeling or lying upon the earth, in some deep cavern, in some lonely alcove, in some deep forest, or in the secret chamber in the lonely hour of even, or at midnight, and see how he feels in converse with his Divine Father, or seated thus among the faithful at the communion board, compared with himself on former occasions, with all the pride of fashion thickly set upon him. I am willing that his verdict, faithfully rehearsed, be final on any issue formed against my views of these congruities for which I plead.

But it is not only in this single item of dress that our public worshipping assemblies call for instant and thorough reformation. Our manners, I mean those of this age, are not sacred. Our attitude, our countenances, our demeanor, are not reverential: we feel not that we stand on holy ground, and therefore we do not loose our shoes from off our feet. The vacant stare, the wandering eye, the dissipated countenance, to say nothing of the foolish levity or pharisaic disdain, proclaim that our hearts are not engaged in spirit and in truth while we are professedly worshipping the Lord.

The undignified and irreverential, the witty and the sarcastic airs and remarks of some who too often speak in the name of the Lord, greatly contribute to this unpropitious and unsanctified state of things. The denunciation of Hosea has come upon them: "There shall be like people like priest," or "like priest like people"; for they act and react upon each

other; and the one cannot long be erroneous or corrupt without the other.

The radical error which works in all these forms is a want of a deep and solemn conviction that the church is the house of God—the temple of the Holy Spirit—and that we are, especially and emphatically, in the presence of the Lord while we are engaged in his worship. Were an angel to appear in our assemblies, could we act thus? All eyes, all ears, all hearts would be fixed upon him. Did we therefore realize the Divine presence, it would be impossible that we could act thoughtlessly, irreverently, or lightly on such occasions. Let every one imagine how he would dress himself—how he would demean himself—how he would prepare himself in expectation of meeting with the Lord and his brethren at any given time and place; and so let him act in the assemblies of the saints on all occasions.

But I am asked, What shall we do? Shall we assume a more solemn, reverential, and devotional appearance? Shall we present ourselves before the Lord in a more orderly and worshipful costume and attitude of body? Not, indeed, hypocritically ; but sincerely and unfeignedly; not with the outward man only, but certainly with the outward as well as with the inward man, we should glorify God. Both our bodies and our spirits are his. He has redeemed our spirits from sin and our bodies from the grave, and both should be dedicated to him. We do not ask the one without the other. We plead for the garb, the attitude, the demeanor—as well as the faith, the hope, the love, the actual piety, and the morality of the Christian. We demand all. We plead for complete sanctification— for a perfect consecration of our persons and powers to the Lord. We should evince in every practicable way, not only the Christian graces, but all the lesser ornaments of a good behavior, in every action and in every display of mind and body.

But here, as in all things pertaining to God, to heaven, and eternal life, we must begin with the heart. "The heart must be kept with all diligence: for out of it are all the issues of life." But how shall we keep the heart right? Aye, that is the question! The answer is ready: The heart is to be kept right by keeping it much in company with God—by prayer and a constant meditation upon the word. These are sovereign remedies for all cardiac derangements. The heart is, indeed, made better, as wisdom saith, by the devotion of the countenance; but it is kept right only by prayer and meditation.

Christians of the present day have not time to prepare for heaven. They have yet to learn that the earth was made for the human body; the body for the soul; and the soul for God. But as it is now carnalized and under the dominion of the flesh, it needs much purification—it needs the blood of sprinkling, the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, all the ordinances of the church—to which must be added the spirit of grace and supplication, private meditation and prayer. Then, indeed, under these influences the Christians, the Nazarites of heaven, as Jeremiah says, will be what God's people once were—"purer than the snow, whiter than the milk, more ruddy in body than rubies—their polishing of sapphires." A public assembly of these will be like a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariot, like polished pillars in an ivory palace, perfumed with frankincense, myrrh, and cassia—"looking forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

PART 2

ORDER OF WORSHIP

ORDER OF WORSHIP*

By ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

We shall now inquire what was the ancient order of worship in the Christian Church. Preparatory to this it may be expedient to consider whether there be any divinely authorized worship in the assembly of saints. As this is a theme of great importance, and of much difficulty with some, we shall bestow some attention to it. And in the first instance we shall attempt to demonstrate from rational principles, that there is a divinely instituted worship for the assemblies of the disciples. In order to do this as convincingly as possible, and to circumscribe the arena of conjecture, we shall take but two positions, which we hope to hold as impregnable fortresses against all assault. These we shall exhibit in the form of dilemmas. The first is, either there is a divinely authorized order of Christian worship in Christian assemblies, or there is not. This every man must admit, or cease to be a man. Now to remove all ambiguity from the terms of the dilemma, we shall explicitly state that, by a Christian assembly, we mean a congregation or assembly of disciples meeting in one place for social worship. The day agreed upon by Christians for this meeting is the first day of every week. The authority that ordains this day we have already noticed in this work, and it is not now a subject of inquiry. It is also unnecessary to our present purpose, inasmuch as this day is agreed upon by all Christians, with the exception of some Sabbatarians, for whose consideration we have something to say another time. By the phrase, "order of Christian worship," we do not mean the position of the bodies of the worshippers, nor the hour of the day in which certain things are to be done, nor whether

**The Christian*, St. John, N. B., Vol. 4, pp. 136-139, May, 1848.

one action shall be always performed first, another always second, and another always third, though in these there is an order which is comely, apposite, or congruous with the genius of the religion, and concerning which some things are said by the apostles; and, perhaps, even in some respects, these things may be determined with certainty as respects the practice of the first congregations of disciples; but that there are certain social acts of Christian worship, all of which are to be attended to in the Christian assembly, and each of which is essential to the perfection of the whole as every member of the human body is essential to the perfect man—is that which we wish to convey by the phrase "order of Christian worship." These remarks may suffice in the meantime to prevent misapprehensions; but in the prosecution of our inquiries every ambiguity will be completely removed. We shall now repeat the first position we have taken—either there is a divinely authorized order of Christian worship in Christian assemblies, or there is not.

On the supposition that there is not, then the following absurdities are inevitable: There can be no disorder in the Christian assembly; there can be no error in the acts of social worship; there can be no innovation in the department of observances; there can be no transgression of the laws of the King. For these reasons, viz., where there is no order established there can be no disorder, for disorder is acting contrary to established order; where there is no standard there can be no error, for error is a departure or a wandering from a standard; where there is nothing fixed there can be no innovation, for to innovate is to introduce new things amongst those already fixed and established; and where there is no law there can be no transgression, for a transgression is a leaping over or a violating of legal restraints. Those, then, who contend that there is no divinely authorized order of Christian worship in Christian assemblies, do at the same time, and must inevitably maintain, that there is no disorder,

no error, no innovation, no transgression in the worship of the Christian Church—no, nor ever can be. This is reducing one side of the dilemma to what may be called perfect absurdity.

But, to make this matter evident to children as well as men, we will carry it a little further. One society of disciples meets on the first day morning and they all dance till evening, under the pretext that this is the happiest way of expressing their joy, and when they have danced themselves down they go home. No in this there is no disorder, error, innovation, or transgression, for there is no divinely authorized order of Christian worship. The reader will observe that we do not suppose human laws or regulations of any consequence in this matter. Men may regulate the worship they require for themselves and for one another; and in relation to those regulations there may be disorder, error, innovation, and transgression. But as none but the Lord can prescribe or regulate the worship due to himself and profitable to us; so, if he have done it, human regulations are as vain and useless as attempts to prevent the ebbing of the sea or the waxing and waning of the moon. But to proceed: Another society meets for worship, and they sing all day; another shouts all day; another runs as a race all day; another lies prostrate on the ground all day; another reads all day; another hears one man speak all day; another sits silent all day; another waves palm branches all day; another cries in the forenoon and listens to the organ in the afternoon; and it is all equally right, lawful, orderly, and acceptable; for there is no divinely authorized order of Christian worship. Now as one of the only two supposable cases must be abandoned, it follows by undeniable consequence, that there is a divinely authorized order of Christian worship in Christian assemblies.

Our second position we hope to make appear equally strong and unassailable. Having now proved that there is a divinely authorized order of Christian worship in Christian assemblies, our second dilemma is: Either this Christian wor-

ship in Christian assemblies is uniformly the same, or it is not. To clear this position of ambiguity, it will be observed that we speak of the assembling of the disciples on the day agreed upon for the purpose of social worship, and that the same acts of religious worship are to be performed on every first day in every assembly of disciples, or they are not. If the same acts of worship, or religious ordinances, or observances, be attended to in every assembling of the saints, then their worship is the same, or it is not.

We shall follow the same method of demonstration as in the preceding dilemma. We shall take the last of the only two supposable cases and try its merits. It is not uniformly the same. Then it is different. These differences are either limited or unlimited. If they are unlimited, then it is uniformly different; and what is uniformly different has no order, standard, or rule, and thus we are led to the same absurdities which follow from supposing there was no divinely authorized order of Christian worship; for a worship uniformly different is a worship without order. But supposing that those differences are limited, those limitations must be defined or pointed out somewhere. But they are not. Now differences that are nowhere limited or pointed out are unlimited, and consequently may be carried *ad infinitum*, which is to say there is no order appointed, and thus we are again encompassed with the same absurdities.

To level this to every apprehension, it may be remarked that the worship of the Jews, though divinely authorized, was not uniformly the same. The worship at the feast of Tabernacles, at Pentecost, at the Passover, and in different seasons of the year, and even of the Moon varied from what was attended to on ordinary occasions. These varieties and differences were pointed out in their standard of worship. But no such varieties are pointed out, no such differences are ordained in any part of the standard of Christian worship. Yet we find amongst the professed Christians as great variety existing as

amongst the Jews—though with this difference, that divine authority ordained the one, and human authority the other. The worship of a class-meeting, of a camp-meeting, of a monthly concert, of an association, of a sacramental occasion, of a preparation, and of an "ordinary Sabbath," differ as much as the Jewish Passover, Pentecost, annual atonement, or daily sacrifice. Now there were in the Jewish state solid and substantial reasons for all these varieties but in the Christian state there is no reason for any variety. The changing types of the Jewish religion have received their consummation, and now there exists at all times the same reasons for the same observances. There is no reason why a society of disciples should commemorate the death or resurrection of Jesus on one first day more than another. All the logic or philosophy of the age, as well as the New Testament, fails in producing one reason. He that invents or discovers it, has discovered a new principle. But we are only establishing or demonstrating on rational principles that the worship of a Christian assembly is uniformly the same, and the method we have chosen is that of supposing the contrary and reducing the hypothesis to an absurdity, or a series of absurdities. In brief, the sum of our remarks on this position is, that if the worship of the Christian Church is not uniformly the same, then it is no established order, as proved in the first dilemma; and if occasionally different, there must be some reason for these varieties; but no reason exists, therefore a difference without reason is irrational and absurd. It follows then that there is a divinely authorized order of Christian worship in Christian assemblies, and that this worship is uniformly the same, which was to be demonstrated on principles of reason.

These positions are capable of rational demonstration on other grounds than those adopted; but this plan was preferred because it was the shortest, and, as we supposed, the most convincing.

This is only preparative or introductory to the essays which are to follow upon the ancient worship of the Christian Church. We are hastening through the outlines and shall fill up the interior after we have given an essay on each of the following topics. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine—in breaking of bread—in fellowship—in prayers—praising God. As we have paid more attention in the general to the apostles' doctrine than to the other items, our next essays will be on the breaking of bread, the fellowship, and prayers of the primitive church.

Hoping that the Christian reader will bring all things to the test, and hold fast that which is good, we bid him adieu for the present.

ORDER OF THE CHURCH AS RESPECTS WORSHIP*

By ALEXANDER CAMPBELL*

The worship of false gods is a scene of superlative tumult, confusion, and disorder. So is much of the corrupt worship of some who acknowledge the one and only living and true God.

In the antecedent economy the tabernacle and temple worship was a perfect model of good order. Everything was done according to a divine pattern, which was itself an image of the perfect order of the Supreme Intelligence. So exact was the obedience required, even to the utmost minutia, that Moses and the Prophets used all diligence to have the people understand all its details. To this effect spake the Holy Spirit to Ezekiel—"Son of man, show the house to the house of Israel; and let them measure the pattern."—"Show them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof; and all the ordinances thereof, and all the laws thereof; and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and *do* them."

Such was the discipline of the Jewish institution as preparatory to the Christian age. Now as the Christian Church is God's earthly house, it would be rationally and analogically expected that the worship of the Lord's day would be a display of the most rational and religious arrangement—a model, indeed, of the utility and beauty of perfect order. So sensitive was our Apostle Paul on this subject, that he besought the Gentile congregations to have "all things done decently and in order."

The Apostle carries his ideas of *decency* to the minutia of a brother's uncovered head, and of a sister's veil; therefore,

**Millennial Harbinger*, 1835, p. 507.

may we not infer that even the dress of Christians in the public assembly is either decent or indecent, according to the standard of Christian simplicity and decorum? If this be true of a Christian's dress, it is equally true of his manners. The dress and manners of God's house ought not to be after the model of the dress and manners of the forum, the theatre, or the carousals of a public entertainment.

When the heirs of heaven present themselves in the presence of the Lord, and meet around that sacred board which commemorates the ignominy, reproach, and sufferings of him who redeemed them to God by offering up himself a sacrifice for their sins; that gaiety of dress and flippancy of manners, so fascinating amongst the sons and daughters of fashion, festivity, and song, are wholly indecent, in the good sense of all the admirers of the fitness of things, or of the innocence and simplicity which adorned the ancient Christians.

In the solemn assembly simplicity of dress and manners— gravity, sobriety, and serious cheerfulness, equidistant from the morose austerity of Pharisaic sanctity and the thoughtless gaiety of Sadducean levity, are essential elements of Christian decency and good order.

But we must attend to good order as well as to decency. The congregation thus organized, with its bishops and deacons being assembled on the Lord's day, in all its movements ought never to lose sight of that dignity and decorum which accord with its high and holy relations to its exalted head. The church must view herself, if sincere in her professions, as "an habitation of God through the Spirit," as "the pillar and support of the truth," as "the temple of God," and as "the gate of heaven." Every one that speaks or acts must feel himself specially in the presence of the Lord, not as on other days or in other places. Not a thought must be entertained, not a word spoken, not an action performed, that would make the disciple blush, if the Lord Jesus was personally present. The Lord, indeed,

"is in the midst of them" if they have met in his name and according to his word.

We need not repeat what is so clearly written in all the addresses to the churches, that there are certain ordinances delivered to the church by her exalted Redeemer, which she is constantly to observe in all her meeting to worship him; that songs of praise, that prayers, supplications, and thanksgivings are to be preserved before the throne of grace, in the name of our great High Priest; that the Scriptures are to be read—that the word is to be inculcated, and exhortations tendered—that the Lord's death is to be commemorated—that the poor saints are to be remembered—and that discipline, when necessary, is to be attended to—are so fully and authoratively delivered to us in the apostolic epistles, as to leave no doubt on the mind of any devoted and diligent disciple concerning the duties incumbent on every church.

But at what hour of the day, and in what sort of a house, and how often on the Lord's day the church should assemble ; and whether she should first pray, sing, or read the Living Oracles; and at what period of her worship she should do this, or that, are matters left to the discretion of the brotherhood, and to that expediency which a thousand contingencies in human lot and circumstances must suggest, and for which no unchangeable ritual or formulary could possibly have been instituted. The Jews' religion was given and adapted to one nation, whose temple was fixed in Jerusalem; but Christianity is designed for all nations, and is adapted to all the varieties of human circumstances, from east to west, and from pole to pole.

Whether, then, the church shall meet once, twice, or thrice on the Lord's day; and at what hours, and how long she shall continue each meeting, whether she shall sing first or pray first; whether she shall commemorate the Lord's death in the morning, at noon, or in the evening, etc., etc., must be decided by the voice of the brethren. But that all the ordi-

nances shall be solemnly attended to, and that perfect order shall be preserved in all her worship, are matters clearly and positively propounded and enjoined.

The members of a church, when strangers are present, should always, if possible, sit together during their meetings for worship. It is impossible to preserve good order through the day if they are dispersed among strangers or occasional visitors.

In attending upon *the supper*, which is the great ordinance of the day of the Resurrection, every previous arrangement to avoid distraction to those who minister to the brethren, should be made. The disciples in this our day are very generally culpably deficient in this essential point of order. Sometimes they are so scattered over the house, as to occasion great embarrassment to wait upon them; and, indeed, on this account, are sometimes passed by. At no other eating or social repast is there so much disorder as we often witness in the Lord's house. Who on any other occasion of social eating would place himself at a distance from the guests, as if to give trouble to those who minister?

Kneeling in prayer is always to be preferred, if it can be made convenient. Standing up in the celebration of praise is more rational and scriptural than sitting, especially in the solemn and social hymns and songs which are sung by all the congregations.

The Scriptures should always be read with all possible accuracy, distinctness, emphasis, and solemnity. Every disciple should carry his book to the School of Christ, and use it in all the readings and references.

Every one that addresses another, whether in salutation, in the way of inquiry, or exhortation, should do it in the most affectionate manner. No indication of levity, of passion, or bad feeling is to be tolerated in the house of God. Laughing in the church is most disorderly. Jests, witticisms, and tart

replies are not to be endured. No person in discussion is authorized to impugn the motives of another. Debates, whether on doctrine, or discipline, or decorum, are not admissible in a worshipping assembly. Gravity, sincerity, and profound reverence for the divine name are to be conspicuous in every disciple. Speaking fast in the church is most uncomely: so is muttering and low speaking.* The names, attributes, and words of God are not to be spoken or pronounced as the common expletives of language.

No business pertaining to this life, however connected with the church, is to be attended to at the hours for worship. Special meetings, either on the Lord's day, or on other days, ought to be called for matters purely temporal, however intimately allied to the prosperity of the church. "There is a time for every purpose and for every work"; and every thing is beautiful and orderly at that time, but at no other. So common sense and all the fundamental principles of Christianity, in our judgment, decree.

The edification and comfort of the brotherhood, their growth in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord ; their increase in knowledge of things divine, spiritual, and eternal—in faith, in love, knowledge of things divine, spiritual, and eternal—in faith, in love, in hope, and in spiritual joy, are the points to be kept supremely in view in all the business of the Lord's day in the Lord's house. There are some very small matters, and even some of these already noted are so small as to be almost beneath the dignity of our subject; yet as much of the comfort and improvement of the brotherhood

*Some speak so loud as if they regarded loud sound as great sense; always on the top of their voice, regardless of the number or distance of their auditors. But there are others that mutter and whisper, especially their prayers; as if they were ashamed to be heard. Even in giving thanks at table, they speak so low, and so fast, as if resolved that their next neighbor should not know whether to say *Amen*. This is most uncourteous and uncomely.

depends upon them, we must, however undignified they may by some be regarded, condescend to notice them.

To be habitually late in attending the appointments of the brethren, is most indecorous; and, except in cases of sickness, to withdraw from any meeting before the final *amen*, is a violation of the most obvious rules of good order. Next to those who permit barking and fighting dogs and screaming children to torment the audience, I know of none more obnoxious to censure than those disturbers of the peace, who are ever and anon on foot, going out and coming in, as if to arrest attention, or disturb the speaker and the audience. These, and they who whisper and mutter to their companions while one is addressing the audience, except on some paramount occasion, belong to the first class of transgressors of the plainest principles of good education and good order. Such persons have as little respect for the credit of their parents and tutors as they have for their own reputation, and ought to be publicly reprovved by every good bishop. For ourselves, in twenty-five years we have had but once to reprove an unfriendly alien for rudeness in a public assembly; but we have witnessed many occasions, not only amongst aliens, but friends, and, with shame be it recorded, sometimes amongst brethren, which called for the sharpest rebukes which Christian love authorizes.

At the close of all social prayers the whole congregation that unites in the petitions, should, like the primitive Christians say, with an audible and clear voice, *Amen*. This is of more importance to the animation and devotion of the social worship than most Christians seem to think. Among the Jews, on all great occasions of public and solemn petition or thanksgiving, the whole congregation said with a loud voice, *Amen!* Paul intimates that every *private person* in the primitive church was to say *amen* at the end of all petitions and thanksgivings expressed in the public assembly.¹ Every one feels the value

¹1 Cor. xiv. 16, 17.

of the signs of sympathy and fellow feeling, of union, harmony, and love at some time of his life; and in the Christian Church² every one feels the power of all the signs of fellowship and accord which indicate that unity of spirit, of desire, and aim— the very essence of social worship—without which all the forms of Christian communion are a dead letter.

² In using the term Christian Church, Alexander Campbell was simply referring to the historical usage, rather than undertaking to name the Lord's Body, the Church.—Hudson.

**A REVIEW OF FRANCIS W. EMMONS'
ARTICLE
ON "THE ANCIENT ORDER OF THINGS IN
THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF THE
CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION"***

By R. R. RICHARDSON

The utility of interchange of views between those who seek a knowledge of truth is universally admitted. When they agree in sentiment, conviction is strengthened, and the common fund of information increased by combined exertion, by which combination of effort even the small but industrious ants "who provide their meat in the summer and gather their food in the harvest," are enabled to convey the bodies of wasps, which are larger than a score of them, into their subterraneous storehouses. Nor is it less advantageous sometimes when they differ; for candid investigation renders knowledge more pure and perfect, and the union of extremes produces the pleasing medium in which truth and happiness are usually found. The tempestuous wind which rises in the sultry calm of summer, tempers down into the mild and healthful breeze; and there is a temperate region between the frigid and the torrid zones.

Man, indeed, regarded as an isolated being, is capable of effecting very little. He has nothing but his own partial experience to direct him, and is confined within the narrow circle of things which fall under his own observation. What he can do therefore of himself is almost nothing at all, and almost worthless. The spider may spin his dusky web from his own bowels, but the delicious honey and the honey-comb are the products of the mutual labor of many bees, and the collected tribute of many different flowers. It was a fine saying of the great Newton, that "God gave man reason and

**Millennial Harbinger, 1836, p. 279*

religion by giving him speech." Certain it is that by means of language a man can appropriate to himself the thoughts, notices, discoveries, and experience of all the world from the beginning of time, and can thus concentrate their varied stores of knowledge, and embody as it were the minds of all in his own person. It is indeed the capacity to receive, retain, and advantageously employ this mighty store, which constitutes greatness, and renders one superior to another or to all. Napoleon gained no victory by his personal strength alone, but by concentrating and directing the force of myriads. The rays of the sun will not inflame until they are collected by the lens. A child may float his mimic barge in the rill which issues from the fountain, but it is the ocean which sustains upon its bosom the ship of war with her burdens of a thousand tons, and a thousand men before the mast!

There is, therefore, never anything to lose (except perhaps a little self-conceit), but often much to gain by interchange of sentiment among men; since a knowledge of the minds of others, consultation, and co-operation are essential to improvement, and to the accomplishment of every important purpose. I need not, however, dilate upon a point so evident, or quote the hackneyed proverb, "In a multitude of counsellors there is safety," for everybody knows that two heads are better than one, unless one of them is—good for nothing.

With these views, I wish to present to the readers of the Harbinger some thoughts which our beloved brother, F. W. Emmons, has lately contributed to the common stock; and, as so good an example is worthy of imitation, I wish to present also some views of my own, which may be considered as opposed in some degree to his sentiments, unless indeed his discourse should turn out to be in part "a dream," and according to the old way of interpreting by the rule of contrariety, my remarks should become the interpretation thereof or *vice versa*. Nevertheless, I am happy to say that I heartily concur

with the sentiments of the greater part of the discourse, of which I will now endeavor to give a brief analysis.

After some brief remarks upon the necessity and utility of order in general, as exemplified in the first principles of science, which, like the alphabet, must be *first* learned before we can proceed to the higher branches; and as enforced upon the Christian congregation by the apostolic precept, "Let every thing be done decently and in order," he defines the terms employed by the apostle, observing that "decently" expresses the manner of doing as becoming: but "in order" embraces a certain arrangement of the things done, as *first, second, third*, etc. The subject is then further illustrated by the natural and moral creations of God, in both of which *light* was *first* brought into existence, and the analogy between light material and light spiritual exhibited. Attention is then fixed upon the sacred oracles as the only source now accessible to us of that spiritual light or knowledge which emanated from the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ, and these are emphatically declared to be our only guide, as the divine testimony was the only foundation for the faith and practice of the first Christians. The evils attending a departure from the divine oracles, and a dependence upon dreams and visions for religious faith, are next spoken of, and these evils are shown in the consequences of the adoption by most professing Christians, of the unfounded idea "*that there is no rule or law for the exercises of public worship.*" These consequences are stated to be the keeping of *different days* in a religious way, and a great variety in the kind of exercises attended to on such days, some sitting together in silence for some time, then shaking hands and dispersing; some singing, preaching, praying; some reading church covenants, using discipline, preaching and partaking of the Lord's Supper; some attending to a round of ceremonies, or an oration, reading prayers, etc.; some dancing till their strength fails, etc. These last I believe, by the bye, dance with-

out music, like those bitten by the tarantula, for whose bite music is said to be the only remedy.

It is then argued that if there be no rule or law upon the subject, all these are right and equally authoritative; but this being absurd, it is concluded that there must be a "rule or law which designates a particular day, and particular exercises, *and the order of exercises* for that day's observance."

We will pause here a moment to phrase "the order of exercises," and to remark that in this place the grand and leading object of the discourse begins to be developed. This object is to prove *that the order in which the exercises of public worship are to be attended to, that is, their order as respects time, priority, or sequence, is actually and positively prescribed by divine authority.* It is not to prove that the Lord's day should be observed—that the Lord's supper should then be celebrated—that the teachings of the scriptures should be heard on that day, and prayers and praises offered—for these acts of worship are universally agreed to and understood among the brethren of the reformation, and practised by them (not but that these points are ably and conclusively argued in the discourse), but it is mainly to prove that *the order in which these exercises are mentioned in Acts ii. 42 is the order in which they should be attended to in the church upon the Lord's day.* For the exercises themselves are to be distinguished from the order in which they are attended to, as the writer observes, p. 88, and very justly, "The *acts* of worship or the particular exercises, with me is one thing, and the *order* in which they are observed is another." We wish the reader particularly to notice this point, because our beloved brother has chosen to group together and Involve in the same conclusion the things already admitted, and this matter which is yet a subject of discussion. Doubtless there may be more than one way of applying the established principle that we attain a knowledge of things *unknown* through the medium of things *known*; but we confess we would like to have had this view of the *order of*

the exercises labeled as a distinct proposition, and being a stranger to us, to have been formally introduced, rather than to come in secretly as it were, or without knocking, amongst a crowd of old friends and neighbors.

Having thus gained admittance, we shall endeavor to exercise the rites of *hospitality* and *courtesy*, or, in other words, will proceed (as far as our limits will permit) to lay before the reader the reasonings and proofs which our author has adduced to sustain his views, and which, coming from one of such abilities and attainments, we trust will meet with a fair, candid, and impartial examination from those who seek to know the truth. Having thus far introduced the discourse, we postpone the subject for want of room to the next number.

REVIEW*

The writer of the discourse under consideration, having shown the absurdity of different forms and acts of worship among professing Christians, founded upon the false assumption that there is no law upon the subject in the New Testament, proceeds to prove that we have such a law, and "*that it is found in the precepts of the apostles, and in the conduct of the first Christians.*" This rule is then applied, and after showing that the first Christians met for worship on the first day of the week, it is urged "that if their conduct be sufficient reason for Christians now to meet on that day, their exercises of worship and the order of those exercises are of equal authority in determining our exercises of public worship."

A comparison is here instituted between the *ancient order* of things and the *ancient gospel*; and after arguing that the latter would not be the ancient gospel but for the order of its items, and that it is not in the items themselves alone, but in the items conjointly with the *divine order* of their exhibition

**Millennial Harbinger*, 1836, p. 293.

that converting power is displayed, we are presented with the proposition that, as both the items of the gospel and the order of these items are found in Peter's sermon on Pentecost, Acts ii. 38., so the ancient exercises of worship and the order in which they are to be attended to (pages 78, 86, 88) are found in the succeeding narrative of the proceedings of the first Christians, Acts ii. 42. A very just criticism is offered upon the translation of this verse, and the following more correct rendering proposed: "And they *unremittingly attended to* the teaching of the apostles, and the fellowship, and the breaking of the loaf, and the prayers/'

Six reasons are then adduced to sustain this proposition:

"1st. The use of the definite article *the* before each substantive in the passage quoted.

"2nd. That this is the proper place, as the account of the establishment of the first Christian Church immediately precedes, to give us full information of the exercises and order of exercises of their public worship, provided it be at all necessary for us to be put in possession of it. But, that

"3d. It is absolutely necessary for us to be put in possession of it, in order to attend to the same things—in order to worship God in spirit and in truth. In *spirit* we might worship him, but in *truth* we could not worship without information of the exercises and order of exercises, for *in truth* is according to divine appointment, and we have already shown that we need and must have a law on the subject.

"4th. If Acts ii. 42. do not present the prominent exercises and the order of exercises, no other passage does express them in all the New Testament. We might, indeed, find one exercise in one place and another in another: we might then arrange all found according to our respective likings, and no two congregations attend to the same exercises in the same order; but this would seriously infract our divinely established

rule; consequently Acts ii. 42. must present the prominent exercises and the order in which they were observed in public worship by the first churches.

"5th. The exercises named are the *public* and *social* exercises of worship.

"6th. Another reason is found in the restricted and yet sufficiently general and definite meaning of the sentence: 'They unremittingly attended to the teaching of the apostles.' This imports here the *act of hearing*—mainly the act of hearing the instructions of the apostles, whether oral or written. This they attended to therefore unremittingly, as they did to the fellowship, to the breaking of the loaf, and to the prayers."

From page 86 we quote as follows:

"Here, then, let it be observed, once for all; that the same authority—apostolic precept, and the example of primitive Christians; and the same reasons—the nature and fitness of things; enjoin on all disciples; on all congregations, the orderly attendance on all the great exercises of the Lord's house, viz. the teaching of the apostles, the fellowship, the breaking of the loaf, and the prayers, on every Lord's day; that enjoin any one of them—or, the observance of the Lord's day itself. Apostolic precept, and the conduct of the first Christians, so far as we have them recorded in the New Testament, do not authorize attendance on one of these exercises to the neglect of another, or others."

On page 88 our author observes:

"In reference to the *order*, in which these exercises are to be attended to, in the Christian congregation; *my order* is the order of Luke, the sacred historian—the *natural order*— the order in which he speaks of them in his narrative: In speaking of the GOSPEL, which Peter preached, all the teachers of the current reformation contend for the order of its items, as given by Luke. Why not also, for his order of

exercises in public worship ? I am aware that, to *some* persons of *some* acquirements, to sustain this order it would have been more definite and satisfactory if the sacred historian, before the substantives of Acts ii. 42., had supplied the numerals, *first, second, third* and *fourth*: but if I mistake not, to the well taught, intelligent teachers of the word of favor, not so—to them it is as definite as it stands *

We say, "*every exercise in its own proper order.*"

The discourse then concludes with a glowing picture of the advantages and appropriateness of the exercises and that order of them for which it pleads.

The apostasy from primitive Christianity is undoubtedly characterized as much by a departure from the simple and significant acts of public worship attended to by the first Christians, as by its substitution of human opinions for the gospel of Christ. Upon the subject of the acts of public worship our author has certainly furnished some excellent remarks, and has, we think, fairly established his position that the exercises enumerated are of divine authority, and perfectly congruous with the Christian institution. We may add that the whole

*"Should I, however, mistake in this conclusion; and any intelligent teacher, after considering well this passage of scripture, and all our reasons for the doctrine deduced, offered in this discourse, think differently—think it not sufficiently sustained, we have other reasons in store: and they shall be forthcoming on the following conditions: That he write and have published a discourse, with his objections prefaced or appended, taking for his text, Acts ii 38, or some other passage of the New Testament, the object of which shall be to prove, *that in Heaven's order, faith precedes reformation; reformation, Immersion; immersion, remission of sins; remission of sins, the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit, eternal life.* This done, and I pledge myself to him, and to the public, by the same reasons, or by as many and as good reasons, as he sustains this; I will, in an essay reviewing him, sustain *that*, or, as a logician, die in the attempt.— *Sapienti verbum sat.*"

discourse is written in a very plain, perspicuous, and pleasing style.

There is one favorite point, however, on which we dissent from the respected author of this discourse, viz. respecting the *order* of the exercises. We do not object particularly to the order itself: on the contrary, we could agree that such an arrangement of the exercises would be very proper, and perhaps as good as any other. But we object to the doctrine that this precise order is positively established by divine authority. We have supposed this matter to be left in a great degree to the wisdom of the churches, and susceptible of being lawfully changed or modified according to circumstances; in other words, we think that we do not need a law upon the subject, and that no such law can be satisfactorily deduced from the New Testament.

We do not need such a law, because,

1. If the churches attend to the same exercises and keep the same ordinances, whether they all attend to them in the same precise order or not is of little importance, and in any case is capable of being arranged by themselves. They can "*mind the same things,*" without attending to them in the *same order*.

2. It is possible to worship God both "in spirit and *in truth*" without a precise order of exercises. Certainly when Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, "You worship you know not what—but the time is come when the *true* worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for *such* are the worshippers whom the Father requires—God is spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," his language must be understood as referring to that *spiritual* worship, founded upon *true* and consistent views of the *divine character*, which was to be rendered under the new

institution, rather than to any *precise order of exercises on the Lord's day*.

3. The exercises *do not stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect*.

This, as it regards the *principles of the gospel*, is an important reason for *their* order, as we can easily perceive. For immersion, as the means through which we enjoy remission of sins, must *necessarily* precede the knowledge of forgiveness; and reformation, for the same reason, must *necessarily* precede immersion. Again, as "without faith it is impossible to please God," and indeed without it no religious principle or obedience whatever can exist, so faith *necessarily* goes before reformation, immersion, and forgiveness; and the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ as the procuring cause of our salvation, *necessarily* precedes the whole. They stand, therefore, to each other, so to speak, in the relation of cause and effect, by the appointment of God; and their use is at once destroyed by any other arrangement. Hence it is as useless to immerse without faith, as it is vain to expect salvation in any other name than that of Christ.

But in this respect the exercises of public worship bear no analogy whatever to the principles of the gospel. To be sure it was *necessary* that the new converts should *first* "attend to the teaching of the apostles." But why? Not because it was "comely, or beautiful, or apposite, or congruous with the genius of our holy religion"; but simply because they were ignorant of the existence and nature of the institutions of Christ, and would not have known that "such things were" at all, except through the teaching of the apostles, it being the business of the latter after converting men to "teach them to observe the things commanded." Hence they attended to "the teaching of the apostles" *first*, not on the Lord's day merely,

but "*daily* in the temple," Acts ii. 46. and "from house to house," where the apostles "ceased not to *teach and preach Jesus Christ.*" Acts v. 42. Hence also Luke places *first* "the teaching of the apostles." All this, then, is "Heaven's order"—it is the "natural order" of *cause and effect*—which is HEAVEN'S ORDER BOTH IN NATURE AND IN RELIGION. We too then say, everything "in its proper order"—the cause always before the effect.

No one can prove, however, that the *regular reading* of the scriptures, and teachings, and remarks of the *brethren* in the church on the *Lord's day*, bears the same relation to the exercises of worship as did this "teaching of the apostles" which gave origin to these exercises. It does not originate with them—nor is "the breaking of the loaf" the effect of attendance upon "the fellowship"—neither is it the cause of "the prayers." And who will attempt to show that "the breaking of the loaf" will not have the same *meaning and influence*, and be *equally profitable before* the fellowship as AFTER it? Who will say that "the prayers" will not avail as much BEFORE "the fellowship," and "the breaking of the loaf," and the reading of the scriptures, as *after* them? Each exercise is perfect and complete in itself, and equally efficacious and significant in any position, and therefore we do not need any divine law prescribing the order of these exercises, for this could add nothing to them and would be perfectly useless.

And in the next place we have no such law, because

1. *It would be incompatible with the genius of the Christian religion.* This religion is conspicuous for its simplicity, the fewness of its ordinances, and the spirituality of its character. By means of a few simple facts, commemorated by its institutions, it influences the human heart to love; and in a few general precepts teaches that obedience which is pleasing

to God and profitable to men. The actions to which it prompts, like those dictated by nature, proceed from the heart, and are equally unconstrained and unaffected. Systems and theories indeed, ordinances, sacraments, and ceremonies of human invention have been the bane of Christianity. In the New Testament its simplicity is not impaired by *unnecessary by-laws*, nor its "liberty" abridged by *rigid forms*. Hence the minutiae relating even to its important institutions are left to the judgment of those who administer them, and we are not directed in what posture we should partake of the Lord's Supper, nor how we should be immersed, nor how many hours of the Lord's day we shall spend in public worship, nor what particular hours—neither have we prescribed the order of that worship.

2. *Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, when treating of the acts of worship, and the exercise of the various gifts of the disciples, a place where we might expect to find such a law if it existed, does not prescribe any order of worship.* On the contrary, after reproving their practice of speaking several at a time and in foreign tongues without an interpreter, as in chap. xiv. 23, "If the whole congregation be come together in one place, and all speak in foreign languages, and there come in unlearned persons, or unbelievers, will they not say that you are mad?" After showing the superior benefit of prophecy and stating that they "may all prophesy *one by one*," he gives the direction, "Let all things be done to edification"—and, "Do all things decently and in order"—this phrase, "in order," evidently referring to their custom of speaking confusedly together, and not at all to any systematic arrangement of the acts of worship.

3. *The order of the words in Acts ii. 42. does not necessarily denote the order of the exercises.* The writer of the discourse before us lays upon the order of the words in this single passage the great stress of his argument for the order of the

exercises,¹ and takes it for granted that Luke in this verse intended to teach two things—1st. the exercises themselves by the words; and 2nd. the order of the exercises by the order in which these words are arranged. The first we admit in part; as to the latter, we cannot for our part imagine Luke to have had this intention. Such a double meaning, such a scrupulous exactitude of adaptation would not, we think, comport with the character of the writers of the New Testament, as such, any more than a prescribed form of worship would with the Christian Institution itself. They did not trouble themselves with theories. With them religion began as a matter of *fact* and ended as a matter of *practice*. They used the unstudied,

¹ In the 4th reason it is observed that "if Acts ii :42 do not express the prominent exercises and the order of them, no other passage does express them in all the New Testament." It is, then, upon this single passage that our author depends for his view of the exercises and their order, as others rest upon the 38th verse of the same chapter for the "ancient gospel" and the order of its "items." He observes also in a note: 'We have other reasons in store, and they shall be forthcoming on condition that the objector write and have published a discourse, taking for his text Acts ii :38 or some other passage of the New Testament, to prove that in *Heaven's order faith precedes reformation; reformation, immersion,*' and so on. This is a fair challenge—but where is a logician to be found so chivalrous as to stake *his life* and fortunes upon such slender ground? If not among those who really take such a *microscopic* view of Acts ii :38, we do not know—unless, indeed, such a champion could be found among

"The light militia of the lower sky;"

amongst whom we are told there are *Sylphs* who can balance themselves upon the point of a bodkin, and *Funambulists* who can dance upon a single hair.

We may add that we too have additional reasons, and we *might* say they should be forthcoming, provided the objector write and publish a discourse, taking for his text the book of Job or some other book of the Old or New Testament, to prove that 2 and 2 make 4. But we do *not* give such a challenge, for we prefer to look at the scriptures with our natural or unaided eyes rather than through either a microscope or a telescope.

unpremeditated language of truth, and both their words and the order of them varied according to the circumstances by which they were surrounded. Hence a precise and determinate order, an accuracy of arrangement, and a regularity of system, are matters which would not be consistent with the unaffected and artless simplicity of its immediate authors. If at any time, therefore, we should succeed in forming a theory founded upon the mere arrangement of words, whether this theory be true or false, we are certainly entitled to claim the whole *honor* of it to ourselves, and do not need to father it upon either the apostles or evangelists;—it cannot be their offspring—to them it has no resemblance. "He that has a dream," therefore, "let him tell a dream, and he that has my word let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? says the Lord."

From the passage quoted from the discourse, p. 88, our author seems to have been led to this view of Acts ii. 42. by the circumstance that some have built a theory of the "ancient gospel" upon the order of the "items," as they are called, in Acts ii. 38. But a "castle in the air" is not rendered any more secure by being built upon a "castle in the air." For in truth even the "items" themselves of the "ancient gospel" are *not found in Acts ii. 38. Faith* is not there—*eternal life* is not there—not to speak of the imposition of hands—the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, which *Paul* ranks among the *first principles of the doctrine of CHRIST*, though we grant they have not yet attained to the honor of being "items" of the "ancient gospel." Neither, indeed, are *all* the exercises of worship found in the 42nd verse; for the exhortations and teachings of the brethren (certainly not *always* apostolic) are not there; nor the important exercise of "teaching each other in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs;" nor the preliminary prayers, which our author himself admits as part of the exercises of public worship. With regard to the 38th verse, however, it will be said that *the circumstances* rendered it *unneces-*

sary or *improper* for Peter to mention faith; and so it may be said of the other omissions. Be it so. And what then is *conceded*? That *other* "circumstances" obtained—that *other purposes* were in view, and that neither Peter nor Luke were delivering in said verses, the one his theory of the "ancient gospel," and the other his "exercises and order of exercises" for the Lord's day; which day he does not so much as mention. For if they had been delivering such theories and arranging such "items" and exercises, they *would not have omitted* such important and essential matters. The mention of them in order would have been not only *proper*, but absolutely *necessary*. And we conclude that if *they* did not intend to deliver such theories in said verses, *we* are not authorized to use either of these verses for this purpose.

Further, *the order in which words occur does not always designate the order of the things for which the words stand*. The collocation or arrangement of words is very arbitrary and uncertain. It is only the *expressed* or *certainly ascertained* intention of the writer which can give a meaning to the order in which he may be pleased to enumerate the things of which he speaks. This intention we think cannot be ascertained with regard to Acts ii. 42.—it certainly *is not expressed*. The order of words is often changed by writers to avoid alliteration, or to escape a periphrasis—to attain a climax, or for the sake of euphony, or to give emphasis or conspicuity to a particular word. In the use of this liberty the writers of the New Testament do not always express the same things in the same order. Thus in Heb. xii. 22-24. "Jesus the mediator of the new institution and the blood of sprinkling" are placed *last*. Again, in chap. vi. 1. reformation is placed before faith; as it reads, "Not laying again the foundation concerning reformation from dead works and faith towards God." And, to bring our remarks to a close, if it were the rule, that the order of words should always give the order of things, the passage which reads, "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our

bodies washed with pure water," would involve the conclusion that a good conscience is obtained *before* immersion—and a "Christian experience" would become necessary as a prerequisite to baptism.

We too, "having offered six reasons" for dissenting from the doctrine that we need a law for the order of the exercises, and have such a law in Acts ii. 42., consider, of course, that our views are "sustained." The reader, on the other hand, may imagine that neither of us is right. He will please remember, however, that, as has been already observed, we could agree with our beloved brother Emmons in the order which he approves—we only object that this order should be considered as of divine authority.

SERVICES *

DEAR BROTHER,

The most superficial observer may perceive, as you have shown in your discourse upon Acts ii. 42., that the "ordinances of divine service" which appertain to the Christian church have been either greatly perverted or entirely changed during the lapse of eighteen centuries. So great indeed has been the corruption of the whole Christian Institution, and so numerous and discordant are the views and practices of professed Christians in latter days, that the person who would form a correct idea of the church of Christ, or understand the genius and character of the Christian religion, must banish from his mind all modern exhibitions of them; he must, so to speak, *forget that such things are*, and, by means of the authentic memorials of primitive ages, come to the examination of the doctrines and ordinances of Christianity as *things that were*. In other words, he who would now enrich himself by the possession of

*R. R. Richardson to F. W. Emmons—Letter No. 4; *Millennial Harbinger*, 1836, p. 561.

true religion must become a RELIGIOUS ANTIQUARY; must learn to prefer the pure and ancient coin, however dimmed by the rust of ages, to the glittering but alloyed product of a modern mint; and reject from his collection every piece which was not issued in the first century and stamped with the image of a DOVE.

The reformers of Popery in the 16th century found the simple, expressive, and instructive ordinances of the Christian church, wholly superseded by a singular and mysterious combination of Jewish, Christian, and Heathenish ceremonies; while the worship of the congregation was for the most part carried on by proxy and veiled in the ecclesiastic tones of the Ambrosian or Gregorian chants. It was perhaps this absurd practice of chanting not only the praises but the prayers of the congregation (which yet prevails more or less in the Church of England), which led Calvin in a great degree to restrain singing in his establishment of a church at Geneva. He nevertheless admitted it to be a part of divine worship, and divided the whole service into *prayer*, *preaching*, and *singing*. Luther, who was a lover of music, regarded singing as of more importance, and went so far even as to form a musical liturgy or psalmody for the churches. As it regards this matter, however, when we refer to the apostles we find that the singing of "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs" constituted a conspicuous part of public worship; and as to the music employed, we have reason to suppose it of the simplest character, since the practice of singing different parts of music was then unknown, neither the Greeks nor Romans being in possession of "harmony" or "counterpoint," the invention of which is usually ascribed to Guido about the year 1022.

But I presume it is unnecessary to descant upon the particular acts of exercises of public worship, after what has been already written and conceded upon this subject. So far as you yourself have touched upon it you have expressed my sentiments, and exhibited the public worship of the Christian

church. If then we were to exclude those peculiar duties, such as ministering to the poor and taking care of the sick, and confine ourselves to those which are properly regarded as acts of public worship or the public exercises of the church, we might briefly enumerate them as follows:—*Reading the Scriptures; teaching; exhorting; presiding; praying; singing; giving thanks; breaking the loaf; contributing for the poor.*

In your discourse upon the "Ancient Order of Things in the Public Worship of the Christian Congregation," you make a very proper distinction between the *exercises* themselves and the *order* in which they are to succeed each other. With regard to the latter, I beg to observe that I have not yet seen anything to produce the belief that the order in which the exercises are named in Acts ii. 42. is their order in public worship; and in closing this correspondence at the close of the 7th volume of the Harbinger, I am sorry that I am not furnished with your "additional reasons" for this view of the matter, that they might be laid before its readers, and properly considered. In the absence then of any scripture testimony to the contrary, I remain convinced that the order of the services is not prescribed; and that, while the *services* themselves must be duly attended to, their *order* may be changed and modified according to the circumstances in which the congregation is placed.

In the church at C———, to which I have already alluded, the order is as follows: When the disciples are convened, the President of the day arises, and after announcing that the hour of public worship has arrived, proceeds to offer up prayers and supplications for all men—kings, and all that are in authority—Jews, Gentiles, and the Church of God. The readers then advance in succession to the reading desk and read the New Testament; the Prophets; the Psalms; and the Law—proceeding regularly through the book, with the omission of genealogies and sundry matters relating to the civil polity of the Jews which do not tend to general edification. The teachers immediately follow, and take up in order the scriptures which

have been just read, calling the attention of the congregation to the important things contained in them, and comparing prophecy with its fulfillment, or law with gospel. The breaking of the loaf is then attended to, with thanksgiving, in the most simple manner, after which comes the fellowship; finally, a general invitation is given to those who have a word of exhortation, and more especially to strange brethren, if any be present; and the president then dismisses the assembly with a benediction. I should add that appropriate psalms, hymns, and songs are interspersed through the worship between the other exercises. This order seems to tend greatly to the edification, and to promote the enjoyment of the disciples. It differs, however, from that which you propose; which is, 1st. the reading; 2d. the fellowship; 3d. the breaking of the loaf; and 4th. the prayers.

Eusebius says that from the beginning the Christians assembled on the first day of the week, called by them the "Lord's day," for the purpose of religious worship, "to read the scriptures, to preach, and to celebrate the Lord's supper;" and Justin Martyr observes, "that on the Lord's day all Christians in the city or country meet together, because that is the day of our Lord's resurrection, and then we read the writings of the apostles and prophets; this being done, the president makes an oration to the assembly, to exhort them to imitate, and to practice the things they have heard; then we all join in prayer, and after that we celebrate the sacrament. Then they who are able and willing give what they think proper, and what is collected is laid up in the hands of the president, who distributes it to orphans and widows, and other necessitous Christians as their wants require." Here we have 1st. the reading of the scriptures; 2d. teaching or exhortation; 3d. prayer; 4th. the Lord's supper; and 5th. the fellowship or contribution—which you will perceive are, with the exception of the prayers (unless the thanksgiving before the supper be so understood) precisely, so far as given, the exercises and order

of exercises in the church at C———, and quite different from the order which you prefer, which, if it were the order of the first churches, must evidently have been changed as early as the time of Justin, who flourished in 138, not more than 40 years after the Apostle John, and who conversed with those who had enjoyed the company of the apostles. We remark here also that it is the *president* who is represented as delivering the discourse and receiving and distributing the contributions. Something like this was the case at first in the church at Jerusalem, when the apostles both taught, and attended to the daily ministration, until necessity compelled them to commit the latter duty to Stephen and others, that they might devote themselves to the word of God. This shows, as I have already observed, that the offices originated in necessity, and were for useful purposes; and that one member may, if it be requisite, perform more than one duty or function.

But I do not adduce the testimony of the early Christians to prove that the order of the church at C———, or any other arrangement of the acts of worship, should be the precise order of other churches; for, as I have before stated, there is no Divine precept given in relation to it, and I am content to leave it, where the scriptures have left it—to the churches themselves. Nevertheless, if uniformity were desirable and practicable in this matter, and a rule were to be adopted, I should undoubtedly prefer that order or arrangement of the exercises which was most common among the primitive disciples. It should never be forgotten that the order of the acts of worship is of the least importance compared with these acts themselves, and that the great command is, "Let all things be done to edification." I Cor. xiv. 26. To edify themselves and those who meet with them should be the great object of every church, and their arrangements should be made accordingly. The commemoration of the gospel facts, the prayers, praises, teachings, and exhortations all tend to refresh the mind and purify and exalt the affections; while the weekly contribution

for the poor, and the kind offices of all the members to each other, and to all men at all times, prove the excellence of the Christian Institution, and commend it to the attention of the world.

The Christian church indeed will never occupy its proper sphere until greater care is taken to "maintain good works"; until more liberal contributions are made for the poor, and better provision for the distressed. It is not in numbers, or talent, or a punctilious attendance upon the forms of religion that the power of a church consists, but in the amount of pure Christian truth and character actually exemplified. It is for the exhibition of "religion pure and undefiled before God and the Father"; for visiting the orphans in their affliction, and causing the widow's heart to sing for joy, that the "church of the living God" should be pre-eminent; and until these things are duly carried out into practice, the truth can never obtain its great and noblest triumph. Nothing can be more beautiful than a congregation of disciples who strive together for the faith of the gospel; who love each other; and who are *m* "zealous of good works," being purified unto God, and re-*m* deemed from all iniquity. No spectacle is more interesting *m* than the church of Christ with her officers, her ordinances, her privileges; animated by the highest hopes; filled with the purest joys, and diffusing the knowledge of salvation and the benign influences of heaven-born charity through all her borders.

May Christians meditate upon these things; and every congregation be thus devoted to the glory of God and the good of men! Then indeed shall "the bride" be glorious and beloved, and the King "greatly desire her beauty." Then will she be "brought with gladness and rejoicing into the King's palace" —her name be "remembered in all generations," and "the people praise her for ever and ever."

—Favor be with you.

PART 3

THE LORD'S SUPPER

THE LORD'S SUPPER*

By D. R. DUNGAN

Love and loyalty to God are seen and realized through obedience to his commandments. I John 5 :3. It was said of Zachariah and Elizabeth that they were "righteous before God, walking in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." Luke 1:5, 6. Christ was loyal to the requirements of the Old Testament, and condemned all evasions of its ordinances while it was in force. Matt. 5:17-20. And if that institution was regarded as so sacred that one jot or tittle of all its demands could not be neglected without incurring the displeasure of Jehovah, it is not possible that he should be indifferent to any appointment in the New Testament. The sacrifices, servants and services of the Law foretold a Savior that was to come, but the ordinances of the New Testament tell of a Savior that has come; tell of his love, his death, his burial and his resurrection for our redemption. These he has left for us to keep till he shall return again. The best that the sacrifices of the Law could promise was the temporary removal of offenses, carrying them forward for one year at a time (Jer. 36:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13; 9:6-17; 10 :1-4), but through the sacrifice of Christ sins once forgiven return no more. In Christ we have our prophet, priest and king, clothed with all authority in heaven and earth, who directs the services of his house so that his work of redemption shall be kept constantly in mind. Any neglect of these, therefore, cannot fail to incur his displeasure. The Lord's Supper, then, is not something that may be observed or forsaken at will; it is not a mere form that may be kept or not, according to the edict of a church, or the caprice of an individual member.

Many of the services required of the ancients were unexplained ; to those to whom they were given they seemed

**Old Faith Restated, p. 231.*

arbitrary, and containing only the lesson of obedience to the will of God. But under the New Covenant we are treated as if we had attained our majority; as friends, who are permitted to know what our Lord doeth. In baptism we see the burial and resurrection of the Master, and in the communion we have a picture of his body, bruised on our account, and his blood shed, by which we have redemption. This shows the reason why Paul praised the Corinthians when they kept the ordinances as they were delivered to them, and condemned them for every failure. 1 Cor. 11:2, 17. We learn from Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20; 16:1, 2, that it was the custom of the disciples to meet together on the first day of the week to break bread. And Paul leaves a positive order not to neglect these meetings. Heb. 10:25.

The beginning of this ordinance may be seen in the following Scriptures:

Matt. 26:26-29: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many unto the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Mark 14:22-25, gives so nearly the same words already quoted that there is no need of inserting them here. But in Luke we have a slight addition, hence we give the account as found in that book.

Luke 22:19, 20: "And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. And the cup in like manner after supper, saying, This cup is the New Covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you."

The importance of the institution indicates the necessity of observing it just as it was delivered. But in deciding this question, we must not mistake incidents for essentials. There are, too, matters of propriety that we can hardly say are either right or wrong in themselves. And yet this liberality may extend too far, and the whole institution be given away by an impropriety that, at its beginning, could have been borne with, but which may be carried to the extent of disloyalty to Christ.

Certainly the Savior did not direct every possible thing that might occur, as to the hour and minute of the day, the place where it should be observed, whether one or more than one should assist in distributing the bread and wine, what kind of a cup and plate should be used, the posture of the body at the time of participation. These and a hundred others like them have been left largely to the consecrated common sense of those who are engaged in the service. Christ met the disciples in a large upper room, and the brethren at Troas met also in an upper room, but nothing may be pleaded from these facts that the ordinance demands such surroundings. But while the place of partaking of the supper is left to the disciples, and while we regard it as a question of propriety, still such indifference to the purity of the communion might be exhibited in the selection of place that the institution itself would be invalidated. "Decency and order" should be preserved, and while some irregularities and improprieties may be tolerated, yet the line of decorum must be drawn somewhere, beyond which the ordinance is not observed. A careful reading of I Cor. 11:17-34, will reveal the fact that the Church has gone beyond the lines of propriety so far that they were no longer eating the Lord's Supper.

THE ELEMENTS USED IN THE SUPPER

"He took Bread." This may be regarded as the bread which was on the table at the time. It had been prepared by Peter and John for the Passover, of which they were then

partaking. That this bread was unleavened has never been doubted. No other would have been admitted at that time. Every reference to the supper, that throws any light on this first emblem, shows that it was a loaf or roll; that it was in one piece; that it, at the beginning, represented the Savior's body in its unity, but that it had to be broken in order to receive blessing from it. When he took it in his hand, he did not say, This is my body BROKEN for you (See the Revision), for no such a figure would have been apparent to any one present; it was not broken at the time—it was after he had given thanks that "he brake it."

A beautiful lesson can be seen in the use of the roll of unleavened bread. I have seen this lesson covered from the sight of all worshipers by having two or three rolls or loaves; by the use of light bread which could not represent the body of the Savior with any propriety; sometimes there are plates with several hundred pieces or small cubes of light bread. This may not be regarded as a desecration of the Lord's Supper, and yet it approximates it so nearly that any one taught in the word of God must hesitate respecting the propriety of participating. In the whole affair there has been such a reckless disregard for what the Savior did and required us to do till he come again, that it hardly amounts to more than a fairly well-executed caricature on the institution. While we may bear with it for the time, such ignorance or indifference, or both, should not go long unconnected. There may be those who can discern the Lord's body in such a mutilated service, but it is of a piece with the whole line of human substitutions for divine teaching.

THE CUP, OR FRUIT OF THE VINE

After they had partaken of the bread, he took the cup, and after he had given thanks he gave it to them saying: "This is the blood of the new Covenant, shed for many, for the remission of sins."

By the word cup we are to understand the contents of the cup. It is generally understood that the liquid in the cup was wine. It is not so denominated, however, in the Scriptures. It had grown into a custom to use wine on the occasion of the Passover. This wine was grape juice and warm water. The Master calls it the fruit of the vine, which indicates to us the presence of wine. It is quite evident that it had been prepared by Peter and John for the Passover, and was on the table for that purpose. It is generally thought, too, that the removal of all leaven from their houses, as well as from the feast during this week, indicates that this wine could not have been alcoholic, as the fermentation necessary to alcohol is the same thing that should be put out of the camp during the time of the feast. But since the cup was not provided by the law, and it was there by sufferance only, it is hardly safe to say that the law would be strictly regarded in a custom that had grown up independently of any commandment. The Savior did not object to the contents but used the cup as he found it. He calls it, the fruit of the vine, and we now know that as alcohol is produced by fermentation the fruit of the vine disappears, and that alcohol, in full proof, has no connection whatever with the fruit of the vine. The Savior used it, too, as the best possible symbol of the blood by which the world should be saved. And we now know that to the extent that any liquid contains alcohol it does not symbolize (as a beverage) anything that can save, but that which has power only for evil.

But there are others who maintain that the cup then used contained wine, and that wine always contains alcohol; that, in order for grape juice to become wine, it must ferment and become alcoholic. They find proof of the correctness of this position in the statements of several learned Rabbis, that the wine used at the feast of the Passover was fermented, and therefore intoxicating. Others affirm that their statements are the result of their tradition or their preferences. But the position in favor of the use of alcoholic wine is amended so

as to assert that there is no wine which is not alcoholic, that the presence of alcohol is essential to the existence of wine. This position is at this time regarded by the learned as exceedingly rash, unscholarly and untrue. While we have but a very limited space for the discussion of this feature of the subject, we will be borne with while we give some of the reasons for objecting to the position. Our quotations will be brief:

I. THE LEXICONS AND LEXICAL MEN.

1. Webster: "Wine, the expressed juice of grapes."
2. Worcester: "MUST, the sweet or unfermented juice of the grape; new wine."
3. Liddell and Scott: "GLEUKOS, sweet, new wine."
4. Groves: "The fresh juice of the grape, must, new wine, and mead."
5. Parkhurst: "Sweet wine, which distills of its own accord from the grapes."
6. Robinson: "MUST, grape juice unfermented."
7. Andrew: "MUSTUM, new or unfermented wine."
8. Leverett: "MUST, new wine."
9. Anthon: "Young, new fresh; MUST, new wine."
10. Dr. Ure: "Juice newly expressed, and before it has begun to ferment is called MUST, and in common language, new wine."
11. Ainsworth: "New wine, close shut up, and not allowed to work."
12. Littleton gives the same that Ainsworth does. 1
13. Smith's Bible Dictionary, A. M. Ed.: "It may be at once conceded that the Hebrew terms, translated wine, refer, occasionally, to an unfermented liquor."

14. Stuart: "Facts show that the ancients not only preserved wine unfermented, but regarded it as of higher flavor and finer quality than fermented wine."
15. Barnes, Note on John 2:10: "That was the pure juice of the grape."
16. Kitto: "Wine, ASIS, denotes the expressed juice of the grape, or other fruit."
17. Thayer: "The numerous authorities already cited to show that unfermented grape juice is wine, also prove that unfermented wine existed."
18. Dr. E. Nott, late President of Union College: "That unintoxicating wines existed from remote antiquity, and were held in high estimation by the wise and good, there can be no reasonable doubt. The evidence is unequivocal and plenary."
19. Roy. Die. Lond.: "Wine pressed from the grape but not fermented."
20. Dr. Hilbert: (Die. Ger. Lond.) : "Wine pressed from the grape, but not fermented: new wine."
21. Littré: (Dic. de la langue Française): "New wine not fermented."
22. Descherell: "Wine which has just been made, and which has not yet fermented."
23. Scheller: (Lexicon 1832): "Wine just pressed out and not strained."
24. Flugel: (Die. Ger. and Eng.) : "Unfermented wine."
25. Freund: (Leipsic 1878): "New or unfermented wine."
26. Dr. Adam Clark: (Com. vol. I., p. 239, Lond Ed., 1836, Note on Gen. 40:11): "From this we find that wine anciently was the mere expressed juice of the grape without fermentation."

(The words MUST, MUSTUM, and GLEUKOS are Greek words spelled in English—Ed.)

Josephus has a statement of this passage that shows the view had in his day respecting wine. Antiq. B. II., ch. 5, sec. 2: "He therefore said that in his sleep he saw three clusters of grapes hanging upon three branches of a vine, large already and ripe for gathering, and that he squeezed them into a cup, which the king held in his hand, and when he had strained the wine, he gave it to the king to drink, and he received it from him with a pleasant countenance. . . . Thou sayest that thou didst squeeze this wine from three clusters of grapes with thine hands, and that the king received it; know, therefore, that this vision is for thy good, and foretells a release from thy present distress." In this occasion the word wine is four times applied to the juice that the butler was to squeeze from the cluster of grapes, into the cup that was to be in the hand of the king.

We might continue this line of investigation almost at any length, but if the testimonies already presented will not be sufficient, a declaration from one having arisen from the dead would be of no avail. While it is conceded that wine will include fermented liquor from grapes or other fruits, it is certain that it also means the unfermented juice. If not, scholarship must pass for nothing and the classics have no weight in determining the meaning of words.

II. THE USE OF THE WORD WINE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT ACCORDS WITH THE TESTIMONY OF THE DICTIONARIES AND THE CLASSICS. About half of the time it is so surrounded that the meaning is unmistakably that of unfermented grape juice.

In Acts 2:13 we have NEW WINE from GLEUKOUS, which was the juice of the grape which had been expressed by the weight of the grapes thrown into the vat, hence sweet wine. This was what the butler gave to the king of Egypt though he pressed it out in his hands instead of taking it fresh from the wine vat. But someone insists that they thought the

apostles were drunk. True enough, and yet being filled with GLEUKOUS would not indicate it. Look at the passage again, and see that it was said in mockery. They meant that they were drunk, but they did not say they were. We use the same sarcasm when we say that a man takes too much tea. We mean to say that he gets drunk, but we say it ironically. Elijah suggested that the prophets of Baal would call louder: "He is a God," but he may be asleep, in conversation, in pursuit, on a journey. No one thinks for a minute that the prophet of the Lord conceded that Baal was a God. He said it in mockery, hence said one thing while he meant another. So it was with the mockers on the Pentecost. It is certain that then the word wine in the New Testament did not necessarily mean fermented liquor. But it may be said that OINOS, the word generally employed in the New Testament for wine, means a fermented liquor. Not necessarily. It occurs ten times. Matt. 9:17; Luke 5:37; Mark 2:22, preceded with the adjective new. The illustration is taken from making wine and bottling it, hence the newly expressed juice was the thought and the only thought that could have been put into the word. The fact that the Savior so surrounded the word removes the question from the field of controversy. So in John 2:1-11, making wine at the feast of Cana; it was not possible for it to have contained alcohol unless the Savior created it on purpose. It was not necessary to the wine, nor even to the best wine, for the GLEUKOS, or that which had been kept from fermentation, was regarded as the best.

If they had fermented grape juice, beyond any question they would call it OINOS, and if they had unfermented liquor they were liable to use the same term. Hence no argument can be made from the word itself since it had the same meaning that our word wine has (see Groves), and we have seen that wine means the juice of grapes or other fruit, either fermented or unfermented. If therefore, the word wine had been used by the Savior in referring to the supper, instead

of "the fruit of the vine," it would not be proof that an intoxicating liquor was present.

But it is sometimes said that the Passover, when this feast was instituted, was six months from the time that the wine had been made, and that it must have fermented in the meantime. This is to assume that they were not able to preserve the juice in an unfermented state. But this is not correct. In the references to the new wine the process was that of preserving it from fermentation. They had many ways of keeping the fruit of the vine free from any alcoholic condition.

A very peculiar argument is sometimes constructed from I Cor. 11:21, 22, that the Corinthians used wine in the supper that was intoxicating, and that while Paul condemned other things he did not correct them in this respect. Let it be noticed, too, that he did not condemn them for making gluttons of themselves or for getting drunk. He says: "What, have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not?" It might be argued from this that Paul had no objection to their getting drunk if they would not do so at the house of God, but wait till they would get home. This error arises from the supposition that the apostle condemned in detail all that was wrong in their procedure. This is not true. There were things that he expected to set in order when he would come to them, and all that he had then to say was that they had so mutilated the supper that they had destroyed its identity, and were not partaking of it at all.

Since, then, there is no evidence that the Savior instituted his supper with the use of alcoholic wine, since he did not use the word wine at all, but "the fruit of the vine," and since we know that as wine ferments, the fruit of the vine disappears, the probabilities are, at least, that he used innocent grape juice for the communion. This is further indicated by the symbolry of the institution: it was to represent the blood by which the world was to be redeemed. If he had come to curse the race,

"to destroy men's lives" and not "to save them," no more appropriate emblem could have been selected than some alcoholic liquor, but as his work was the salvation of the race no more inappropriate element could have been found than an intoxicating beverage.

There is a fitness in the selection of symbols made by the Master. The unleavened roll and the fruit of the vine appropriately represent the body and blood by which sin is to be removed and the world saved. But it is not consistent with the character and teaching of Christ to suppose that he would use a liquor that had done more toward the corruption, and sorrow and poverty, and degradation of humanity than all other causes combined, to symbolize the blood that was shed for the remission of sins.

Prudential reasons for the use of unfermented wine in the Lord's Supper are very strong.

1. There is no sufficient reason why this innocent wine should not be used.
2. It is appropriate, and intoxicating wine is not.
3. The wine that is bought at the drugstore is sometimes devoid of any of the fruit of the vine. It is made wholly of poisonous drugs.¹
4. There are many persons who are endangered by the taste of fermented liquor. They have become addicted to drink till it has become a disease, and the taste of alcohol unbalances them and they lose control of themselves, and plunge again into drunkenness because of the poison in the cup that was supposed to contain a blessing. To laugh at this does not change the facts in the case; very many such persons have been known. Since the danger can be avoided, it is an evil to

¹ Pure food laws now would modify Brother Dungan's statement.—Hudson.

continue a practice that endangers any portion of the congregation.²

5. We will be certainly right in using the unfermented wine, and it is therefore the duty of the rulers of every congregation to see to it that all intoxicants are strictly kept out of the house of God.

It is easier to point out the things that should be, and to warn against the things that should not be, than to determine how far such improprieties as those we have mentioned should be endured; when it becomes sin to tolerate them. We may not be at liberty to raise the question in public, nor be warranted in absenting ourselves from the table of the Lord, but we should seek the removal of any evils of the kind.

FOR WHOM WAS THE SUPPER INTENDED?

This question is variously answered. Some have regarded it as a fellowship. Hence they have limited it to their own membership. In the judgment of those holding this view of the subject it is entirely improper to invite those of other communions to participate. But when it is shown that the communion is not church fellowship, but that it is the communion of the body and blood of Christ, and that it belongs to all the children of God, there is nothing left but to claim that there are no children of God except those of that communion or church. That claim now meets with such general disfavor that but very few can be found that will uphold it.

Others with much more seeming consistency claim that none but immersed believers have a right to partake. It is usually presented in this way: the supper was given to none but the Church of Christ, that church contained no one not baptized, and none are baptized except those who have been immersed. Hence this institution belongs to none except immersed believers. This view is generally beset with diffi-

²Brother Dungan was extremely cautious; maybe too much so.— Hudson.

culties. It affirms that none are the children of God but those that are immersed, or that the Lord only gave the supper to that portion of his children who obeyed him in that ordinance. There is an apparent unwillingness to defend either of these positions. The substance of the claim is this: the supper was intended for the children of God, we are the children of God and none others are, therefore the supper belongs to us and to us alone.

But I am asked for the position we take on the subject. It would be of greater value to inquire what the Scriptures teach on the subject. It is certain that the ordinances of the Lord's house belong to, and were intended for the children of God. It is certain, too, that the children of God had been immersed. Now, the therefore is easy.

The language: "Let a man so examine himself and so let him eat and drink," has been taken out of its meaning. It does not mean to decide if he is worthy to eat and drink. It related to the manner of his eating and drinking. On the other point there was no question; that they had a right to commune was not under discussion. It was the manner of their partaking that was being censured. They had turned the breaking of bread into a kind of Sunday-Club-Dinner, and to eat and drink thus unworthily was to eat and drink damnation.

There should be clear and explicit teaching on this subject, and then, without barring up the institution, there will be no injurious services performed. We can teach plainly as to the purpose of the Lord's house, but having no commission on the point, we are not at liberty to organize a police regulation to prevent those who have not learned all the truth from trying to serve the Lord.

SHOULD THE LAITY PARTAKE OF THE WINE?

This question will seem strange for a Protestant, or for one not in the Catholic Church, to ask. It is said, however,

that when the Savior instituted this supper, there were none present but the apostles, and therefore, "drink ye all of it" has no reference to any others; that to understand the privileges of other members, we are left wholly to other Scriptures. But this would relate to the bread as well as to the juice of the grape. If Christ gave the institution simply to the priests and intended it for them only, it is safe to say that the apostles did not understand his teaching. It should be remembered that the twelve were not only apostles, they were disciples, and that all that constituted the services of the heart concerned them not simply because of any official position in the church, but because they were disciples and needed the same means of growth that other disciples did. The statement in Acts 20:7, that the disciples met together to break bread refers to the institution as a whole and not simply to the use of one element, nor does I Cor. 10:17, "For all partake of the one bread," refer in any way to the idea that the body of the church did not participate in the use of the cup, for in chapter 11:26 he says: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come." The same persons that ate the bread drank the cup. The Catholic Church has had wars on this point and many have been killed for their faith that the laity were entitled to the fruit of the vine. But Jesus wishes to be remembered by all of his followers in the use of that which represents his gift both of body and blood.

WHEN SHOULD THE CHURCH BREAK THE BREAD?

The idea is now quite prevalent that there is the largest liberty in this respect; that a church can elect as well concerning this question as the time and place of the prayer meeting; that there was nothing indicated by the Savior when he says: "As often as ye do this, do it in remembrance of me till I come," as to the time of frequency. Certainly we have no

statement of the exact time of their meetings for that purpose, and yet we are not without a guide in the matter. In Acts 20:7 there is a statement that is indicative of the practice of the early church, which must have had not only the sanction but the instruction of the apostles.

Luke has some peculiarities as well as other writers, and in this verse is one of them: the use of the word WHEN. He employs it to indicate an occurrence that was everywhere known, and therefore expected. The passage becomes significant with this explanation: "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread," was supposed to be anticipated by every reader. He had just related the fact that they had been there for a whole week, and of course a first day would occur, and on that first day the disciples would be expected to meet together to break bread. He wishes to tell the reader about Paul's discourse and the miracle that was wrought by him that night, but preceded the account by the announcement that everyone would anticipate. Hence he says that this discourse was given "when we were gathered together to break bread." You will see the use of the word in Acts 8:12: "WHEN they believed." See again Acts 16:15: "And WHEN she was baptized." He had just related that her heart was opened, that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, and everyone would expect her baptism to follow, and he records it in that way, as a matter of course. But when the custom was not known he announced it as a matter that had not been understood beforehand. Acts 17:1, 2, 3; Luke 4:16, will show the difference in the style between writing things that were known to be the custom and recording something that had not been known before. In these last texts he notices customs that had not been announced and were not supposed to be matters of common knowledge. But in the other place the style is different.

It was not, then, an accident that they met together on a first day of the week at Troas for the purpose of attending

to the communion, but a custom was announced, which announcement was anticipated by everyone who knew the practices of the church. This is further seen in the First Corinthian letter (11:17-34), which shows that when they met together it was for the purpose of breaking bread; and in 16:1, 2, we learn that it was their practice to meet together on every first day of the week. It was not simply the custom in the city of Corinth, but in Galatia. Now the recommendations that Paul would give to the churches in Galatia respecting their meetings would come from a knowledge of the time when they were held. Putting these two facts together, we have it that first they met together to break bread; this was the main purpose of their meetings; and second, that they met together on every first day of the week. From this it is the conviction of the most eminent men of the church today that it was the custom of the first church to break bread on every first day of the week. I have the eight volumes of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, and without exception their references indicate that they so practiced, and that they understood the teaching and practice of the church during the days of the apostles to be the same. Indeed, they claim such practice as the reason and authority for their custom.

In the "Teaching of the Apostles," which is supposed to have been written about A. D. 120, in chapter 14 we find this: "But every Lord's day do ye gather yourselves together, and break bread, and give thanks after having confessed your transgressions, that your sacrifice may be pure. But let no one that is at variance with his fellow come together with you, until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice may not be profaned. For this is that which was spoken by the Lord: 'In every place and time offer to me a pure sacrifice, for I am a great king saith the Lord, and my name is wonderful among the nations.'"

In the First Apology of Justin, chapter 67, we have the custom described, that of assembling and having the Scrip-

tures read, and remarks made on them, then engaging in prayer and breaking of bread. This they did on the day that was "called Sunday." Of course, since Justin was writing to an emperor, he used the word Sunday for the first day of the week, instead of the Lord's day that was nearly always used by the Fathers, that he might be understood. In the writings of these men, two things are apparent: first, they are everywhere agreed as to the custom of meeting together on the first day, or Lord's day, for the purpose of breaking bread; and second, they are agreed that this teaching was from the apostles.

An objection has just been raised against weekly communion on account of the frequency, which it is claimed will render it so common as to hinder the impression that it should make on those who attend upon it. This same objection is urged against prayer being offered daily, so it has been thought that it should be only after such intervals as will render it more awe-inspiring. So the priests should have gone occasionally and lighted the lamps and burned the incense. But, again, it is said that the time is not definitely fixed by a direct statement. As a command, this is true. We learn, however, what was regarded as proper in the days of the apostles, when the churches were under the direction of their inspiration, and follow the example, believing that they were right, and that what was right then is right now. If we do as the churches did when under the control of inspired men in the matters of public worship, we will certainly be safe.

BUT WHAT TIME OF THE DAY SHOULD WE BREAK BREAD?

It was instituted in the evening, but if this time is to guide us, it should occur on Friday and not on the Lord's day. There is, perhaps, no more in the exact hour in which it was instituted than in the large upper room in which it occurred. The

Master took the occasion of the Passover to give this new ordinance. Something, however, is supposed to be gained by the word "supper," DEIPNON, used by Paul in reference to it in I Cor. 11:20. Yet it is easy to make more out of the word here used than there is in it. DEIPNON, the word in question, is used interchangeably in the classics with ARISTON and DORPON, and stands for a meal of any kind. Nitzsch holds it to be the PRINCIPAL MEAL whenever taken. Lid-dell and Scott say, "Certainly the chief meal, answering to our dinner." Paul shows that it was not a literal supper, and that the mistake made by the Corinthians on that point was to fail utterly of its true import. It consisted only of the bread and cup.

The first church understood the occasion as one of gladness because the Savior had risen from the dead, and had promised to return to them again. As Christ rose in the morning of the first day of the week, it could be argued that the disciples should meet in the morning for that purpose. And there are reasons to believe that they did this in many places during the second century, but whether from conviction respecting the time that the ordinance should be observed, or because of the persecutions, and the necessity of holding all meetings in secret, is not certain. Under ordinary circumstances, reason would say that it should be at such a time that the aged and infirm could be present. This is almost impossible if put in the night. Hence the most suitable time for convenience has been selected by the church in all ages, except in the times of persecution.

THE POSTURE IN WHICH IT SHOULD BE RECEIVED

Of course there is no statement respecting the position of the body during the time of the communion. There is a custom descendent from Catholicism that required the kneel-

ing posture. But this has come from regarding the loaf and cup as representing the real presence of the Savior, and hence they regard it as a divinity and feel that it is proper to kneel in its presence. As they partook of the food in a reclining posture, it is very probable that it was observed in that way in the beginning. They were at the table and had been eating of the Passover, and all probabilities are in favor of the idea that they continued in that posture during the communion. The early church, according to Tertullian, performed all services on the Lord's day while standing, to indicate their joy, and regarded kneeling on that occasion as sacrilege. But for this there is no more authority than for reclining on the left elbow. It is one of those questions concerning which the Lord has seen proper to leave us uninstructed. "LET EVERYTHING BE DONE DECENTLY AND IN ORDER."

WHAT NAME SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE ORDINANCE?

Someone will regard this as a very unimportant question, but it is not. Falsehoods are many times perpetuated by terms that are misleading. Both Paul and Peter exhort us to speak of the things of the Spirit in the language of the Spirit. In this way we will not only have the right thoughts but the right words in which to express them. The word EUCHARIST contains but a single thought in the institution, that of giving thanks—from EU, well, and charista—grace or thanks. "Sacrament"—an oath—is nearly meaningless. The Scripture terms are very much better: Lord's Supper, Breaking of Bread, the Communion. These terms bring up the facts and thoughts of the ordinance. It is more than giving of thanks, it is more than oath; it is the communion of the body and blood of the Lord. The word HOST was used by the Catholics and is yet to some extent. But this only for the Bread, after the consecration. This name came from the idea that by the services of the priest it had become the veritable body of the Christ. But

that these forms of expression have ever come into existence is proof that there were thoughts that the Bible does not contain. If men had no other thoughts than those found in the Scriptures then their thoughts and ideas could be expressed by the use of the words found in the Bible. I propose then a return in this particular, and to speak of those things which the Bible teaches, and in the language in which the Bible speaks of them.

WHAT OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION AND CONSUBSTANTIATION ?

Transubstantiation is the doctrine that in the consecration by the service of the priest, the substance of the bread and wine is made into the very body and blood of the Redeemer. This, like all other enormities of the Apostasy, has had a history, and has been presented in many different phases. Augustine introduced the doctrine of purgatory and Transubstantiation in a mild form. He maintained that the Logos dwelt in the bread and wine as he had done in the body, and that it was in this way that he said, "THIS IS MY BODY." Paschasius Radbertus, about the year 831, wrote a book in which he took the position which has since become a Romish doctrine. But it gave great offense at the time to many of the authorities, and was finally adopted after many a heated debate. It was a century and more in becoming orthodox, during which time it was sometimes orthodox to believe that the bread and wine became body and blood only as it was received by faith, that all that part that was not received was not thus changed. They were never able to say whether all the bread and wine thus consecrated was digested or not. Luther held the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Sometimes the idea prevailed that was called Consubstantiation, and there was fierce war between the friends of the different theories, though to read the arguments, one does not know on which side the

writer is. Those holding the view believed that the actual presence of the body and blood of the Christ was SUBSTANTIALLY present WITH the bread and wine. SUBSTANTIALLY and WITH were their varying words and made difference enough to continue the wrangle.

It seems strange that anyone should ever have committed the blunder of supposing that the Savior meant his disciples to understand that he then held his own body in his hand. It would be as reasonable to demand a literal interpretation when he says, "I am the door of the sheep"; "I am the vine, and my Father is the husbandman"; "I am the way," or road. To interpret any of these statements literally is to remove their significance and value. That God could create man is not doubted by any believer; but that a priest, by pronouncing a few Latin words, can create divinity out of a piece of bread, would seem too much for the faith of any sane person. But it is claimed that the Master refers to this ordinance in the sixth chapter of John, when he says, "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." There is no evidence that this statement contains any reference to the Lord's Supper any more than to any other service which he had required. Perhaps this series of metaphors is less understood than almost any other portion of the New Testament. He is followed physically by a number of those who were anxious for the loaves and fishes, and it is the purpose of the Master to make them understand that the temporal food given their fathers in the wilderness was not that blessing which could save them, or give them life; that none could come to the Father except through him, and that none could come to him unless drawn by the Father by hearing and learning of God. Hence, the whole lesson is to show them the necessity of mental or spiritual feeding, that they might have eternal life abiding in them. So he came to furnish them bread and drink by giving himself for them, and they were to come and eat him, not physically, but mentally or spiritually: believe in him, have fellowship

with him, walk in the light of his truth, imitate his life, walk in him and be saved by him.

THE PURPOSE OF THE EMBLEMATIC LOAF AND CUP

It was to show forth the Lord's death till he shall come again. It is the communion of the body and blood of the Lord. It causes every true disciple to discern the Lord's body and blood, and thus to remember the redemption price. It shows the oneness of those who constitute the church, "For we are one body and one bread." It fills all believers' hearts with joyous anticipation respecting the second coming of the Master. "Do this in remembrance of me till I come." How sweet it would be to go to the presence of the Lord from the communion table! The service is full of meaning to every believer, and of great value to every child of God. It signifies our gathering together to him at a great day, and should therefore be a time of rejoicing in the hope of a great feast reserved in the heavens for all who are finally faithful.

DO THE UNIMMERSED COMMUNE?*

By MOSES E. LARD

The subject of communion has been, for some time, engrossing much of the attention of our brotherhood. It has been conspicuously discussed both in the *Millennial Harbinger* and in the *American Christian Review*. Brethren Pendleton and Errett have occupied most of the space in the former work; brother Franklin has occupied most of the space in the latter. It cannot be denied that at times the discussion has become a little piquant; and I have thought that now and then I could even taste in it some slight traces of acetic acid and salt. Perhaps this was all imaginary. But suppose it was not, what then? I love to read a thing when it becomes a little racy, and can stand it well when it becomes even a little rare, to use a favorite term of the Epicurean, when ordering his steak. I do not mean that I like to see a discussion look bloody; but with me let it look almost any way rather than cadaverous. Away with that sickly sentimentalism which screams out at every strong epithet of an earnest man! I love epithets; and if they detonate like percussion caps or flash like meteors, all the better. Only let them be not unbecoming the gravity of religious discussion and the fraternity of Christians. As for the condiments just named, they are excellent things, as is well known even to children. Salt is a capital disinfectant, keeping out bad odors, and both salt and acetic acid have fine conservative properties. Even religious discussions cannot do well without them.

Some brethren have augured ill from the discussion as conducted in these two journals. Frightful rents and heresies in the church have suddenly shot across their horizon. I shall not deny that I have seen some things to regret; yet I have

*Vol. 1 of *Lard's Quarterly*, Sept., 1863, p. 41.

seen nothing to fear. When brethren become earnest in a discussion we are not to infer wrath; neither when they differ in opinion are we to infer heresies. Good will surely come out of this discussion, and in the end we shall be a wiser, if not a better, people.

I believe the discussion to be both necessary and well-timed—well-timed because it serves to give a little employment to our thoughts at a time when they greatly need employment on Christian themes—necessary, because it will lead to more definite as well as more accurate views of a most important subject. Heretofore communion has occupied no great share of our attention. Our views and language respecting it are, in many instances, borrowed wholly from the parties around us, and not derived immediately from the word of God. The subject needs a thorough reconsideration, and our views and speech, where either may be defective, a thorough correction. Hitherto we have deemed a few hasty paragraphs, or a few very brief, and frequently very unstudied remarks at the table, quite enough to set forth the true conception of this impressive and significant rite. Possibly in this we have been wrong. Now that the subject is before the brotherhood in a mooted form, let it receive a patient, and, if need be, a protracted examination. Still no lengthy examination of the subject is proposed in the present paper. A statement of it, as I understand it, is what is proposed rather than an elaborate discussion of it.

The present discussion, be it remembered, is one confined entirely to our brotherhood. We are not conducting it with others, but strictly amongst ourselves. This being so, the following particulars may be assumed:

1. That belief in Christ, a fixed purpose to forsake sin, and the immersion of the body in water, are necessary to constitute a man a Christian—always and everywhere necessary. In other words, and generally, it is here assumed that it takes two things to constitute a man a Christian; namely: 1. The

right spirit or mental frame; 2. The right act or acts; and that no more can the right spirit, without the right acts, constitute him a Christian, than can the right acts, without the right spirit. What I mean by the right spirit and the right acts is the spirit and acts prescribed in the New Testament. With the right spirit, without the right acts, a man may be eminently good and pious, but he is not a Christian. Though he should be in spirit only as faultless as a seraph, he is not a Christian. God may esteem him very highly, much more so than many of the immersed, and even very certainly save him; still, with becoming decency be it said, he is not a Christian. In this case God esteems him as a good man and not as a Christian; and the distinction between the two is as palpable to thought, as is the distinction to the eye, between the words good and Christian employed to denote them respectively. With the right acts, without the right spirit, a man may be pre-eminently moral, still he is no Christian; and though all the world should pronounce him one, yet is he not one in the sight of God. These things, for the present, I take for granted without stopping to argue them.

2. That the Kingdom or Church is something wholly distinct from the world; that between them exists a line deep, legible, and ineffaceable; that from the world into the kingdom a man cannot pass except by a birth of water and spirit, and that without this birth he is not a Christian. With our brethren these positions are postulates and not matters of controversy.

3. That the institution called the Lord's Supper exists wholly within the kingdom; and in no sense nor in any part out of it.

Now if these premises be correct, and correct I most conscientiously believe them to be, I then ask, how can a man who is out of the kingdom participate in a rite which exists wholly in it? If the man cannot enter the kingdom without being born again, nor the rite be removed out of the kingdom into the world; then it seems to me that participation in the

rite by the man is impossible. If I set a table in my house it is most clear that no one can partake thereat without first entering the house. Equally clear it would seem to be, that no one can partake of the Lord's table without first entering the kingdom. May it not be, then, that in the present controversy we have been assuming as true what is, in fact, not true? We have been assuming that the unimmersed do commune; but may this not be false? I will not affirm that it is false; but I must deny that it is true. That the unimmersed seem to commune, I grant. Certain it is that they break the bread and drink the cup; but is this a genuine communion? It is what we call communion, I well know, but is it so viewed and so accepted by the Lord? Candidly I cannot think it. The case resembles a vitiated immersion. A man professes to believe in his heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, seems penitent and sincere; yet in fact he is not a believer. I immerse this man. Now, so far as I am concerned, so far as the audience is concerned, and so far as even the act itself is concerned, this seems a genuine immersion; yet in fact it is not so. The absence of faith has vitiated it, and it is not accepted by the Lord as the act appointed by him. Precisely so in the case of communion. A man to all human appearance communes—he certainly breaks the bread and drinks of the cup; yet this is not a real communion. The man is not in the kingdom, and this vitiates his act. It is hence not accepted of the Lord as the act appointed by Him. The act appointed by Him is appointed to be performed by none but a Christian; consequently when performed by any other, it is not the act appointed by him; hence it is no communion. Even granting that the communicant is perfectly sincere; still this cannot alter the nature of his act, only so far, it may be as to render it uncriminal. Mere sincerity cannot entitle a man to commune; he must be a Christian and sincere, otherwise he neither can nor does commune. If a man be out of the kingdom, neither sincerity alone, nor sincerity and piety alone, can alter his

relation thereto; neither consequently can they alone entitle him to commune. When out of the kingdom, but one thing can alter his relation to it; namely, a birth of water and spirit. This alone, therefore, can entitle him to commune.

But suppose a man to be a true believer in Christ, to be truly penitent, to be sprinkled and not immersed, and sincerely to think this baptism, to be a strictly moral man, and to feel in heart that he is a Christian—what then? May he not commune? I answer yes; provided it can be first shown that sincerely thinking so transmutes an act of sprinkling into an act of immersion, or causes God to accept the thing he has not appointed for the thing he has. Otherwise, I say, not that the man may not commune, but that he cannot and does not commune. The Christian man is not a character compounded of a mere bundle of good intentions and inferences; but a positive, determinate character, all of whose lineaments and qualifications are distinctly set down in the word of God, and without which a man is not a Christian. Men may clamor at this if they see fit, and string together whole scores of *ad captandum* questions put as mere appeals to the feelings and prejudices of the multitude; I heed them not. "What!" will retort the astounded opponent, utterly shocked and scandalized at the boldness of what is here said, "Do you mean to say that Martin Luther was not a Christian?" I mean to say distinctly and emphatically that Martin Luther, if not immersed, was not a Christian—this is what I mean to say. I do not mean to deny that Martin Luther was eminently a good and pious man; neither do I mean to deny that God took him when he died—I deny that he was a Christian. Nor am I unapprised of the effect which writing thus, has on the feelings of many excellent and benevolent people; but for one, I cannot repress in my heart the deep, honest convictions thereof; at least I will not. It is high time that the world understood us on the present point; and that we understood ourselves. If we mean to teach without mincing the matter, that immersion, for this

is the only difficulty in the way, is necessary, always and everywhere, since the founding of the kingdom, to constitute a Christian, let it be unqualifiedly said; and then let it stand forever as the unalterable expression of our faith. Or if we do not mean to teach thus, let us avow what we do mean to teach. Candidly I am tired of publishing to the world a tenet, as something taught in Holy Writ, and in the same breath proclaiming a set of inferences which falsify it. If a man can be a Christian without immersion, let the fact be shown; or if a man can or may commune without being a Christian, let the fact be shown. I deny both. Immovably I stand here. But I shall be told that this is Phariseeism, that it is exclusivism. Be it so; if it be true and this is the only question with me respecting it, then am I so far the defendant of Phariseeism and exclusivism. I stagger at nothing if true, at everything if false.

But I shall be told that I am missing the question; that the question is, not whether a man can be a Christian without immersion, since it is conceded he cannot, but whether, if a pious, unimmersed person, who sincerely believes himself to have been baptized, and who feels in heart that he is a Christian and ought to commune—whether if he proposes to commune, I have the right to forbid him? I argue, first, that if he can really commune, that is, commune acceptably to God, he may commune; but, second, if he cannot commune acceptably to God, then he may not commune at all, and if he may not commune at all, then not only have I the right, but it is my solemn duty to forbid him to perform the act which he cannot perform. Suppose, now, that Brother Pendleton, for he is less likely than anyone else to deem me capable of being discourteous towards him, or to take offense at the personality—suppose he should affirm, that this pious, unimmersed man can commune acceptably to God; and that therefore he has the right to do so. I ask Brother Pendleton how he knows this? and I make the question a special point. All he knows

is, that the man who is certainly a Christian can commune acceptably; but that he who is not certainly a Christian can do so is something he does not know. How then dare he assert it? Should he assert it, however, not as a fact taught in the Bible, but as a mere opinion or honest inference, I then have no controversy with my brother, and love him none the less either for holding or expressing the opinion; only in that case I think him not so good a logician as his former pupil. Will he forgive this vanity?

But, on the other hand, suppose Brother Pendleton should ask me, how I know that the act of this pious, unimmersed person is not acceptable to God? I reply, I do not know it at all, neither is it my business to pretend to know it. I may legitimately deny that any act is, as an act of worship, acceptable to God, unless He has expressly or by implication enjoined it; and sure I am, He has never enjoined that the unimmersed either shall or may commune. True, the Bible does not expressly prohibit the unimmersed to commune; but then no one will contend that a man may do the things which the Bible does not prohibit, merely because it does not prohibit them. We infer duties, not from what the Bible does not say, but from what it does say.

But I shall be asked, what harm, after all, can come of the pious unimmersed's communing? I answer, if all men saw as far and thought as well as Brother Pendleton sees and thinks, perhaps but little harm would come of it. But such is not the case; and hence I think that evil only, and not good, must result from the practice. The conviction is somehow deeply, and I think most correctly, fixed in the popular mind, that none but a Christian may commune, and that if two men commune together, this is proof positive that each regards the other as a Christian—the latter part of the sentence is not necessarily correct). But Brother Pendleton sits down and communes with the pious unimmersed, though holding that none but Christians may commune. From this act one of two

inferences will be drawn, and no labor on his part can prevent it; namely, either that he holds the unimmersed to be Christian ; and hence regards immersion as not necessary to becoming a Christian; or, if he regards immersion as necessary to becoming a Christian, that his practice is inconsistent with what he holds. Let me tell my brother plainly that his own positions in the Harbinger have placed him before large numbers of our brethren as either thus holding or thus inconsistent. I wish I could feel that his positions have done him injustice. Does Brother Pendleton hold that a man who is not a Christian (I use the term strictly) may commune? Suppose he does not. Yet does he hold that the unimmersed may commune? Suppose he does. Then that immersion is not necessary, according to him, to becoming a Christian, is intuitively evident. Or does he hold that a man is not a Christian without immersion, and that unless a Christian he may not commune ? If so, let him plainly avow it; and this will exclude the unimmersed. I trust my brother will use no epithet to qualify the term Christian. Let him not say of a man, he may commune, if a Christian in spirit, or in heart, or in deportment; but let him plainly say, that he may not commune unless a Christian, or that he may commune without being one; also, that he is a Christian without immersion, or that he is not one without it. All men will then understand Brother Pendleton. But, perhaps, he will say that some of these points are of a nature so delicate, that he should shrink from deciding them on his own individual responsibility. Some of them are grave points, I grant, but then I well know that he has them all decided in his own mind. Let us have that decision.

Does Brother Pendleton take the position, and this is the position I understand him to take, that if a pious man, though not strictly a Christian, desires to commune with us, he may, on his own responsibility, do so; and we may not forbid him? I then reply, that, when he says of the man, he may commune if he sees fit, this is a mere opinion of Brother Pendleton, and

is to be so held and so expressed and that it is not a thing to be published to the world as something taught in Holy Writ. Let us not lose sight of our just and cherished distinction between matter of opinion and matter of faith.

Again, I understand Brother Pendleton to hold that it is extremely indelicate, if not presumptuous, to think that all the pious unimmersed are not Christians. I have reason to know much of my brother's kind heart, and clear head; and that it is hard for him when speaking from the former to pronounce any good man not a Christian. Let him, then, not be offended with me, if I tell him that when he speaks thus, he speaks from the heart alone, and not from the head. I am not insensible to his amiableness in this respect. But this is not a question to be decided by affection, or sympathy, or anything else, save the clear, hard light of the Bible. By it, and it only, must every man stand or fall. I then ask my brother, whether, in the light of this sacred test, even he can pronounce Martin Luther a Christian without an epithet—a Christian in the sense in which the term occurs in the Bible—a Christian in the sense in which he applies the term to his venerable father, the President of Bethany College? If he replies he can, I then ask him to make the world sensible that he consistently believes immersion necessary to becoming a Christian; or if he says he cannot, then let him say outright that Luther was not a Christian; and we shall deem him, though none the less kind, certainly the more consistent. To think that a pious man is not a Christian hurts me no less than it hurts Brother Pendleton. But then I owe a stern duty to the teachings of Holy Writ, which I must meekly pay, though it cost me every feeling of my heart, and unchristianized all the world besides. I love a lofty charity which refuses to note all the little errors of frail humanity; but I love not less that sublime regard for the truth which is ready to immolate even earth rather than one jot, or one tittle thereof should fail. It is not that I love Luther less, but that I love truth more, which impels me to think him not

a Christian. In affection for his memory, in admiration for his strong brain, his great heart, his devotion to truth, and his shining deeds, I claim to be the inferior not even of the accomplished Pendleton. Still, admiration of the great man on the one hand, shall never enfeeble my regard for the voice of truth which, on the other, asks my fealty and defense. When we have settled the question as to Luther, we shall have settled it as to all the pious unimmersed. Many of the preceding questions are put, not as implying that Brother Pendleton is not, or does not hold what they embrace, but for the sake of setting doubtful points, or points of difference, in the strongest light before the reader.

That the foregoing positions are offensive to the pious unimmersed, that they render it the more difficult for us to come into profitable contact with them, I well know, and that they even seem to imply a feeling of self superiority on our part, I shall not deny. All this I sincerely regret. But I have long since learned that you never correct men's errors by seeming to treat them as not errors; and that it is the spirit and air with which you tell a man he is wrong which give him offense, rather than the mere fact of telling him so. Let the unimmersed be told of their error with a spirit as sweet and kind as that in which you would address the wife of your bosom, but at the same time with a purpose as firm and uncompromising as that in which you would snatch the hand of your child from theft. To the spirit which Brethren Pendleton and Errett would have us manifest to the pious unimmersed in the parties of the day, none can object; but that these brethren have, in claiming for these pious unimmersed the right to commune, put forth a position deeply injurious to the truth of Christ, I cannot but think. And if they imagine that this is said in a captious or fault-finding spirit, or in a spirit which would impeach them with groundless error, they know not the hand that pens these lines. Brother Pendleton is my steadfast friend, but that he has stained the pages of the Harbinger

with an error, I as conscientiously believe as I believe him to be my friend. Should he call this bold, I will not deny it; should he think it said by the wrong person, it would hurt me; but should he feel that it is unkind, then are we at issue. But this he will not do; for Brother Pendleton is a candid man, and he loves candor in others.

It is proper to remark here, that Brother Pendleton has most distinctly reiterated his belief, that immersion is necessary to becoming a Christian, a reiteration in no case necessary with the writer of this; and that he has very clearly defined his claim for the pious unimmersed. But that his belief, and his claim are inconsistent is the precise point which strikes me with force; nor do I believe that even he can ever reconcile them. That they are inconsistent to his mind, I do not for a moment believe; for he is incapable of holding a known inconsistency; but that they are inconsistent to my mind, I am not ashamed to avow, however they may appear to others.

In the course of this discussion the word right, or an expression equivalent to it, is one of frequent occurrence. We speak of the right of a man to commune, and of our right to forbid him. This term needs qualification. It is one which it is extremely difficult to use without creating a false impression, or leading to a false conclusion. Indeed, it is hardly too much to say, that it is a dangerous term to use, especially in a question like the present. The following qualifications are submitted with deference: A man is viewed in the two-fold character of man and Christian. A man, as a Christian, has the right to perform an act, as an act of worship, only when it is expressly sanctioned by Holy Writ. What is not thus sanctioned he has no right to perform. He has no rights except such as he has derived from this source. It is on this ground we say that the unimmersed may not commune. The Bible does not recognize the unimmersed as Christians; it hence grants them no rights as such. A man, as a man, has the right to do—1st, Whatever is necessary to constitute him a Chris-

tian; he has the right to believe and to the use of all the means necessary to belief, the right to repent, and the right to be immersed, and none whose duty it is to immerse can forbid him, for two rights cannot conflict; 2d, Whatever is for his own well-being or that of others, and is not inconsistent with the Bible. Beyond these a man has no rights either as a man or as a Christian. Hence when I claim the right to forbid the unimmersed to commune, my claim has this extent only: that as a teacher of the truth I must tell him he has not the right to commune. This done, and I can proceed no further. If he still insists that he has the right to commune, and communes, I am clear. But in this case I would hand him neither the loaf nor the cup. He should take them for himself.

But I shall be told that in thus assuming to forbid the unimmersed to commune, I assume to decide the question whether he is or is not a Christian—a question which I have not the right to decide. I deny the charge and disclaim the right. The man tells me he is a believer, I accept it; he tells me he is penitent, I accept it; he tells me he is unimmersed, on this the Bible decides him to be out of the kingdom, not a Christian. I make no decision of my own, but simply accept the Bible's decision, and on this base my statement that the man has not the right to commune. But it may be insisted that I still virtually decide the question, since I assume to determine what the Bible decides. I grant it, and reply that I am not to be blamed on that account. Every man does precisely the same, and could not do less if he would.

But I shall be asked, since it is conceded that there are Christians among the parties of the day, whether I would exclude them from communion? I reply, I would exclude no man from communion who is a Christian, but every man who is not. A Christian man is a member of the body of Christ and my brother, and I would commune with him in a loving spirit though I met him in the vilest sinks of Rome. Hell can

rear no barriers so high, nor sin dig ditches so deep and foul, as to shut out from my fellowship him whom Christ has washed in his own blood. And though I admired a man with my whole strength, and loved him as my own flesh, and even wept over his deficiencies as feelingly as a mother weeps over the deformity of her babe, yet would I not eat with him, unless he was of the "one body." But when I concede that there are Christians amongst the parties of the day, let me not be accused of concealment. I recognize no human being as a Christian who is not immersed. Men may call this by what name they see fit, it moves me not. It is my faith; if wrong, let the world reject it—if right, let the world take heed. But should even a Christian propose to commune with me as a Papist, or as a partisan of any kind, I should certainly decline his offer. To be accepted, the proposition would have to be made by him simply as a Christian, and in no other character or capacity.

The inconsistency of the Baptists in recognizing the unimmersed as Christians, and yet refusing to commune with them, glares even on the mind of a half idiot, from very shallowness. No sort of defense can be made for it. While their course in declining to commune with the other immersed, who are their peers both in life and spirit, must be pronounced intensely bigoted. I could never be so unjust to my common sense, to say nothing of the truth, as to fall into the inconsistency of the Baptists. If a man be a Christian, that is enough for me; I am ready to commune with him. In error he may be in some points, but this shall not cause me to reject him. Yet I should delight to see the day come when the Baptists would relax a little their austere and unhallowed rules on this point, and when we and they at least should enjoy the pleasure of cultivating more fraternal relations over the loaf and cup. I am not ashamed to avow that I even seek this; not because I covet the approbation and caresses of the Baptists, but for far worthier reasons—I seek it because it is right in itself.

But perhaps the position will be taken, as I believe it has been pending the present discussion, that God has a "people" even in Babylon, and that since His, they therefore, though unimmersed, have the right to commune. I reply, that the conclusion does not follow from the premises. If all who are in Babylon are unimmersed, then God has no people in it, in the sense in which Christians are his people. He then has a people in it either in this sense, that though not Christians, they are a pious people and will be saved, since their not being Christians has resulted, not from willful disobedience or perverseness of heart, but from unavoidable darkness of mind; or in this, that they would be Christians if they had the chance, but not having it, they cannot be. They have the disposition or ready will but not the opportunity. It was in this latter sense that the Lord had "much people" in Corinth, as he said to Paul: Acts 18, 10; or rather, in the city were many people for Him, as the passage ought to read. They were for him, that is, ready to become his or about to become his, but at the time not his. This they were yet to become. The passage here, and that in Revelation 18, 4, are different. In Revelation it is "my people"; in Acts it is a people for me. In Corinth they were yet to become Christians, and hence did not pretend to be Christians, whereas in Babylon they pretend to be Christians, or think they are Christians, and though not so, since they are a pious people, God accepts them as his, not because they are indeed Christians, but because they would be had they a chance. Still, neither in the one case were they Christians nor in the other are they. Consequently in the one case they had not, and in the other they have not the right to commune. For I lay it down as a position never to be gain-sayed, that none but a Christian can commune. In the sense in which He had a people in Corinth, and in which he has a people in Babylon, I rejoice to think He still has thousands scattered over the world, and in the various parties of the day, on whose final happiness we, in our narrow calculations,

are not reckoning. On this ground alone have *I* hope for many of the pious whom *I* am still compelled in pain to regard as not Christians.

Here doubtless I shall be met with the assertion, that it is inconsistent to admit that a man may be saved, and yet deny that he can commune. I shall not deny a seeming inconsistency; but a real one I must certainly deny. If God saved none but Christians, the inconsistency would be real. But this is not the case. He saves many who are not Christians— saves them because they do the best they can in the circumstances which surround them. Yet the grounds on which he saves these are different from the grounds on which men become Christians; and hence are not the grounds on which persons may commune. The rules by which God judges some men, to save them, are not the rules by which we are to judge them, to let them commune. He as Lord may, in making a decision, take into the account what we dare not even think of. To be short, because we conjecture that God will save a certain character who is not a Christian, we are not to proceed to treat him as though entitled to all the privileges of Christians. We must be governed strictly by the law, and in no case presume to disregard it.

Near the commencement of the present controversy a question was raised as to the practice of our churches in the premises. A word on this is demanded. Our churches in the West, I am sorry to say, without an exception known to me, permit the unimmersed to commune. They do not, I grant, invite them to commune; and yet their language is so understood by the unimmersed. "Let a man examine himself," they say, "and so let him eat and drink." This the unimmersed construe thus; Let a man determine for himself whether he is or is not a Christian; and if he determines that he is, then let him eat. This is unjust to the truth, and not just to the unimmersed. The language was never designed to start the question—Is a man a Christian or is he not? No such thought

was in the Apostles' mind. The following is the question the language raises: Is a Christian worthy to eat and drink? And surely, that a Christian is or is not worthy, is a very different thing from the question, is a man a Christian or is he not? Our churches have thoughtlessly glided into this practice; I thoughtfully and at length I trust they will abandon it. It has been deemed one of those indifferent or harmless things, which, though unsanctioned by the Bible, may nevertheless be tolerated in the church. Yet all such unsanctioned usages must, in the end, prove a curse. Yet all our preachers and overseers, when citing the preceding language, plainly tell their audiences to whom alone it applies, and the only question it was designed to raise. Then, and not before, shall we be free from the charge, often and with effect urged against us, of inconsistently communing with those whom we regard as not Christians.

In the outset of the current reformation, our motto was: a thus saith the Lord, for every article of our faith, a precept or a precedent for all we do. In the light of this cherished postulate, what defense can we plead for our act when we sit down to commune with the unimmersed? Did Paul ever do it? Did Peter ever do it? or did either ever command or counsel it? Let us be most careful of this; that we take our practice strictly from the holy word of God; and that what it does not clearly sanction we neither do nor countenance. Then and only then shall we be safe.

I extremely regret the position taken prominently and chiefly by brethren Pendleton and Errett on this question. It will subject us to the charge of having abandoned, in the persons of eminent brethren, the foregoing cardinal principle, of inconsistency between what we preach and what we practice, and of being a divided people in sentiment. This was most unnecessary. Had these brethren published what they have said, avowedly as mere matter of opinion, no controversy could have risen thereon. But they have given to their utter-

ances a far graver aspect than can be ascribed to mere opinion. Hence their position wears a serious air. I wish every thought they have penned on it were erased. Had I the age or the position to justify it, I should certainly request these brethren to reconsider the ground they have taken. But such request they might think impertinent, and therefore treat it cavalierly. Hence it is not made.

In the foregoing remarks I have cited nothing from the writings of the brethren named. My reasons for this are these: 1. All they have said has been long since read by all who will see this piece. 2. Brother Pendleton at least will not think me capable of intentionally misrepresenting him. Brother Errett does not know me so well, though I hope he has no reason to think differently. 3. If the foregoing statements misrepresent them or their views, I wish the opportunity of publishing the correction from their own hands. The sense in which I understand their views is the sense in which their views are generally understood. But I am more than anxious that they shall afford me and many others the opportunity of understanding their views, as the expression, on their part, of mere matters of opinion. The controversy would then be at an end.

SOCIAL WORSHIP*

By ISAAC W. TENER

In the religious world there appears a strange anomaly respecting social worship—one which has caused me no little reflection and embarrassment, and which I feel considerable difficulty in adjusting by any scriptural rule.

All sects have their own tables, called by them *the Lord's table*, at which none are allowed to sit down, save those belonging to the party—none save those who unite to pay the same minister, attend the same house, and acknowledge the same creed and form of church government; yet all these differing and conflicting parties are wont to meet together around the social hearth, or at a preaching, or prayer meeting, and offer up their prayers and praises as an act of social worship: and also join together in all or any of the "benevolent schemes" of the day; and this too, *because they view each other as CHRISTIANS*, who differ merely in non-essentials—as all traveling to the same place by different roads, and expect ultimately to sit down around the same table in the King's own country. Today around the social hearth, *as Christians*, they will join in social prayer and praise, and tomorrow they will refuse to break the loaf together! What's the reason? Not because they think they are not Christians, for this they have before acknowledged; but because of some speculative difference. Now I know it is commanded, 2 Cor. vi 17, to come out from the unrighteous, unbelievers, and infidels, and to be separate, and not to touch the unclean, and the Lord will receive us; but that any command exists to come out from *Christians*, and be separate when performing *any act of social worship*, I have yet to learn. So that consistency would say, if we unite in one act of social worship, we ought in all.

**Millennial Harbinger*, 1835, p. 11.

In the *Christian Baptist*, vol. 6, page 183, you give five reasons why you "object to making it a rule, *in any case*, to receive unimmersed persons to church ordinances:—

"1st. Because it is nowhere commanded.

"2d. Because it is nowhere preceded in the New Testament.

"3d. Because it necessarily corrupts the simplicity and uniformity of the whole genius of the New Institution.

"4th. Because it not only deranges the order of the kingdom, but makes *void* one of the most important institutions ever given to man. It necessarily makes *immersion* of non-effect. For, with what consistency or propriety can a congregation hold up to the world either the *authority* or *utility* of an institution they are in the habit of making as little of, as any human opinion?

"5th. Because, in making a canon to dispense with a divine institution of momentous import, they who do so assume the very same *dispensing power* which issued in that tremendous apostacy which we and all Christians are praying and laboring to destroy. If a Christian community puts into its magna charta, covenant, or constitution, an assumption to dispense with an institution of the Great King, who can tell where this power of granting license to itself may terminate."

Again, (C. B. vol. 5, page 122,) you say, "Christian immersion stands in the same place in the Christian temple, or worship, that the laver, or bath of purification, stood in the Jewish—VIZ. BETWEEN THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST AND ACCEPTABLE WORSHIP"; and you make "prayer, praise, and vocal worship, the antitype of the Priest approaching the holiest of all;" and this (as in the case of the Priests) subsequent to immersion. Again, (C. B. vol. 5, page 223,) "No prayers, songs of praise, no acts of devotion, in the new economy, are enjoined on the *unbaptized*. Immersion, next to

faith, is a *sine qua non*, without which nothing can be done acceptably." Also, in your review of the history of churches, volume 5, pages 276 & 7, you offer some very good reasons against receiving into the church unimmersed persons; but this is not exactly my difficulty. I shall now state it:—

Is it scriptural, or consistent, for those who have believed the gospel and put on Christ by being immersed into his death, to join in prayer, praise, or any other act of social worship with those who have not been immersed, no matter how good their characters may be? And if so, why not upon the same principle receive them to the Lord's table?

That an immersed believer may and can pray acceptably, and should do so at all times, is abundantly evident; and in every instance when called on may do so, is also clear, because he can pray either for, or with, as he pleases: but when he goes to hear a preacher who has not been immersed, and when he and his unimmersed congregation go to prayer, or sing a song of praise; or when he happens to sojourn at the house of an unimmersed friend, and when he and his unimmersed family go to prayer, or sing a song of praise; whether he is justifiable in uniting with them in these acts of social worship, on the ground of expediency, or any other ground, is a matter I would wish to have some information on.

In C. B. vol. 5, page 224, you ask, "*Why is the Holy Spirit promised as consequent upon immersion!*" And then answer, "1st. Because forgiveness is through immersion; and because, in the second place, the Spirit of Holiness cannot reside in any heart where sin is not absolved." If this position be true, and if it be a principle leading to apostasy to dispense with baptism as a prerequisite to church fellowship, and that an unimmersed person has not his sins remitted—that baptism stands between the sacrifice of Christ and all acceptable worship, and that no prayers, songs of praise or acts of devotion of any kind are enjoined upon the unimmersed—can the prayer of this un-

pardoned person, who cannot possess the spirit of holiness, nor a guiltless conscience, be acceptable? Or can we join with him in these social acts?

To say it is not acceptable, and to refuse to join with such, appears self-conceited, censorious, uncharitable, illiberal, and opposite to that benevolence which is one of the primary virtues of Christianity. And on the other hand, to say that one in an unpardoned state can pray acceptably, and should be united within this act, and not in breaking the loaf on the Lord's day, appears to me somewhat inconsistent. What, then, is the Christian's duty in this captious age? Shall he never go to a friend's house, or to hear a sermon, to avoid giving offence by not conforming? or shall he go and conform, and thus virtually admit their acceptability without obeying the Lord? Or shall he go and refuse to join with them, and thus incur their resentment, excite their prejudice, and draw down upon himself the charge of bigotry, &c. &c. ? This is a difficulty I have often felt, and I am sure that others have felt it, and many a time I did not know how to act.

Should any, and what allowance ought to be made for the peculiar situation of the day in which we live? That many are sincere in their present course can admit of no doubt, who, through the influence of education, &c. &c. cannot see as we do; and shall we say we will hold no fellowship with them, no matter how pious, humble, and devout, merely because they have not been immersed, though their lives may shame those of many an immersed professor? If the volume of inspiration affords any light upon this subject, you will confer a particular favor by letting me see it, either privately, or through the Harbinger.

Yours in the hope of a glorious resurrection,

ISAAC W. TENER
Taylorstown, Pa. Dec. 6, 1834

REPLY TO I. W. TENER

(By A. CAMPBELL.)

Dear Brother,

THE question propounded is one which has been before my mind for many years. Like every other divine institution, prayer has been much abused. It is by some made the way of salvation, and it has been even substituted for the sacrifice of Christ. It has had ascribed to it a sort of meritorious propitiatory influence in heaven, and has been recommended to those "*seeking religion*" as the only way to find it. Even Deists themselves have been commanded to pray; and some of them, like Lord Herbert, have presumed to affirm that their prayers have been answered. Volney himself, in a violent sea storm, is represented as praying in an agony of distress—"O God, (*if there be any,*) *save my soul, if I have any!*"

It is a custom to teach children "to *say* prayers," and it becomes with many a mere habit to invoke the divine name when in distress. They seem not to have learned that he that comes to God acceptably, "must believe that he exists, and that he is the rewarder of them who diligently seek him"; and that "without faith it is impossible to please God." They appear never to have been taught that "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, while the prayer of the upright is his delight." The blind man restored could say that God hears not sinners; but if any one be a worshiper of God and does his will, that man he hears. But they seem not to have learned as much as he.

Promiscuous prayers, and prayer meeting for those that pray to get religion; prayer as a *family duty*, whether the family are saints or sinners; and various other abuses of this institution have conspired to hide from the view of many their state and character before God.

But to come directly to the burthen of your epistle: Social prayer always implies communion. To have communion with any person in prayer and in praise, and not at the Lord's table,

has, for more than twenty years, appeared to me as incongruous, unreasonable, and unprecedented as it does to you.

True, it may be said, that the Lord's table is only for communion; whereas prayer and praise are for others as well as for those who unite in them. Still, however, there is just as much union and communion in agreeing to supplicate from the Lord any favor for another as in asking it for ourselves, and as much communion of the understanding, will, and affections—of the whole spirit, soul, and body in prayer as in the Lord's supper. He must be of a slow or feeble understanding who has not learned from the New Testament that the first Christians had communion in the Lord's supper with all those with whom they united in social prayer or praise.

But we ought to pray *for* all men, though we cannot pray *with* all men. Indeed, we can only pray *with* them who pray *with* us: for while I can go *for* you to London, I cannot go *with* you, unless you go *with* me.

I cannot, indeed, unite in prayer with any congregation of professors who *refuse* to keep any of the commandments; but if such persons, as far as they know the truth, practise it, and seem to possess the spirit of obedience, I would not throw a stumbling block in their way by withdrawing from *their* social worship; as they might ascribe my conduct to a species of evangelical pharisaism, and shut their ears against my remonstrances. Besides, if those professors of faith in the Messiah, and who are obedient to the extent of their knowledge, ask for such blessings as God has promised, and return thanks to the Lord for his favors bestowed, I could not withhold my *Amen*. I find the Apostles frequenting the Jewish synagogues, and Paul conforming to their usages, and thus becoming a Jew that he might gain the Jew; and ought not we to go and do likewise, especially as our so doing is not understood by them as fellowshiping them any farther than as they may act in conformity to the truth. If Paul would call upon the Lord in the midst of a ship full of Barbarians, and

return thanks for his goodness in protecting and sustaining them upon his bounty, that he might dispose them favorably to his religion, to the God whom he served; and if Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus invoked the heavenly Father for their sakes who heard him, that they might believe that God had sent him—I feel myself authorized, when asked to pray by any one acknowledging the Lord, to pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. These have been my conclusions and the reasons of my practice in this delicate matter. But if I had reason to think that my conduct would be understood as approving their course, I would not thus act, lest their conscience might be emboldened to disregard the institutions of the Lord.

I cannot treat every unimmersed person as a Pagan, inasmuch as their not having been immersed is because they have been sprinkled; and this is often no more than a simple mistake, and not a voluntary renunciation of the Redeemer's institution. If they have thus erred, I would, perhaps, err more in judging them to be Pagans and in treating them as such, than they err in simply mistaking the meaning of a commandment of the Lord. But in all this I do not indiscriminately call them to worship God in any act of private or social worship, any more than I would invite them to partake of the Lord's supper.

There is a very essential difference between going into a Jewish synagogue for the purpose of converting them to Christ by a courteous respect for the worshippers and their prejudices, and in going there to invite them to keep up such an institution. There was a very essential difference between Paul's receiving the presents and donations of the Pagan Chief of Malta and his islanders, and Paul's asking these Pagans to contribute to I his necessities or those of his companions. So I discover a very marked difference between being present in any religious assembly and demeaning ourselves in accommodation to their prejudices, and our calling upon them or inviting them to act thus.

This, however, I have placed in the chapter of *expediencies*. If you ask me for the contents of that chapter, I answer, It is the *moral* of 1st Cor. vi. 12, and x. 23, 24. "All meats (says the Apostle) are lawful to me, but all are not expedient; all are lawful to me, but all do not edify." So while it might be lawful for me to treat every unimmersed professor as a Pagan; it might not be expedient as far as his edification is concerned. In matters of this kind, which depend more upon our modes of thinking and reasoning, than upon a "*thus saith the Lord*," or an express precedent, it becomes us to be modest and by no means dogmatical; and, therefore, I have rather given you my premises, and the reasons of my conduct, than entered argumentatively into the question.

Much as I appreciate scriptural views of the gospel, and much importance as I am obliged to lay upon the right understanding of its ordinances, and much as I may lament the loss which is sustained by all professors who do not understand and keep the ordinances as delivered to us by the Apostles; I cannot, however, regard and treat every professor unimmersed as I do a heathen and a publican. While I cannot, according to the Constitution, receive a friendly alien into the kingdom, I dare not treat him as I would the worshipper of Jupiter or Diana. If I hear him addressing God through Jesus Christ and asking for such blessings as he needs and as are promised, I will rather say *Amen* to his petitions, than treat him as one that says, "O! Baal, save us! O! Baal, save us!"

In the hope of immortality, ever yours,

A. CAMPBELL.

PART 4

SINGING

IS SINGING IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD OF DIVINE APPOINTMENT?*

By F. G. ALIEN

It seems strange to us that this question should ever be raised by those who hold that the Christian religion is wholly a divine thing. With rationalists, who hold that men may elect their own religion, it would be different.

It cannot be denied by those who are willing to receive the teaching of the Spirit, that the New Testament churches worshiped God in song. This is mentioned in 1. Cor. xiv. *IS*; Eph. v. 19; and Col. iii. 16, besides other places "To the saints at Ephesus" Paul says:

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colosse," the same Apostle wrote:

Let the word of God dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

From these passages it will be seen that the brethren in both of these churches were exhorted to sing in the worship of God, and what they were thus exhorted to do they were

**Old Path Guide, Vol 3, 1881, p. 22.*

admonished to do in the name of Jesus Christ. It is simply certain that they worshiped God in song, and this worship was in the name of Jesus Christ, as every act of acceptable worship must be. It is equally certain that no act of worship can be performed in the name of Jesus Christ by apostolic injunction, that was not authorized by Jesus Christ.

In every age of the world, from the Garden of Eden down, every act of divine worship had to be appointed of God. There never was a time when man was left to elect his own acts of acceptable worship—to make his own religion. God has decreed that all acts of acceptable worship shall be by *faith*. Nothing can be done by faith that God has not directed. The limit of God's revelation is the limit of man's faith. When God ceases to direct, man ceases to act by faith. Whatever may be true about "aids to the worship," the act of worship itself has of necessity to be of divine appointment; otherwise it cannot be by Faith.

When the question is raised as to whether or not an uninspired man did a certain thing, it is legitimate to ask, Would he do it? If a charge of ungodly conduct is alleged against a good and true brother, the truth of which is yet in doubt, we naturally ask, Would he do it? And, until the fact is established that he did it, the question, which turns upon the man's character, would have very great weight in forming our judgment of his guilt or innocence. This question is legitimate *before* the fact of his guilt or innocence is established. It has no bearing in the case afterward.

When, therefore, it is alleged that the disciples may have introduced singing into the worship of God as a free-will offering, without a divine appointment to that end, such are our modes of thought in reference to such things, that we almost involuntarily raise the question, What right had they to do it?

We must remember that these churches were under the superintendency of the Apostles and other men guided into infallible truth by the Holy Spirit. If we are told that it is out

of order, illogical, to ask what right the Apostles had to do a thing till the fact is established as to whether or not they did it, we are simply told in other words that the divine principles underlying all acts and institutions of worship from the establishment of God's religion down through all the ages are to be deliberately thrown out of court, as having no bearing in the case, till the "facts" are established. Then, we ask: If these divine principles which have remained unchanged through all the ages are not to be considered in the investigation of facts, on what principles are you going to establish facts ? We hold, therefore, that the question: What right had the Apostles to introduce singing into the worship of God, or suffer it to be done, if it was not of divine appointment? is not only legitimate, but demanded.

Singing, as an act of worship in the religion of Christ, is of either human or divine origin. If it is of human origin, and became a recognized act of acceptable worship, then it is true that man is the author of a part of his own worship. Then if he can be the author of one part, why not of another part? If of a part, why not of the whole ? If all or any of this be true, then on what ground could Paul condemn "will-worship," or self-chosen worship?

God does not allow men to choose what they will worship, nor how they will worship, nor what they will dedicate to Him in worship. If we may bring our songs and offer them to God in worship, in the name of Jesus Christ, when Christ never appointed a worship of that kind, then we may bring our play and our dance and everything else that we may choose, and offer them to God in worship in the name of Christ. Hence, if we accept the position that singing is an acceptable act of worship, and is of human origin, we simply cut loose from divine legislation in matters of worship, and delight our souls in a religion of our own formation.

We are compelled, therefore, to conclude that singing in the worship is of divine origin. We have found Paul recog-

nizing it as an act of worship, and exhorting his brethren to engage in it heartily, in the name of Christ. Just when the Apostles appointed it, the history does not inform us. Whatever they did, they did as the Spirit directed them. Hence all that they introduced into the worship, was appointed of God. The very fact of their introduction of anything, establishes its divine appointment. They simply did as the Spirit directed them, and the Spirit directed them as God willed. Hence, it matters not when nor where they introduced singing into the worship, they did it by divine direction; and what they did by divine direction was of divine appointment.

It has been claimed that singing constituted no part of the worship of the church at Jerusalem, because it is not mentioned in the other acts of worship, in which it is said they continued. But this conclusion is reached by a very fallacious mode of reasoning.

When we find singing in other churches, we have no right to conclude that it was not in the Jerusalem church simply because it is not mentioned. On precisely this ground do our religious opponents cut baptism off from every passage in which justification by faith is mentioned, and baptism is not. We find in other places that baptism is necessary to justification by faith, and hence the faith implies it when the baptism is not mentioned. So in other places we find singing in the worship, and we conclude that it was in the worship here, unless we find something forbidding it, which is not the case. We are not told that they assembled in Jerusalem on the first day of the week to break bread, but we learn that they did this elsewhere, and we infer that they did it here. On the above mode of reasoning, we should conclude that they did not partake of the Lord's Supper on the Lord's day, except at Troas, because it is not so stated in the accounts of their worship. So of many other things pertaining to the worship and order of the primitive churches, until the "unity of the faith" is

broken into a hundred fragments, and its beauty and power forever destroyed.

In the position that there was no singing in the early Jerusalem church, because it is not mentioned among the items of worship, a very important fact is overlooked. This statement is not confined to the early history of the church in Jerusalem, nor indeed, to that church at all. The statement was made by Luke in about the year A.D. 63. This was thirty years after the conversion of the people to whom the language refers. They were, as a rule, not even residents of Jerusalem at the time, but were there from various countries, attending the feast of Pentecost. We infer, therefore, that eventually they returned to their homes. We also learn that when the persecution arose, they were all scattered everywhere, except the Apostles. It follows, therefore, that at the time Luke wrote the Acts of Apostles, the first converts to Christianity, who were yet living, were scattered over the whole Jewish world. Most of them had run their race and been gathered to their fathers. It is the remembrance of these facts that gives significance to the statement, that they continued "steadfast" in these divine appointments. They were not "steadfast" for a few months, but for life. Luke had thirty years of their history before him when he made that statement.

At the time this statement was made, we find singing a recognized act of worship in other congregations. If, therefore, the first converts did not sing in worship, they refused to join in this part of the worship in the churches over the country through which they lived and died. Just remember that the people to whom Luke referred when he said they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching, etc., never lived in Jerusalem, at least but few of them; that they spent their lives in other churches, and you will see that his language is not confined to the church in Jerusalem, but is as comprehensive as the scattered lives of those disciples through a period of thirty years. What these disciples continued in, they

continued in wherever they were during that thirty years, and this was not in Jerusalem. The same is true of what they did not do. Consequently, for one to conclude that the above statement of Luke is limited to the church in Jerusalem, and that, therefore, they did not sing, because the fact that they did is not mentioned, reaches a conclusion that a knowledge of the facts will not warrant.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN CHURCHES AND DANCING*

By MOSES E. LARD

In settling any question, whether theoretic or practical, the first thing to be agreed upon is the standard of final appeal. Without this our discussions are mere endless wranglings, and our arguments little else than mere circular talk. Neither error in thought nor error in practice is corrected. Strife is engendered and issue joined, but neither that nor this ever finds an end. Positions are taken which are illogical and gratuitous; while parties are formed seemingly without the hope of remedy; and all this for the want of some standard to which appeal can be at once and decisively made. Now that we as a people have agreed to accept the New Testament as that standard is a fact too notorious to admit of question. To this we have consented to bring the smallest point of doctrine, and the most trivial feature in practice. And furthermore, we have solemnly covenanted that whatever cannot be clearly shown to have the sanction of this standard shall be held as not doctrine, and shall not be practiced. We say shown to have the sanction; for it is not enough to warrant a practice that this standard does not sanction it. No practice can be defended on this ground. To warrant the holding of a doctrine or practice it must be shown that it has the affirmative or positive sanction of this standard, and not merely that it is not condemned by it. Either it must be actually asserted or necessarily implied, or it must be positively backed by some divinely approved precedent, otherwise it is not even an item in Christianity, and is therefore, when it is attempted to be made a part of it, criminal and wrong. Right in itself, and when standing apart from Christianity it may be, but when the

**Lard's Quarterly*, 1864, Vol. 1, p. 330.

effort is made to constitute it either a part of the Christian doctrine or of the Christian worship then both the act to do so and the thing itself become marked with the deepest stains of sin. In itself and as a mere act we think it perfectly innocent to sprinkle water on the face of an infant; but when the attempt is made to foist it into and incorporate it with Christianity, then the frown and anathema of Heaven lie on it. To all of which we as members of the body of Christ have bound ourselves in solemn acts and covenants. The simple fact that we claim to hold a place in the family of God is proof of this. As a people we have from the first and continually to the present proclaimed that the New Testament and that alone is our only full and perfect rule of faith and practice. We "have declared a thousand times and more that whatever it does not teach we must not hold, and whatever it does not sanction we must not practice. He who ignores or repudiates these principles, whether he be preacher, or layman, has by the act become an apostate from our ranks; and the sooner he lifts his hand high, avows the fact, and goes out from amongst us the better, yes, verily, the better for us.

I. Now in the light of the foregoing principles what defense can be urged for the introduction into some of our congregations of instrumental music? The answer which thunders into my ear from every page of the New Testament is, none. Did Christ ever appoint it? did the apostles ever sanction it? or did any one of the primitive churches ever use it? Never. In what light then must we view him who attempts to introduce it into the churches of Christ of the present day? I answer, as an insulter of the authority of Christ, and as a defiant and impious innovator on the simplicity and purity of the ancient worship. In no other light can we view him, in no other light should he be viewed. But we are told that there is no harm in instrumental music, and that therefore it may be innocently introduced into the churches of Christ. I shall certainly attempt no grave reply to this shallow thing; for

argument 1 will not call it. Grant, then, for a moment that there is no harm in instrumental music. The question arises what kind of instrument shall be used? An organ, shouts the sickly puling of Rome. An organ indeed! and shall we have only an organ? Is there no good music in anything else than an organ? We know there is. Why then have only an organ? This is arbitrary and tyrannical. But what signify arbitrariness and tyranny in a church which has consented to be disgraced by an organ? Simply nothing. These are now its spirit and its law, and of course are no offense to it. But despite of even these, for now we care nothing for strife, nothing for the feelings of brethren, we shall insist on the right both for self and others to introduce each for himself the instrument with which he can best conduct his worship. For the son of Mars, then, we claim the right to introduce the fife and the drum; and for self the right to introduce, for I could never make music on anything else, but am capital on these, the Jews-harp, the tin-pan, and the barrel-head. I even go farther, and with all the pluck of a Lacedemonian contend for the right of the Caledonian to have his bagpipes, and the ancient Israelite his ram's horns. To all of which let us still add a few fiddles, a tamborine, and a gong. Vive la music made on instruments! This is about as like pandemonium as anything we can well imagine, and about as near that place as we can well get unless we could get between that place and the church that has adopted instrumental music, and we think there is left little room between the two on which to stand. Soberly and candidly we are pained at these symptoms of degeneracy in a few of our churches. The day on which a church sets up an organ in its house, is the day on which it reaches the first station on the road to apostasy. From this it will soon proceed to other innovations; and the work of innovating once fairly commenced no stop can be put to it till ruin ensues. And then the spirit which precedes and fosters these innovations is a most dangerous spirit—dangerous because cruel, intractable,

and unreasonable. It is cruel because it is ready to immolate everything that in the least stands in the way of its wicked work; intractable, because it will not yield on even one tittle of its innovations; and unreasonable, because it will heed neither the voice of God nor that of man. Indeed, when a church has once introduced an organ, we believe it to be true, as a general rule, of those members who take the lead in the work, that they will suffer its Bible to be torn into shreds before they will part from their pet. No matter how unanimous or how kind the voice of remonstrance may be, the spirit of innovation never retraces its steps. When once it sets in to accomplish a certain object, accomplish that object it will, though ruin marks every step in its advance. Church history teems with proofs of what is here said. Let now, as further evidence of this, any set of brethren, no matter how pious and true, set about inducing a church which has introduced an organ, to put it away, and these brethren will soon fall under its proscriptions and it will absolutely go the length of putting them away before it will put away its organ.

But what shall be done with such churches? Of course nothing. If they see fit to mortify the feelings of their brethren, to forsake the example of the primitive churches, to condemn the authority of Christ by resorting to will worship, to excite dissension, and give rise to general scandal, they must do it. As a body we can do nothing. Still we have three partial remedies left us to which we should at once resort. 1. Let every preacher in our ranks resolve at once that he will never, under any circumstances or on any account, enter a meeting house belonging to our brethren in which an organ stands. We beg and entreat our preaching brethren to adopt this as an unalterable rule of conduct. This and like evils must be checked, and the very speediest way to effect it is the one here suggested. 2. Let no brother who takes a letter from one church ever unite with another using an organ. Rather let him live out of a church than go into such a den. 3. Let those

brethren who oppose the introduction of an organ first remonstrate in gentle, kind, but decided terms. If their remonstrance is unheeded, and the organ is brought in, then let them at once, and without even the formality of asking for a letter, abandon the church so acting; and let all such members unite elsewhere. Thus these organ-grinding churches will in the lapse of time be broken down, or wholly apostatize, and the sooner they are in fragments the better for the cause of Christ. I have no sympathy with them, no fellowship for them, and so help me God never intend knowingly to put my foot into one of them. As a people we claim to be engaged in an effort to return to the purity, simplicity, freedom from ostentation and pride, of the ancient apostolic churches. Let us, then, neither wink at any thing standing in the way, nor compromise aught essential to this end. The moment we do so our unity is at an end, and our hopes are in the dust.

II. Next in regard to Christians dancing. We frankly confess we feel ashamed and scandalized at the prevalence, in many sections of the country, of this licentious practice amongst the children of our brethren. And what hurts us little less is the fact that some even of the older brethren and sisters are giving it their countenance. Nay, they go so far as to encourage and justify it on the score that there is no harm in it; and in some cases actually send their children to dancing schools. For the sake of all such let us grant their universal plea of no harm in it, and see what it results in. There is, then, no harm in dancing; and of course no harm in any Christian's dancing. Now suppose that those who urge this plea should, on going into that intoxicating and bewildering place called the ball-room, see Bro. Campbell, Bro. John Smith, Bro. John Rogers, with other like aged and venerable men in Christ, actually engaged in a waltz, hugging other men's wives round over the floor. Could any other than a feeling of profound disgust seize them? But why? There is no harm in dancing! Yet we should feel not merely shocked at the

incongruity of such a sight, but positively amazed. But how is this? These are, of all men, the ones whom dancing is least likely to corrupt; yet our feelings utterly refuse to be reconciled to their act. Surely this plea of no harm in it cannot be sound. But further, suppose that on some Lord's day, just after weeping over and partaking of the emblems of the Savior's body and blood, a member of some church should arise and propose to clear away the seats, and that the whole church should engage in a dance; and suppose that this should actually be done. Nay further, let us suppose it to be repeated from Lord's day to Lord's day through the year. Would those who cry no harm in it be willing to belong to such a church, or would they even be willing for their dancing children to be reared up in it? Hardly, we think. But why? If there be no harm in dancing, then is there no harm in dancing on the Lord's day, none in dancing in the Lord's house. The truth is, this plea is simply a specious lie with which Satan is at this time drugging these members. Let those who urge it first show that there is no harm in dancing before they ask us to acquiesce. Let them either show where it has the sanction of Christ or the apostles, or was practiced in some primitive church; or else let them forever cease to urge this plea, and abandon the practice. If they will not do this, then let them go out of the church of God into the world where they properly belong. The church never parts from aught but trouble when it parts from such members. If they can be reclaimed and saved by all just means let this be done; but the church should make no compromise, not for one day, with dancing. Let its action be kind but firm, and terribly prompt. This alone will save. Of all the unsanctioned acts a church has to deal with, ; none demands prompter treatment than dancing. It is one of those specious and insidious evils which must be cured in its very inception, or it is never cured. Tolerate it, and by and by those who advocate it will claim the right by prescription to engage in it. Remonstrance is vain then. Our churches should

lift a unanimous voice against it, and proceed to rid themselves of it with an energy and a promptitude which would leave not a vestige of it in Zion. Let the world know, but especially let professors know, that it must be completely and forever abandoned. A stand like this once taken and maintained with dignity and firmness, and the evil is soon cured. But as long as the shilly-shallying course of some of our churches is persisted in, dancing will increase in them until it ultimately becomes the rule; then the result is clear. Attempt to correct it now, and dancing will exclude the church, and not the church dancing.

But just here, and before we close this short piece, a favorite position of the dancer and organ advocate needs to be noticed and disposed of. Each claims that since the New Testament does not in express words condemn his hobby, he therefore has the same right to have it that others have to exclude it; and that he is under no more obligation to yield his preference than is the opponent to yield his opposition. But this position is not sound. A man has a right to hold as a matter of conscience every doctrine the New Testament clearly teaches, and to practice as a matter of conscience every act it clearly sanctions; and beyond this a Christian conscience is a myth. Nay, further: I am bound in conscience to be opposed to everything not thus indorsed. Now when the dancer claims the right to introduce dancing, he claims the right to innovate in a matter in which I am bound to have conscience and he is bound to have none, I cannot therefore yield to him, but he must yield to me. He must consequently abandon dancing if I object to it. For suppose me bound to yield to him in a case in which I am to have conscience and he is to have none. This of course would confer on me the right to require him to yield to me in a precisely similar case. How then would stand the matter? Simply thus, that I must yield to him both when I have and when I have not conscience, and that he must do the same with me. But this is folly and

nonsense. Hence when I object, the dancer can introduce dancing on no ground save that of a criminal and wicked disregard of my conscience and my feelings, and he who does this is unworthy of a place in the church of the living God, and we say put him away. In many instances the remedy is | painful we know; but, we repeat, the evil must be checked. j

No greater curse can befall the church of Christ than to popularize it by tolerating within it this and like dangerous practices. By so doing I grant we may increase its members of a certain kind, but its piety and purity we should reduce] to a low, very low grade. The church gains nothing by strewing the path that leads into it with flowers, and providing ; downy beds for those who dwell within it. Self-denial, labor, and a perpetual mortification of the flesh, are its glory and the pledge of its success. Let men know that the condition on which they can enter the church is that they part from all that pampers carnality and promotes pride, and you immeasurably increase its attractiveness. When sin gives exquisite pain and the soul sighs for the rest and the life which are in Christ Jesus, dancing and an organ are detested and shunned. The heart that delights in them and advocates them has never communed long with itself over its corruptions and deep wants. Christianity is designed to make men new creatures. The old life with its revelries, its fun, its high bursts of fleshly glee, its show and worldly usages, is exchanged for one who wept and sorrowed, but never danced nor fawned on an organ, and from cultivating the most affectionate and tender regard for the feelings of such of God's children as weep over even the most trivial innovation, and from mingling in scenes which fill us with grief, steep us in sympathy, and start within us the holiest resolutions our natures can give birth to. This is the school in which Christians should aim to fit themselves for heaven, and not the ball-room. I never knew a dancing Christian on his dying bed to send for a dancer to comfort him, nor a fiddle called for in the chamber where death completes his

work. Let no Christian think that he can scandalize the church of God with the evils of which we are speaking and stand approved in the judgment day. He sports with criminal carelessness with the future destiny who so thinks God will not suffer himself to be mocked with impunity by the impious daring of him who insults his children on earth and wounds their best feelings by dragging these innovations into the church. Here such a party may escape The want of strictness in churches, and the shuffling indifference of overseers, may give him little pain; but the day of reckoning hastens on. The churches of Christ in the whole land owe it to themselves, and to the high and just ground they have taken, to guard with sleepless vigilance against even the semblance of an innovation on the practice and usages of the apostolic churches. Apostasies begin with things that "have no harm in them," and end in ruin. At first they creep, but in the end stride continents at a single step. Finally we say watch, beware!

SHOULD WE DISCUSS THE ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP?*

(In Reply to a Correspondent) *By* F. G. ALLEN

As to the inconsistencies of some men in praising a thing in a house of the denominations that they condemn in our own, we will only say that this proves nothing as to the right or wrong of the matter. We can readily understand why one can preach in a denominational church that uses the organ, when he would not preach in a church of his own brethren that uses it, without expressing his disapprobation. Because the latter would likely be construed into a favoring of it, while the former could not, any more than that of their other items of faith and worship.

I find no command in the New Testament in regard to instrumental music in our worship, and therefore cannot advocate its use upon scriptural grounds, and I see nothing forbidding it; in fact it is a subject I fear to agitate either way.

Certainly there is no command in the New Testament in regard to instrumental music in our worship, nor were there any instruments used during that age of the church. It is also true that there is no specific command against instruments in the worship, expressed in so many words. But the question is, Are we permitted to introduce into the worship whatever is not specifically forbidden? He who thus affirms must accept all the impious innovations of Rome. For they, neither, are specifically forbidden. There can be no end to the corruptions of the worship on this principle. On this principle, no religion

**Old Path Guide*, Vol. 2, 1880, p. 427.

that God ever gave to men could maintain its identity through three generations. Clearly, then, these questions are to be settled on other grounds. The items of worship must be of specific appointment. They are not susceptible of modification at the hands of men. Every act of worship must be performed in faith, else it is not accepted. That only can be done in faith which is done by divine direction. Hence the act of worship must be divinely appointed. Consequently to claim that the organ may be used in the worship because its use is not specifically forbidden, it to put the whole matter of worship on false and ruinous grounds.

In favoring it to the extent of bringing it into our worship we certainly meet the harsh judgment of many good brethren, and in opposing it we jostle the conscientious scruples of others equally upright.

We have never been able to see where the "conscientious scruples" come in on the part of those favoring the use of the instrument. We can easily understand how people can favor it, and how they can long to have it in the church, but how their conscience can be involved in its non-use we are wholly unable to understand. We venture the assertion, without fear of successful contradiction, that the grandest and best work ever done by any religious people was done before they reached that period in their history when their culture (?) demanded the use of instruments in the worship. We are simply following in the wake of others, and the spirit that demands instruments in the worship today will not stop with the instruments. No man who has the spirit of Christ in him can look upon the work of the past and then say his *conscience* demands an instrument in the work of the future.

Why contend so much about a mere matter of opinion? Do you really think time and pen as well employed in such criticism as they would be in teaching sinners the

"Way of the Lord," or in impressing the minds of Christians with practical duties, and encouraging them to live peaceably, walking blameless in all things ?

If the organ question, in all its phases, were merely a "matter of opinion," perhaps it would deserve less attention than it receives, but such is not the case. In its most important bearings on the religion of Christ it is a matter of *faith*. If the New Testament does not teach that those who produce division and alienation in the churches of God by the introduction of an organ, are schismatics, and to be disfellowshipped as such, then it teaches nothing to us. This is just as much a matter of faith as is Christian baptism. We may have our opinions about the use of the organ in some other respects, but there is no room for opinion here. Hence we would just as well quit contending about the one baptism, and extend to sprinklers the right hand of fellowship, as to fraternize with these ungodly men as brethren beloved in the Church of Christ.

It is of very little worth to "teach sinners the way of the Lord," and then leave them to go in a way that is not "the way of the Lord." Men need to be taught submission to divine authority after baptism as well as before. Without this their baptism is worthless. "To live peaceably and walk blameless in all things," is the very end for which we are contending in our controversies on this question. We love peace, but we want it to rest on truth and righteousness. First *pure*, then peaceable, is the divine plan. If we can have peace only at the expense of a surrender to the world's infringements on the purity of the church, then we should have it only in death.

In regard to the organ, do you really believe its use sinful in a congregation where all the members desire it, and who use it to improve church music? Would it be right for one of another congregation to answer, severely, those quietly and harmoniously doing that which they believed not forbidden in the Bible? Should we not leave

them in peace so long as they are active, zealous brethren, and do not try to urge its use on those who oppose it?

This contains three questions, each of which we shall try to answer briefly but candidly.

(1) We believe the use of the organ in the worship to be sinful though all the members of the congregation may desire it, and use it for the purpose of improving church music. We believe it to be wrong because we believe its consequences are necessarily evil. We believe that the "improvement of church music," by the organ, is always at the expense of the spirituality of the worship, and therefore wrong.

(2) There is no necessity for "answering severely" those who think the use of the organ not forbidden by the Word of God; but there is a necessity of meeting the question with great firmness, well sensed with kindness.

(5) A church thus worshipping should be left in peace so far as an actual disturbance is concerned, but we should never fail to protest against their course, and admonish them as brethren.

Life is too short for fault-finding, and we "pass this way but once," therefore let us enlarge the mantle of love so that it will smoothly cover our neighbor as well as ourselves.

The truth of all this depends on the sense in which we take "fault-finding." Life is too short not to find fault with a great many things by which we are surrounded. The Savior found fault with many things, and in order to correct them, He said He must work while it is called today. Charity is a noble thing, but we should be careful to not cultivate a false charity. The Savior himself had not a charity that embraced error, nor did his gentle spirit ever compromise with wrong. Let no man deceive himself with the idea that he has the spirit of Christ, when he is willing to let corruptions of the worship

of God pass unnoticed. We "pass this way but once," hence we should be as true to the Savior as possible in passing. We conclude, therefore, that a discussion of the elements of acceptable worship is always in order. Too much vigilance over them is hardly possible. We have won every inch of ground so far in our attempts at restoration by sharp and severe controversy. It is just as important to maintain a right position as to win it. We are living in an age of sharp conflict of every description, and he who is tired of it, and will no longer imitate his Master in the conflict, should at once seek his bed and his grave.

PART 5
THE CONTRIBUTION

THE CONTRIBUTION*

By ALBERT ALLEN

All institutions, so far as they look to the founder, are necessarily human or divine. The authority which enjoins as a duty the observance of the one or the other must possess the inherent right to control the actions of men. Before a hearty submission can be rendered, not only the right to legislate must be clearly recognized, but the fact that such legislation did actually occur. In the absence of these convictions in the mind of disciples, every command of Jesus Christ, as King or Head of the church, will be either totally void in effect, or productive of a lifeless form of obedience.

In support, then, of any institution claiming to be divine, it must be proved to have been established by no less a personage than the Lord Jesus himself, or some one acting under his sacred authority. The pages of the New Testament, as embodying the whole will of Christ concerning the church, is the only document on earth where such proof can be supposed to exist. All other testimony, come from what source it may, is to be rejected, as insufficient, inappropriate, and void. Nor indeed can the inferential or deducible, as derived therefrom, be relied on as strictly conclusive. Nothing less than express command or apostolic precedent can be deemed satisfactory. Where either of these can be shown to sustain a Christian practice, the authority upon which such practice rests rises above all doubt or cavil. This is clear to the intelligent reader, if he will reflect for a moment upon the ground of assurance, which compels his acceptance of baptism, the breaking of the loaf, or the observance of the first day of the week, as ordinances of the kingdom of Christ.

**Lard's Quarterly*, Vol. 2, p. 64 (1864).

Without further prefatory remarks, and with these facts before us, we submit the proposition, that: The apostles, who were guided into all the truth by the Holy Spirit, and who regulated the action of the primitive churches in all public exercises of religious worship, did establish the contribution as one of those acts to be observed in the weekly assembly of the saints; and, consequently, that every Christian congregation should observe it weekly, as an act of acceptable worship.

It is evident that the proposition assumes "that the apostles of Jesus Christ did establish the contribution as an act of religious worship in the primitive congregations without pretending to define what the contribution is, how to be observed, or the design for which instituted." It simply affirms that the rite styled "the contribution" was instituted or established by the apostles, and enjoined on the primitive congregations as an item to be observed weekly by them, among other acts of religious worship. If what is now so plainly affirmed can be sustained by Scripture evidence, the conclusion stated above, that "every Christian congregation should observe it weekly as an act of acceptable worship," is too obvious to be denied by anyone, unless, indeed he fails to apprehend the identity of authority between this and other received institutions of the church—the necessity of uniform practice in all the Christian congregations—or recklessly assumes that it was designed only to be an occasional practice, and which, like "the washing of the saints' feet," was to cease when the necessity which caused its observance no longer existed. And lest this thoughtless assumption should find a lodgment in the mind of some forgetful one, we will here remark, that the Master said: "The poor you always have with you"; and were its existence predicated upon the continuousness of want (its true occasion) it could never cease.

The task of sustaining the proposition just stated is by no means difficult, as the testimony is brief and pointed. The first Christian congregation established by the apostles after

the ascent of Jesus to the right hand of his Father, who were fully empowered by the Holy Spirit to "disciple all nations," was at Jerusalem. Under the teachings of these inspired ambassadors they were gathered together in one body, and instructed, as newly constituted subjects of the reign of Christ, in all the mysteries of his kingdom, and in their personal relations, dependencies, and honors. True to the directions thus received, it is recorded in evidence of their fidelity, in Acts ii., 42, that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, • in the contribution, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." Between the periods of the actual practice of this congregation of disciples here spoken of and that of their baptism, as mentioned in the preceding verse, there must have been some interval of time. How much the historian does not state. But enough certainly to warrant his saying they continued in these things; and, as if not satisfied with this mention of their practice, he adds "they continued steadfastly." Thus forcing the conviction on the mind of the reader that such was their fixed or constant custom. Without any ambiguity whatever, here is a distinct and well-marked instance of the very first congregation of disciples, under apostolic authority or sanction, observing and continuing to observe several items of religious worship, among which is the contribution. While, then, it must be admitted that the contribution was appointed by the apostles or under their sanction, which is the same, it will be contended that the terms "continued steadfastly" do not prove its weekly observance. Certainly they do not, but presumptively they do. For if the term "contribution" is expressive of an act at all, then continuing steadfastly in doing that act can mean but one of two things, viz., either that their whole time was occupied in doing it (which is observed as other things are said to have been done by them), or that it was done periodically. And if periodically, we are certainly justified in giving all the weight of probability in behalf of the first day of the week; inasmuch

as this day was commemorative of the resurrection of their Saviour, and was the day on which they assembled together to break the loaf, and consequently the most opportune time.

Not wishing, however, to transcend the positive teaching of the Scriptures on this point, we quote the first and second verses of the sixteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, as translated by Drs. McNight, Campbell, and others: "Now concerning the collection which is for the saints, as I ordered the congregations of Galatia, so also do you. On the first day of every week let each of you lay somewhat by itself, according as he may have prospered, putting it into the treasury; that when I come there may be then no collections." We have no special object in presenting this translation other than its definiteness and avouched accuracy. Prominent in this, as in the common version of the same passage, stands the fact that Paul orders the church at Corinth, as he had also ordered the churches of Galatia, "to lay somewhat by itself, putting it into the treasury," and this to be done on every first day of the week. The question now occurs: Is this the contribution in which it is stated the Jerusalem congregation "continued steadfastly"? If so, that portion of our proposition which affirms a weekly observance of the contribution is proved beyond a doubt. In the settlement of this question, let us turn to the apostle's second letter to the same church, supposed to be written more than one year after the one from which is the above quotation. In the ninth chapter and the first and second verses he says: "But indeed concerning the ministry which is for the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you. For I know your willingness, of which I boasted on your behalf to the Macedonians, that Achaia was prepared since the last year; and your zeal has stirred up the multitude." In the same chapter, twelfth and thirteenth verses, he says: "For the ministry of this public service not only fills up completely the wants of the saints, but also abounds in thanksgivings to God. They, through the proof

of this ministry, glorify God for your avowed subjection to the Gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution for them, and for all."

Let us now inquire: What does the apostle mean by the expression in the first of these quotations "the ministry which is for the saints," and in the second, "the ministry of this public service" ? Certainly the very same thing, when he writes them "concerning the collection for the saints," in his first epistle, and enjoins it as a "Service" to be observed on the first day of the week—a day on which they all assembled together, and thus made that service "public." Speaking of the same thing in the thirteenth verse, as above, he styles it "their contribution for them" (the poor saints in Jerusalem), "and for all" other poor saints. Here the term "contribution" represents what is called the "ministry of the saints," in the second epistle, and also that which is identical with it, "the collection for the saints," in the first epistle; while it is itself the same unqualified term used in Acts ii., 42. But if this be not enough to establish identity between the practice of the Jerusalem church as represented by the term "contribution," and the practice of the Corinthian church, as ordered by Paul in the sixteenth chapter of his first letter, as the "collection for the saints," we have only to refer to his Epistle to the Romans, xv., 26, to make this practice complete in identity; so far as the same word is the representative of the same thing, when used by the inspired penman: "For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia (Corinth) to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem."

From these premises we conclude that the apostles did establish the contribution as an act of religious worship, to be observed in the weekly assembly of the saints, and consequently that every Christian congregation should observe it weekly as an act of acceptable worship. To the same end, historic testimony of a reliable character could be adduced

plainly attesting this uniform practice in the earlier Christian congregations. But it is deemed unnecessary.

Thus far, it will be seen that we have anticipated any direct effort to correctly understand what is meant by the term "contribution," though using it to indicate a joint participation of worldly goods, in giving and receiving. We are aware that such understanding of the word is at variance with that entertained by some New Testament critics, whose intelligence and piety we both admire and esteem. Among whom must be ranked our estimable brother McGarvey, author of "Commentary on Acts of Apostles." We prefer an agreement with our brethren, even in matters of opinion; but where that opinion does not serve to estrange or alienate our feelings, it does not provoke a single regret.

It is generally conceded that the original term *Koinonia*, used twenty times in the Acts of Apostles and in the epistles, always embraces the idea of sharing, or joint participation. This leading idea seems to be as fixedly associated with it as is the idea of light or heat with the word sun, whenever used. The difficulty lies exclusively in determining what is the thing to be shared, in the absence of a positive statement, or some qualifying term or terms, as is the case in Acts ii., 42. If, in a number of cases in the Scriptures, it is used with some qualifying word or phrase, determining the thing participated in, and in the remaining cases is without any such qualification whatever, it is clear that the sacred writer must, in every such case of independent use, have employed it in some well-known ordinary sense. And if in one case of such separate use its meaning may, by the context or otherwise, be certainly ascertained, we may reasonably infer the same meaning in every case of like occurrence. If we try the word *Koinonia* by this rule, we will find it to be qualified fifteen times by such distinctive expression as the *Koinonia* "of his son"; "of the blood"; "of his sufferings," etc. In the remaining five instances

it is used independently, except in Romans, xv., 26, in which Paul says they made a certain contribution, understood by some to mean a specific one in amount. Acts ii., 42, 2 Cor. viii, 4; ix., 13, and Heb. xiii., 16, contain the other instances. Several of these passages have been quoted in full. The one from 2 Cor. ix., 13, clearly defines the ordinary use of this word. For, he says, the liberality of their contribution filled up completely the want of the saints. Confirmatory, also, of the fact that the term *koinonia*, in New Testament use, when standing independently, means joint participation in giving and receiving treasure only, is the passage in Heb. xiii., 16: "But to do good and contribute, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." From these it is certainly safe to conclude that it has the same meaning in second of Acts. It may not be amiss, however, to venture a single argument in corroboration of this view, to wit: To meet every rational conception of the case, there must be a divinely authorized order of worship, and this order must be uniformly the same in all the congregations of Christ. What has been discovered to constitute this act of religious worship of weekly observance in the church at Corinth, under apostolic authority, must consequently have its counterpart in the worship of the Jerusalem congregation under apostolic authority. This correspondence can be with no other act of religious worship in the Jerusalem church but the contribution, and hence must be with that. This is too clear to be denied, and must possess its full force in determining the meaning of the term, as used to represent the practice of the first congregation of disciples.

Nor can we see that this meaning of the word should be regarded as "limited," or "restricted." That it is an appropriate use we do not deny, but appropriated by divinely inspired writers. Hence, we can not agree with the author of the Commentary on Acts, that it means in Acts ii., 42, a "common participation of religious enjoyments, including con-

tributions for the poor." For had its meaning been so comprehensive as to include all religious enjoyments, it would have been useless, to say the least, for the historian Luke to add that they continued steadfastly in "the breaking of bread and in prayers"; inasmuch as these are evidently "religious enjoyments." In harmony, then, with Dr. McNight and A. Campbell, we must conclude that a special act of worship is represented by this word *koinonia*, which consisted in contributing to the relief of the suffering saints somewhat of those worldly effects with which God had blessed them.

If the foregoing views be correct, we may presume to find some law regulating the observance of this duty, and the object for which done. Many subordinate objects may have influenced the Divine purpose in the appointment of this institution; but the chief one is, the relief of the saints—the poor saints—from the distress and sufferings of poverty. Was there ever a better object to which a Christian could devote a portion of his worldly riches? We answer emphatically no! though all the colleges in the land go unendowed, and even Christian missions unsustained. There is not a human society claiming the regard and esteem of any intelligent man that has not incorporated in its constitution this benevolent feature, and because of which, more than any other, is commended and appreciated by society. Under every antecedent dispensation God has made the most ample provision for the poor of his people, by special enactment, and has ever approbated the principle of benevolence, as among the most honorable and godlike that can be entertained or cherished. While under the Christian dispensation, one essentially of love and mercy, he has made the most enlarged provisions for the relief of the destitute of his children by and through the exercise of that faith which says: "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and that "brotherly love which beareth all things," and "is kind"; furnishing an exhibition by which all men shall know that

they are the disciples of Christ. Thus intending the church to feel, and the world to see, an illustration of the "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." Paul could say of himself, that, in conference with the apostles, whom he visited at Jerusalem seventeen years after his conversion, they added nothing to him; but would that he should "remember the poor," the same which he also "was forward to do." For he had learned in his eventful life how to be abased and how to abound, to be hungry and to be full, and had in his deep poverty experienced the blessedness of having that which "was lacking to him" supplied once and again by the brethren who came from Macedonia. That he had labored with his own hands day and night that he might not be chargeable to the brethren, and might have to give to others. Would that all Christians could say the same. What suffering would cease, and what honor redound to the praise and glory of God's great name, and what fruit abound to the Christian's everlasting account!

But we have strayed beyond our purpose in considering the object or design of this institution. In resuming our investigations of the law regulating its observance, we learn from the portions of Scripture already cited certain distinct facts:

1. That it was to be done on the first day of every week.

2. That the amount thus obtained was to be put into the treasury of the church.
3. That each ought to give as he was prospered of the Lord, and "according as he purposeth in his own heart." The first of these rules has been considered in the preceding writing, and demands no further notice here, except to answer an objection sometimes raised on the words, "that when I come there be then no collections." It is inferred by the objector that this paragraph teaches the non-continuance of the contribution, after the arrival of the apostle at Corinth. To accept such an inference is equivalent to affirming that the

charities of the church are only occasional and spasmodic, without energy or continuous life; a conclusion too incredible to claim one grain of honest belief. The meaning of the apostle is easily reached by reference to his second letter, ninth chapter, verses three and four: "Yet I have sent the brethren, that our boasting concerning you may not be rendered false in this particular; but that as I said you may be prepared. Lest, perhaps, if the Macedonians come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not you) should be put to shame by this confidence." From this, as well as the facts of the case which it is not necessary to state, it is clear that the expression only means, that they should be ready with their gift when he arrived at Corinth.

As to the law of giving, the apostle affirms that there should be "first, a willing mind," and then it is accepted "according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." The amount given by each is therefore to be in some proportion to the amount relatively possessed by each, in order that "equality" be obtained or that "one be not burdened and another eased." This rule accords with the general law of Christian responsibility in other respects, requiring little where little is given, and much where much is given. Many believe, however, that the expression "as the Lord hath prospered them" implies that a certain percentage of their weekly gains is to be separated and devoted to this purpose; and on account of the difficulty, to say nothing of the impossibility, in many secular pursuits, of estimating such weekly gains, and determining the required percentage, declare the whole matter of contribution impracticable, and hence unbinding. With such we can not agree, believing that no exact ratio between the amount given and the aggregate amount possessed is designed by the use of the word "as," nor that so sordid an idea possessed Paul's mind, as to confine the term "prosperity" to worldly gains only. In this belief we feel sustained, because

no mention is made anywhere what that ratio should be, nor yet a single intimation requiring on the part of any disciple rigid conformity to a statutory provision. But, on the contrary, it is affirmed in the seventh verse of the next chapter, that "every one, according as he purposeth in his heart, ought to give; not with regret, nor by constraint, for God loves a cheerful giver." Without this freedom of action, no more room would be given to the exercise of benevolence on the part of the given, nor any higher exhibition of it furnished the world than could be found in the case of the Jew. who by legal enactment paid a tithe annually of what he possessed to the Lord.

But it will be asked if temporal gains or worldly riches do not constitute the full measure of the prosperity here spoken of, what else does enter into it ? We answer: Every temporal and spiritual blessing of which God is the giver, and which is necessary to the successful prosecution of any secular or religious pursuit whatever. The term prospered does not admit into its meaning any quality, expressive of, or belonging to, a thing completed or terminated, but only related to such actions or means as favor the proposed end. Hence in any estimate of how God has prospered us we must take into the account every benefaction of his, by which is enhanced our capacity of doing good to others, and the securement of our own personal and eternal happiness. Thus directed to the source of all blessing, we are impelled, by every principle of gratitude, to give as we have received, and to bless as we are blessed. For though the poor presents the occasion for benevolence, God's goodness to us furnishes the consideration which prompts to action. Human sympathy is a noble passion; but, undirected by a lofty sentiment, has at best its moods and persons, and seldom acts except in the present tense of seeing or hearing. We love the soul that can be moved by pity to relieve the distress and sufferings of frail mortality; but we

admire in a purer and higher sense him whose benevolence is not enkindled by a carnal impulse, but springs from a just and sublime conception of obligations to Him who redeemeth his life from destruction, and who crowneth him with loving kindness and tender mercies.

Every Christian should, therefore, possessing a "willing mind," and knowing that "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver," give "according as he purposeth in his own heart," and as "of the ability which God giveth," ever remembering that it is written, that "God is able to make every blessing abound to you; that in every thing having all sufficiency, you may abound in every good work."

Of the many blissful effects resulting from the practice of this systematic and Divine plan of Christian beneficence much might be written; but the present length of this article precludes more than the bare mention of a few of these as they appear on the surface of the apostolic writings, and strike the reader as obviously and essentially true.

In relation to the giver, it cultivates the habit of beneficence—leads to a contemplation of God's goodness—reminds him of the grace of Christ—assures him as a "cheerful giver" of God's love—of fruit which shall abound to his account, in the form of personal blessings and a service acceptable to God. In relation to the receiver, it supplieth his want. Is productive of thanksgiving to God, and induces prayers for, and love to, the giver.

While in relation to the world, it is an evidence of discipleship. For the Saviour has said: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

A few words of kindly admonition to the reader, and we are done. The church has long languished in the neglect of this department of her usefulness and honor. As a consequence, the praise she should have has been accorded to human institutions. That some system of active benevolence should

be uniformly adopted in the congregations is not only demanded by these facts, but by the voice of pleading humanity, as it recounts its privations, griefs, and woes, endured even in the bosom of the church. What shall we say to our Master, who, having told us that a cup of cold water given to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple shall not lose its reward, shall thrust home the accusation: "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not" ? Silent as the grave will be our own lips, while He who is now our advocate will then have ceased to plead in our behalf forever. Fearful, indeed, is the responsibility of those to whom, as tenants at will, He has said: "Occupy till I come."

THE CONTRIBUTION*

By GEORGE AUSTEN

In the first number of the current volume the readers of *the Quarterly*, in an able article under this heading, have their attention called to a subject of profound interest.

The power and spirit of the gospel in no one of its claims upon the human conscience are seen with greater clearness than in its triumphs over the lust of gain. The Saviour has placed this sentiment before us with all the force of a divine oracle. "He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If, therefore, you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will intrust you with the true riches?"

One feels to pause here, and tremblingly to ask: Is it so? The Scriptures can never be broken. Is it so? Heaven and earth may pass away, but my word can never pass away. Oh! how lightly we tread now upon these burning coals of fire, which to thousands will never be quenched!

Though we welcome the article with so much pleasure as the beginning we trust of a still further and fuller development of the subject of which it treats, still there are points in the proposition with which the writer sets out, and for the verification or proof of which he mainly labors, which, though clearly stated, lack that fullness of proof for which the mind hungers when dealing with questions of such import.

There is something repugnant to the mind in regarding an ordinance which terminates on food and raiment, as an ordinance of worship under the dispensation of the Spirit.

If, however, it could be made to appear that such a contribution or collection should be taken up on the first day of

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the week, even of every week, are we therefore to place it among the acts of worship, such as singing, prayer, and eating the Lord's supper? Are we mistaken when the ordinances of the gospel are regarded by us as the highest acts of spiritual worship in which we can ever engage in this life? Are they not trees in the garden of God (the church) on which hang the fruit of life? That which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Within this sacred inclosure we have no need of the "light of the sun, nor the light of the moon." The Lord God and the Lamb are the light of it. Nothing here terminates on the flesh; it is all spirit, all life. "Not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life," he has been constituted a priest.

"The holy kiss," "the washing of the saints' feet," "the Sabbath," the "ministering to the necessities of the saints," and, if you please, "instrumental music," from our present stand-point, though all of God, occupy one and the same plane. They are all of the "earth earthy," and are founded on the nature and constitution of man in his relations to the present life, and from the nature of things are excluded as acts or parts of worship from God's spiritual temple (the church), where he is worshiped "in spirit and according to truth "

Is it not, may I ask, at the point of positive ordinances that our faith is accounted to us for righteousness, as Abraham, made perfect by obedience? Just here we step off "the foundation," and begin the work of "laying another," which is not another, only as it becomes the "foundation" of "the apostasy;" for in what does this consist, if not in ordinances merely human? In the one centres the power of God for justification through faith; in the other the power of Satan through unbelief.

Have the dullest observers failed to see the deadly hatred which the latter bears to the former? Hence the fierce conflict through which our brethren have passed, and are still

passing. Is the human heart capable of a hatred more intense than "sprinkling" bears to "exclusive immersion"? And is there any thing held in more ineffable contempt than the Lord's supper of the New Testament, as set forth in the weekly commemoration of his death by a "monthly," a "quarterly," or an "annual sacrament." At these respective altars we worship. No strange thing has happened when the one persecutes the other. "Wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." All along the line covered by the positive ordinances of the gospel, with their antecedents and consequents, is the battle-ground of this deadly conflict. But this is a digression. Let us come back to our subject.

That provision should have been made for the wants of such as may not be able to provide for themselves is certainly in keeping with the spirit of the gospel. That it should take the form of a weekly contribution, even to the just designation of "the contribution," would seem entirely in harmony with the spirit and genius of the gospel. But to give it a place as an act of worship, as prayer, praise, and the Lord's supper, is lifting it to the highest point of spiritual communion.

Still, if the Scriptures so place it (which we have assumed they do not), it is all important that we be rightly instructed on this, as on all other vital living points. It is just here that the want is felt, in reading the article of which we are speaking.

If the contribution be an act of worship, as the Lord's supper, when does it become so? The laws which govern it must answer. These are time, place, circumstance. 1. On the first day of the week (every week). 2. When assembled with the church. 3. As the Lord has prospered the worshiper.

I confess there is something fearful in this last qualification. Some poor widow may drop her farthing into the treasury and meet the full complement of the law in the case; but

who has the courage to speak, or write, or even think of the mockery and insult that has been going on, even in our own churches, if the contribution be an act of worship, and these the laws which govern it. "To be guilty in one, is to be guilty in all."

But against it, as an act of worship, may not other objections be urged? If worship at all, the act itself, the contribution, must be the thing performed. Would not this deprive the ones for whose benefit the ordinance was given of all • participation in the worship, so far as the ordinance goes? Was there ever an ordinance of religion given of God for one class of persons to the exclusion of another under any dispensation? The Lord's day, the Lord's house, the Lord's table, singing, and prayer are for all God's people; but the "fellowship" excludes the Lord's poor from any participation as an act of worship. Does the gain to the flesh compensate for the loss to the spirit?

Whether the writer of the article has fully sustained himself in other respects may be submitted to those of a more enlarged experience than is claimed by me. The subject, however, needs a thorough handling; deep thought and greatness of heart are the needed elements to master it; our destiny as a people hangs tremblingly upon it. God and mammon are the mighty forces claiming dominion. "If the Lord be God, worship him; if Baal be God, worship him." We can not drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. "We can not serve God and mammon."

As the matter now stands, if the contribution is to be understood as a fixed law of God for the supply of the wants of the poor and the furtherance of the gospel, and these the laws which govern it, let the rulers of our churches see to it that the brotherhood are fully taught upon the subject.

I am truly glad that this article has appeared in the *Quarterly* at this early stage of its labors, and, for myself,

thank the writer for having led the way in discussing and settling a subject fraught with such immense interests to us as a people. It ought not to be concealed, that there hangs over us—an otherwise great and promising people—a dark foreboding, which, if unheeded, will end in our utter overthrow. I need scarcely pen the words, so obvious is it to us all; I mean the blighting, damning sin of worldly mindedness; deep down at the bottom of this monstrous iniquity lies the love of money. It is now eating like a canker at the very roots of our existence; evidently our churches are most imperfectly taught, if taught at all, on this subject.

A power so omnipotent for evil would, if rightly used be equally strong for good. No being in the universe, better than Satan, knows the prodigious gain to the cause of the victor in this mighty contest. Shall our great and most favored brotherhood be the victors in the struggle, or will we be led the easy captives "by the world, the flesh, and the devil?"

As we now stand to the world and each other there seems but one of God's gifts which, by common consent, is to be devoted to the furtherance of the gospel. If any one has the gift of speech, so as to communicate his thoughts with facility and eloquence, all say, and say truly, "you ought to preach." If a man has the gift from God to accumulate wealth ("it is God who giveth to a man power to get riches") we all say you ought to devote the fruits of that power first for your own necessities, and after this to the furtherance of the gospel? Does the man live who can give to God and his own understanding a reason why the two several gifts bear a relation, the one to the flesh, and the other to the Spirit—why the one binds the possessor to devote himself to Christ and the church, and the other is left free to devote himself to the world, the flesh, and the devil?

No question more vitally concerns us than this; our life or death is in it. If the great surplus fund now in the hands

of brethren is to be offered a holocaust to the flesh, then the flood of corruption must flow in upon us. If our brethren will "sow dragon's teeth, then we must expect Satan's armed men to spring up in our midst;" on one side or the other this surplus must fall. No power in the universe can save from the alternative. To the flesh it must go, if not given to the spirit. If to the flesh, then of the flesh we must reap corruption; but if to the spirit it be devoted, then of the spirit we will reap life everlasting, so teach the Scriptures; and Jesus says "they can not be broken." "As you have yielded your members servants to iniquity, unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness, that your fruit may be unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." We have seen that sectarianism has no power in it to "deliver from this present evil world." It is a frightful amalgum "of Christ and Belial," "flesh and spirit," "God and mammon." Is the God of this world to have dominion forever? And are we as a people, like those who have gone before us, to fall down and worship him who once made the experiment upon one mightier than himself? It is his old game, to the perils of which we are fast drifting; but the remedy, let some one mightier than I say in what it shall consist. Meanwhile, there is no subject on which the Scriptures have spoken with greater plainness than this. But we,—like Israel of old, "the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

THE CONTRIBUTION*

By ALBERT ALLEN

The object of this communication is to remove the objections of G. A., and to answer his inquiries as presented in an article on the contribution in the April number of the *Quarterly*. In addressing ourself to this task we desire to treat the subject with fairness and frankness, and to avoid every thing that could wound or offend the feelings of the writer.

The reader of that article will be impressed with the favorable sentiment entertained by the writer toward the benevolent aspect of the contribution, but he is made as deeply sensible of the aversion felt by him against any recognition of it as a divine institution, or an ordinance of worship of continuous obligation. The exhibition of a spirit so generous and liberal causes us to wonder the more at this decided aversion, since it is presented in complete undress, and no attempt made to clothe it even with the flimsy garb of truth in which he seems to think our position is enveloped, and which could be so easily removed. After expressing his gratification at the appearance of our original article on this subject, "as the beginning of a still further and fuller development of the subject of which it treats," he says, "still there are points in the proposition with which the writer sets out, and for the vindication or proof of which he mainly labors, which, though clearly stated, lack that fullness of proof for which the mind hungers when dealing with questions of such import." While we can not complain of any judgment which he may honestly form as to the merit of our article, or chide him for his unbelief in any "point in the proposition," as long as neither the one nor the other will establish its truth, nor determine its

**Lard's Quarterly*, Vol. 2, 1865, p 416

falsity; still we do regret that he did not make some effort to reveal this deficiency, and relieve us from the necessity of vainly exclaiming with Burns,

"Oh, wad some pow'r the giftie gie us
To see oursels as others see us."

He declares that "there is something repugnant to the mind in regarding an ordinance which terminates in food and raiment as an ordinance of worship, under the dispensation **of** the Spirit." We will examine this declaration briefly, made as it is without any qualification, and containing one capital error at least, if not more. In the first place he asserts this repugnance of mind without limitation or restriction, leaving us in doubt whether he means to confine it to his own mind, or to affirm it as existing in the minds of all, and that too upon a false assumption as to the "termination" of the ordinance. If he means to say that there is something repugnant to his own mind in this supposed case, we would kindly suggest that it might be produced by erroneous conceptions, for which he is personally responsible. But if he refers to the mind of the Christian world at large, we must be excused for doubting the coextensiveness of his information. Supposing, however, that he means the mind, as a reasoning and judging power, and even admitting this to be its decision, we are certainly bound not to accept its conclusions as proper and right, except as they accord with unmistakable teachings of Scripture of which he has left us wholly destitute. Even when this concurrence exists, we accept the fact upon the authority of revealed truth, rather than upon the judgment which the mind as a reasoning faculty furnishes.

The plainest truths of the Bible afford instances of this kind, such as "God is Spirit," etc. The mind may, in many of its decisions, be infallibly correct, and can be proved so by the teachings of the word of God. This, however, will not

justify us in accepting all its decisions. In this particular case it certainly bears with it no authority, inasmuch as we have a knowledge of no "ordinance of worship" which does "terminate in food and raiment." This is the grand error into which our reviewer has fallen. We may clothe any other ordinance of the gospel with these false apprehensions of its character, and it will become repugnant to and incompatible with every enlightened scriptural conception of them. These palpable or sensibly apprehended things, connected with the ordinances of the gospel, are often seized upon to derogate from the true dignity and authority of divine institutions. Christian men are often charged, from such a cause, with teaching the gross doctrine that water, as used in the ordinance of baptism, really washes away the defilements of the soul, and that the bread and wine used in the supper authorize the doctrine of material communion with God. Whether the contribution be an ordinance of religious worship or not, it certainly has a very different "termination" from the one honestly but erroneously presented by G. A. in the above quotations. That it contemplates in its administration supplying the wants (temporal) of the saints, Paul plainly affirms in 2 Corinthians, ix., 12 But that this is only one of the things which enter into and compose the appointed act, rather than constitute its result, is very clear. Food and raiment are the immediate result of receiving. The "receiving" is one part of the ordinance, just as the "giving" is another. Paul makes this very clear when he says to the Philippians, "no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but you only."

The Saviour said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive," and possibly the very name "contribution" may have been given to this institution, as it is in all the others, in reference to some one of its distinguishing acts. The "termination" of the ordinance is not in food and raiment. The true culmination is embraced in a summary contained in the ninth

chapter of 2d Corinthians, where, among other spiritual results, Paul mentions, "thanksgiving to God," the indwelling "grace of God," the strengthening of brotherly affection, the evidence of "subjection to the gospel of Christ," and the blissful assurance of God's love.

The use of a material element in the observance of the contribution, can constitute no objection to its being regarded an ordinance of worship. For to the extent that such an objection would impair the claim of this ordinance, it would to the same extent affect the Lord's supper, in which material elements are actually eaten and drunk. Such a criterion is not therefore allowable in any case. If we decide that an ordinance of Christianity must exclude from its signification, performance, or design whatever is material as being inimical to its spiritual purpose, such decision would result, not only in the overthrow of divine ordinances, but leave Satan to rejoice that the things of this world are no longer fitted for the use of Jesus Christ in sustaining and extending his kingdom on earth. Prayer and praise would no longer engage an unruly member; communion with the Lord and with one another through the elements representing the body and blood of our adorable Saviour would cease; friends who will welcome us to everlasting habitations could no more be made with the mammon of unrighteousness; nor sacrifices, holy and acceptable, be offered in these vile bodies.

We have said this much to relieve the contribution from objections which it is alleged invalidate its claim as an ordinance of worship, and to show that it does not contain within its limits any thing which may not be predicated in some degree of other acts properly regarded as ordinances. This identity is not urged, however, to prove it such. For it might embrace every conception, object, and spiritual signification, belonging to an ordinance—and yet, if it be not appointed by proper authority, with laws regulating its observance, it can not be

regarded as authoritative and binding. This much it must have to constitute it an ordinance. Less than this will not do, and more than this is not necessary. So teach our best lexicographers and writers. Authority and legislation are essential antecedents and the true source of every institution human as well as divine, the former always creating obligation and the latter appointing the mode of its discharge. Direct reference was made in our former article to the evidence of these two essential conditions existing in the New Testament, and their direct bearing on the contribution, and hence will not be reproduced here. A few thoughts in reference to it as an ordinance of worship, seem, however, to be needed, and are now offered.

If what is called the contribution corresponds with the *koinonia* in Acts ii., 42, in which it is said the Jerusalem church "continued steadfastly," we are bound to regard it as a divine institution, or else we are to suppose that this congregation, which of all others must have been rightly organized under the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, had thus early become corrupted by human innovations. This supposition, the only one possible, is certainly discarded by every one as being entitled to no credit whatever, and the practice must therefore receive the sanction of a divine warrant. Those who practiced it, by submitting to the gospel ordinances as such, had been introduced already into the church, and hence must have observed it as an ordinance of worship, "in paying divine honors" to the Lord through the newly established modes and institution of his kingdom. Rendering to God obedience in all his appointments in the true spirit of obedience is the highest worship, veneration, or homage the Christian can ever offer while in the flesh. Much that the church now does may be wide of this mark, but all she ever was authorized to do contemplated this great object. No man without this spirit can ever worship, even though his compliance be otherwise

exact with all God's appointments. The absence of this spirit, however, on the part of the worshiper evidently does not affect the appointment in relation to its being an ordinance of acceptable worship. The contribution may be an ordinance of worship, and yet ceases to be such to him who observes it not in the right spirit. We must not expect to find in the acts belonging to this or any other ordinance that which will evoke the proper spirit. Ordinances are not established to produce this spirit, but to present a way in which the Christian may offer acceptable worship to God. Hence the Apostle Paul attempts to evoke this spirit, in reference to the contribution, by presenting the grandest considerations that ever engaged the mind or heart of mortal, not excepting even the love of God and the condescension of Jesus Christ. We can but ask the reader to refer to them in the various places where this ordinance is alluded to in his epistles, and analyze them for himself

Before dismissing this especial point, however, we must be permitted to ask a few questions calculated to involve in doubt, if not in unsoundness, the position of those who differ from us. We, in common with a large number of the existing denominational churches, observe in our weekly assemblies what is called the contribution. The practice exists We wish to know what authority it bears? Is it of God, or of man? If of man, when was this human device introduced into the church, and by whom? The historic account in Acts ii., 42, being the earliest mention we have of this matter, it must be, upon the latter supposition the first instance of human innovation, and hence can not be ignored. How will you proceed to prove it of human paternity, and claim for the other practices of the church there mentioned divine authority? If you escape from this difficulty by admitting them all to be divinely warranted, and then claim that the contribution was designed to have only a temporary continuance, in the absence of scriptural evidence to sustain such an opinion, do you not

assign a similar fate to all the other items with which it stands so intimately connected? Are you prepared for this wholesale repudiation of divine order and ordinances? If you affirm the fact of subsequent abrogation, of course you are expected to state when and where it occurred, and by whose authority. Can you do this? The words of Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, "that there be no collections when I come," lends not the shadow of support to such a conclusion. For in the second epistle, when speaking of the same thing, he clearly explains what he designed by this injunction, as being nothing more than urging them not to put off the collection until he came; inasmuch as having boasted to the churches of Macedonia that "Corinth was ready" a year before, he was unwilling that the Macedonian brethren who would accompany him thither should find them unprepared, and therefore mortify him and the church at Corinth in this "confident boasting." All admit that these words demand that collections should be made before he reached them, but certainly no one can construe them to forbid collections being continued after he left them. No such liberty can be tolerated in construing the writings of any man, and in this instance such a construction only finds a feeble plausibility as it may borrow strength from the idea that, as soon as the great distress which was known to exist at that time among the Jerusalem brethren was relieved, its continuances would be unnecessary. This is certainly interpreting the doubtful by the false, and that it may appear such, it will only be necessary to quote the passage relied upon to sustain the idea, and offer a few remarks upon it. It occurs in Romans xv., 25, 26, and reads as follows: "But now I go to Jerusalem to minister unto the saints, for it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem."

Unfortunately for those who rely upon this passage to sustain their theory of the occasional obligation of the con-

tribution, the word which they regard as favoring such a limitation is found neither with such a signification in the original, nor at all in the reading of the late translation by H. T. Anderson. We allude to the word certain, in the above quotation from the common version. It is, nevertheless, urged that inasmuch as the contribution in this case had a definite object (the relief of "poor saints") its observance is only proper when a like definite object requires it. This evidently bases the whole obligation of the contribution not only upon a false foundation, as we have before shown, but also makes that which is the continual occasion of its observance both a contingency and a cause. The plea is therefore destructive to itself. The fact of the Saviour's saying "the poor you have always with you" dissipates, not only the idea of contingency, but does also, on the above supposition as a cause, if it prove any thing, prove beyond all controversy that the church should observe the contribution regularly and continually. Neither can such theorists claim that a condition of things precisely similar to those then existing is required to justify its practice now that the number of sufferers must be as great and no greater—that they must be located at one and the same place—that they must have become destitute in consequence of persecution—or that the relief sent must be by the hands of an apostle. None is so silly as to affirm this. But it is urged generally that this contribution was made directly with reference to and on account of the special distress then prevailing. Does the passage warrant such an idea? If I were to announce publicly that I was going to Richmond to carry to the poor saints of that place a contribution which it had pleased the brethren of Lexington and Cincinnati to make, would the reader be authorized to infer that the money was collected by the churches in view of this particular case, rather than that these churches, having a treasury in which they were in the habit of keeping in store somewhat for such purposes, had

appropriated the whole or a part from it for this particular case? If it were known that this treasury was established for a purpose identical with the one which carried me to Richmond, no one would be at liberty to suppose any thing else than that it was appropriated from that treasury. Such was precisely the case cited in Romans. If the passage can be tortured to express the idea that the contribution is only to be observed under appeals made by abject and clearly ascertained poverty, it will, by the same liberty of interpretation, forbid our doing it then, unless matters otherwise conform to the other peculiarities of this case. It is not difficult to see that this rigid mode of interpretation would soon overthrow all the authority we now derive from precedent. Circumstances may be such as to make the demand on our liberality more imperative, just as there are occasions when prayer seems more appropriate and when it contemplates a particular thing as its special burden, but these can never weaken or strengthen the force of the institution itself, resting as it does on a basis independent altogether of what is purely occasional. There is nothing in these occurrences to alter the operations of the institution, in order to meet the requirement of such cases. For the church must support its poor, whether they be few or many, and by means of this institution can make provision commensurate with the amount or degree of want which may exist at all times. But by anticipating objections, not contained in the body of G. A.'s article, we have digressed and must therefore return.

The fact that weekly contribution was observed by the primitive churches under the direction and sanction of the apostles—the absence of any subsequent legislation annulling its practice, and the existence at this time of the same reasons which seem to have occasioned its institution, leave us no room to dispute or disregard its obligation at the present time. Its name, its place, and its rank among the various items of

religious duty, service, or worship, have been candidly considered by us. Of those who differ from us in relation to its obligation or classification, we ask a development of their views and a candid consideration of the difficulties which seem to involve any conception of it other than that which we have given. Especially are we desirous of knowing whether they will regard it as standing on the same level with other benevolent acts, and assign that which is solemnly done by the congregation in its assemblies on the Lord's day, the same rank with that which is individually done as an act of charity on any day indiscriminately. We make this request of our brethren at large, for we can not believe that they will commit themselves to the views of our reviewer, who testifies that the "ministering to the saints," the "sabbath," and "instrumental music," occupy one and the same plane. In the mean time, however, we would request him, in view of his declaration, that the other things enumerated by him are "of the earth, earthy," and "from the nature of things excluded as acts of worship from God's spiritual temple," to trace the correspondence between these and the contribution, showing their points of identity, and then enlighten us as to what "nature of things" it is which excludes it from being an ordinance of worship. In justice to himself this task becomes necessary, and especially so in view of the admissions in a subsequent paragraph, in which he says, "that it should take the form of a weekly contribution, even to the just designation of 'the contribution,' " would seem entirely in harmony with the spirit and genius of the gospel.

Against regarding it an ordinance of worship, he presents an objection, which to be clearly apprehended requires us to quote in full the following paragraph: "If worship at all, the act itself, the contribution, must be performed. Would not this deprive the ones for whose benefit the ordinance was given of all participation in the worship, so far as the ordi-

nance goes? Was there ever an ordinance of religion given of God for one class of persons to the exclusion of another under any dispensation? The Lord's day, the Lord's house, the Lord's table, singing and prayer are for all God's people, but the fellowship excludes the Lord's poor from any participation as an act of worship."

The first error into which the writer has fallen is in assuming that the ordinance is for the benefit of one class only in the church. This is no less a mistake than his supposition that it terminates in "food and raiment." As high as the spiritual design and effect of the contribution are above the contingent considerations of carnal relief, so far does the truly enlarged privileges of the institution in relation to all classes reach beyond the limitations expressed above. To the attentive reader of the New Testament it is perfectly clear that Paul urges that both the "giver" and "receiver" are benefitted, even in the low sense of temporal blessings. Without, therefore discussing the error regarding the institution as established for the exclusive benefit of the "poor" we simply refer the reader to the second letter to the Corinthians, ix., 8-13 inclusive.

The second error is in affirming that the "poor" would be necessarily excluded from participating in the act of ministering or giving. Of course, we can only understand him that poverty would be the cause of such exclusion. Following the law of giving "as he is prospered," the rich would give of his abundance, and the poor according to his poverty. If his poverty is so extreme as to leave him no "crumb" from the proceeds of his own toil, he would still be enabled by reason of his having received bountifully from the church, to give some fractional part of this, which he should regard as expressive of his prosperity. Such a case, therefore, can never exist under the operations of the institution; but, being supposed, affords an opportunity to vindicate in this simple manner the

equalizing effects of the institution in its privileges to persons of all classes and conditions in the church, and thus to attest the divine wisdom and benevolence exercised in its appointment. The objection is, therefore, in point of fact, worthless. The poor can and must give as well as the rich.

The idea of "participation" is located not so much in the act of giving (where G. A. placed it), as it is in the equality of blessings produced by it, and that community of feeling and sympathy evinced through it. A whole congregation in the same manner participate in the prayers of the church, although there is but one of the entire number who speaks. Participation in most of the ordinances of public worship is independent of the performance of precisely similar acts, upon the part of all. If this were not the case and exclusion from worship followed as a consequence to every one who did not perform the act, the worship of God would become more exclusive, perhaps, under any other ordinance of the church than under the contribution. For it is a significant fact in respect to this ordinance that all can participate in its blessings, both temporal and spiritual, by act and otherwise, to the full extent and demands of their several capacities and necessary situations. In no other is there furnished the same evidence of our being the children of Him who is good unto all and whose care is over all. Nor is there another which so fully discloses the wondrous provisions of this grace, through that chain of dependence, which binds all the members of the body of Christ together in one.

PART 6
PREACHING

PREACHING*

By MOSES E. LARD

If callings are to be estimated by the results they yield, then is preaching the first calling of earth. Of course, the reader does not understand me to speak of pecuniary results. Estimated by this standard, preaching is the last of callings. I speak of such results as are best for man, best in the highest sense of the word, best for time, best for eternity. Estimated by these results and preaching claims the palm; and by these results alone is preaching to be estimated. Now if none who understands it will deny, then all that pertains to it deserves to be done in the most perfect manner attainable. This proposition is self-evident. How, then, may the gospel be best preached? To the consideration of this question the present piece will be devoted.

It is Whately, I believe, who defines the best orator to be him who carries his point. If carrying the point always depended exclusively on the highest skill, and if the possession of this constituted the highest excellence, then the definition might be accepted as correct. But such is not the case. Now, certainly, he who possesses the highest skill in rhetoric, and who is most expert in the use of what he knows, is fairly entitled to be denominated the best orator, whether he carries his point or not. For, in the first place, he may be on the wrong side of the question, and may fail to carry his point from this circumstance. In the second, he may be on the right side of the question and may still fail to carry his point from ignorance or prejudice, or both, in his hearers. Yet I should still insist on his claim to be styled the best orator.

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But be this as it may, can we denominate that preacher the best who carries his point? If so, then the preaching which he does would certainly be entitled to be called the best preaching. Are we prepared to accept this as the standard? Far from it, I think. With me that preaching is the best which, including the most truth and excluding the most error, results in making the most Christians. If this be not the best preaching then is my conception of the best erroneous. Few brethren however, will dissent from my definition. Our previous question, then, a little modified, amounts to this: How shall we so preach as to include the most truth, exclude the most error, and make the most Christians? No graver question than this can fill the soul, or engage the thought of the preacher. If it cost him nights and days of anxiety and countless prayers— these are not too much.

Before proceeding to comment further on my definition of the best preaching, several preliminaries demand each a short notice.

First, as to the motives which should prompt men to preach. On this I hardly need make a remark. The reader anticipates me, and makes it unnecessary. Still, as this article is not for those who are already successful preachers, but for the inexperienced, and for such as may be thinking of adopting the calling for the future, a few suggestions can hardly be considered out of place. That the great, leading, guiding motive of the preacher should be the salvation of the lost, no one, perhaps, needs to be told. By this Christ will be most honored; and whatever honors him most will in the end be best for us. But this motive will exclude several other possible, and in some cases even actual, motives.

It will wholly exclude the consideration of personal ease. Let no man who sets out to preach, as preaching deserves to be done, flatter himself with the delusion that he is about to enter on a career of ease. If this be his expectation in the

outset, and if he follows his calling faithfully, it will not be long before disappointment will confront him in the form of a life-long reality. I will not say that preaching is the most arduous of all callings; but I will say that no calling should be more so than preaching. Yet it is much to be feared that many view it as little more than a pleasant pastime; and I am sorry to add, that the life of many a preacher would seem to justify the view. No indolent man can be a preacher; nor should such a man be countenanced in the calling even for a • day. A man who is not intellectually and physically industrious should select some other vocation than preaching. At least let him never think of disgracing the work of Christ by attempting it. The numberless ways in which both mind and body are taxed, in the case of the faithful preacher, render it absolutely necessary that he shall be most laborious and industrious in his habits. Hence, unless a young man can obtain his consent to a life of unremitting toil, let him at once banish all thought of preaching from his mind. But of this subject more a little further on.

It will exclude the motive of mere worldly honor. I do not mean to say that a preacher should not wish to be honorable. This he should be, with no wish about it. What I mean is this: No man should undertake to preach even in part for the mere distinction which it gives him in the eye of the world. He who seeks worldly distinction will in the end prove a time-server, and in the hands of such the gospel is never safe. He will ultimately mould it to suit the carnal tastes of those to whom he ministers, and thereby weaken or wholly destroy its power. The vanity to become a popular public speaker, to sway great audiences at will, and to be puffed in newspaper paragraphs as the distinguished so and so, is a dangerous vanity, which preachers may well afford to decline. Study, deeply study, your heart, my dear young preaching brother, to see that no motive of this kind is actuating you to enter

on the clean, delicate, and sacred calling of preaching. If any other than the one lofty motive already named control you, you may succeed in the estimation of men; but within, }our conscience will never cease to upbraid you, while a life-long work will procure you not even one smile from heaven. I will not say that you should cultivate a feeling of positive indifference to the good opinion of mankind; but I do say that you should never use your vocation as a preacher to obtain it. Do your whole duty well, as to your Master alone. If the world applaud, it is well; if the world scowl, be it so. That is a golden margin to a fleecy cloud, which will soon pass away; this is a speck on the sun's bright face, eclipsed *by* his overpowering splendor.

As to the ability which a young preacher should presumptively possess, or with which he should set out, a few words may be in place. If the calling be the first in the world, we can not think it going too far to wish that it were sustained by the best talent with which the human family are blessed. Yet we know from experience that this will never be so, save in exceptional cases. Yet no young man should ever think of preaching, unless he is endowed with broad, fine sense, an active mind, and the power of concentrated, persistent thought. This much at least he should possess, as a basis on which to begin. Besides this, he should be eminently free from all eccentricities, crotchets, and other noticeable oddities. A man possessed of these is almost certain, at some time, to turn a knight of hobbies, and to do the cause more injury than he ever does it good. In other words, the young preacher should be possessed of a large share of that sterling stuff the world calls mother-wit, and withal should give proof of a naturally well-regulated brain. We never admired those curious, mental oscillations which cause a man to sparkle like a genius today, and show him a dunce tomorrow. We like the mind which exhibits solidity, uniformity, and trustworthiness. These traits

will always command respect, and, where skillfully directed, will never fail to prove highly useful. Where a young man is pre-eminently endowed, he is too apt to trust exclusively to his parts, and to neglect the minute and constant study of the Scriptures, which uniformly results in his becoming simply a disclaimer and in ceasing to be a preacher. This is an extreme never to be encouraged. There is yet another, still more to be deprecated. It is the vain stupidity which never aspires to any thing more than merely to be the wick which absorbs the oil and bears the flame supplied by another. When the former ends his career, Christians too often have reason to lament the demise of an apostate and a sot; when the latter dies the world is glad at the exit of a bore. The young preacher will do well to study to belong to neither of these extremes.

Respecting the education or mental training to be possessed by a young man before he enters on the task of preaching, I shall here say nothing. Elsewhere in the present number of the *Quarterly* will be found an article initiating the discussion of that important topic. To this article I shall for the present content myself to refer the reader, and pass on.

Neither do I mean to speak now of the moral or spiritual training a young man should have before engaging in this high calling. On this he will also find some valuable suggestions in the article just referred to, which I would commend to his thoughtful attention. I may be allowed, however, to add that no other qualification should be suffered to take the place of a deeply religious heart, and that none, not even the most brilliant, can compensate for the want of it. The preacher, if not above all men, still certainly the preacher should be a Christian from highest principle, and from an inextinguishable devotion to the truth. His piety should be deep, and his zeal burn with a never-abating force. These

combined with commanding abilities to preach the gospel, in the same person, constitute earth's noblest man.

But I now come to speak more particularly of preaching proper. This I shall distribute into topical preaching and contextual preaching. By the former I mean preaching on a particular topic or theme, as faith, with a view of exhausting it; by the latter, preaching on a particular section or chapter, with a view of presenting a connected exposition of it as a whole. Each of these divisions has its advantages. Topical preaching is, as a general rule, best for the world, contextual, best for the church. But neither before the world nor the church should either be used exclusively. No rule can be laid down as to when the one is preferable to the other. This must depend on the object the preacher has in view, and on the assumed or known necessities of his audience.

But by a young preacher contextual preaching is, with hardly an exception, to be preferred. In the first place, such preaching is almost wholly immethodical, all that is necessary being, to present a succinct, clear explanation of each word, clause, and sentence, as it occurs. This renders wholly unnecessary the oft-recurring firstly, secondly, thirdly, and so on, always tediously and frequently distasteful to audiences. The points to be presented being numerous, no single one need occupy much time. This to the beginner is very important. His stock of information is not expected to be large, and then his powers of elaboration are yet in their immaturity. It is hence dangerous for him to attempt long and difficult excursions. Far-reaching, consecutive trains of thought are for minds which have been long in training, and are thoroughly disciplined, and not for the inexperienced. Besides the beginner is sure to be less coherent than the practical speaker. This defect will remain wholly unnoticed in contextual preaching. He may feel it himself, and it is not desirable that he should not, but then it is best that himself alone should feel

it, as otherwise embarrassment and a possible failure might be the result. Nothing so much confuses the beginner as to know that others see his confusion. This, then, he should constantly endeavor to keep out of sight. A young man who seems self-possessed and connected, if these spring not from vanity or self-conceit, will never fail to command respect; and even to command the respect of an audience is by him an end not to be despised.

In the second place, contextual preaching leads to contextual study of the Scriptures; and this, beyond question, is the best for the young preacher. He does not want to know the Bible as a mere book of topics or disconnected themes, but as a perfect whole, complete only in its entirety, in all its parts dependent, and never to be understood except when studied in its numerous and complex connections. Years should be devoted to its study in this way; and while studying it in this way, it is best to preach it in this way. When the Bible is somewhat understood as a whole, its individual parts are comparatively easy of comprehension. Then topical preaching may with propriety be engaged in. A man need then have no fear that any part of his speech will be contradictory of the Book; since the whole lies visibly before him as a guide. I would, then, for the reasons now assigned, especially commend to the beginner the subject of contextual preaching.

But let me now suppose it to be given out that a young brother is going to preach on the following Lord's day; whether it be his first or his one hundred and first attempt is immaterial. Many preliminaries demand our notice. He has determined not to speak on some particular topic, but on a chapter or paragraph. What kind of one shall it be? No more important question than this can be asked. On the answer to it will almost certainly depend his success or his failure. By all means let him avoid an intricate passage or section, especially one that has been long in debate among learned men.

Nothing looks worse in a young man, just setting out to preach, than to hear him delivering judgments and criticisms in cases where the great and learned of earth have paused and declined to risk even an opinion. All such passages should be studiously excluded from his early effort. He will hence not select a section involving such questions as predestination, foreknowledge, will, regeneration, etc. All these he can safely, and will most creditably, leave to the discussion of the experienced preacher, whose talents, age, and high standing will justify him in undertaking their solution. As a general rule, the young preacher will find it best to select a paragraph abounding in incidents which afford scope for narration and description. These he will usually treat with greatest ease to himself, and pleasure to his audience. Young men are apt to be redundant in the use of words, especially in the use of adjectives and poetic epithets. These are best suited to a narrative style. Besides, the power to set the numerous and marvelous incidents of the Bible before an audience in a witching and powerful light, is one of the most fascinating traits a man, whether young or old, can possibly possess. It never fails to be deeply engaging, and to cast the minds of hearers in the happiest conceivable frame for the reception of tough and offensive truths. It is a power for the mastery of which the young preacher can afford to spend much time and large labor. The dialectics of Christianity—its logic, its analysis, its exegesis—these are not usually the topics best adapted to the exuberant minds of young men. A florid sentence over the stiff inornate form of a syllogism is intolerable. It is hence better, as a general thing, for the beginner to confine his early labors to such themes as correspond with the vivacity, ease, and bounding life of his own young heart. As he solidifies and becomes more a thing of earth, he can venture on the harder and dryer subjects of the gospel.

But now let me suppose my young brother to have selected the paragraph or chapter on which his speech is to be made. I need not remind him how necessary it is that his comprehension of this should be complete, reaching even to the minutest circumstance. The topography of the place where the scene is laid should be perfectly familiar to him; so that it can be alluded to and spoken of with all the ease and readiness of a home spot. If important historic events stand connected with it, these should be known. But, above all, the sense of the passage, as an integral part of the sacred narrative or book, should be thoroughly understood. Its terms should all be studied, so that, if need be, they may be defined and their meaning illustrated with the utmost readiness and precision. No study will more become or more improve the young preacher than the close study of terms. All the light and all the obscurity in the Bible are contained in them. The ability to bring out that light, and to remove that obscurity should be an object of his life-long ambition. To the acquisition of it he is almost certain to devote too little attention, and very certain not to devote too much.

His paragraph being mastered as now indicated, the important question will present itself: Should he speak from notes? To this question we emphatically answer, No. The mind never works easily and naturally over notes. Its effort is too strictly an effort of memory. It is hence stiff, cold, and mechanical. Men that preach from notes seldom or never weep. There is no heart in note-preaching. A severe effort of memory is the sure suppression of the sympathies and kindlier feelings of the soul. If the mind now and then gleams forth in outbursts of grand thought, or the heart streams out in subtle, searching flows, it will be when both are in perfect ease, and wholly unconstricted by an effort to remember the stale words of a note. The subject to be spoken on should be so thoroughly understood, that not even the semblance of a

note is needed to keep each minutest part in view. Then and then only can the mind work over it with the masterly ease necessary to success. Thought is then sportive and high; the soul is self-possessed, confident, and muscular; the feelings are free, liquid, and obedient—such must the preacher be who bears all down before him.

But when we insist that the young preacher shall not use notes, we by no means wish to be understood as teaching that he is not to be methodical and orderly. Very far from it. Order and method are accomplishments in which he should strive to become an adept. But, then, order and method neither depend on note-taking nor on note-using. In many instances they depend on the original constitution of the mind; but, as a general rule, not less on training. The order and method which result from severe, constant mental discipline, are the only order and method the preacher need ever aim at, but these he should constantly aim at. His mind should be taught to work orderly as a matter of habit. Then his preaching will be even to himself a delightful exercise. Years of unremitting attention may be necessary to attain the end; but he should never unbend his purpose till it is attained. He should so regulate his mental habits, as not to be nonplused even by the most unexpected emergency. If suddenly called upon to speak on a subject not wholly familiar to him, the training of his mind should be such as to suggest to him at once, and as if by intuition, the true starting point. This found, he should then be enabled to call up each consecutive step as though it occurred to him naturally and without effort on his part. But this the young preacher must not expect to be able to do at first. Only after long years of sedulous attention to his intellectual training can he expect to be competent to the task.

But before the young preacher begins his speech a few collateral items will demand his attention; and although they

belong not strictly to preaching, yet they belong to preachers, and hence should not be overlooked.

First, his personal appearance. I lay it down as a rule in dress that the young preacher should be faultlessly neat and faultlessly plain. A slovenly, ungainly appearance in the pulpit is insufferable. It is indicative of coarseness of nature, and of an inexcusable disregard for the good taste and refined sense of his audience. It should hence be studiously avoided I do not mean to say that his dress should be fine. Not at all. It may be, where his circumstances will allow of nothing better, of the most ordinary material; and no truly cultivated Christian man or woman will ever esteem him the less on that account. But, then, the most common fabric can be neatly cut and neatly made, can be kept clean, and worn becomingly on the person. This is all I mean. Especially should the young preacher avoid all odd cuts and odd colors in his dress. Any thing of the kind is sure to provoke the criticism of the public, and to mortify the feelings of the very brethren whose good opinion he should most value. His hair should be kept of the proper length, and show that while it is not an object of special care, it is not in the least neglected. Where a young preacher's hair is, on the one hand, long, bushy, and undressed, it is too apt to arouse suspicions in the minds of the polite to which they are extremely reluctant to give expression; and where it is, on the other, long, sleek, dangling, and curly, it may lead to the conjecture that sacred calling of preaching is to be made subservient to the interests of reduplication, in other words, getting a wife. These are both unpromising extremes in young preachers.

The same degree of propriety should be observed in regard to the beard. It should not be cut in eccentric forms, or worn after the rakish fashion of rowdies. A young preacher with face all shaved except a ring half an inch broad around the mouth, the hair of which he is continually fingering, twist-

ing, and stroking, presents an appearance excessively repulsive and vulgar. But a simple hint here is deemed enough.

The young preacher, whose circumstances will permit him to dress finely, should yet be in dress a model of simplicity and purity. He should scrupulously refrain from every thing gaudy and showy. Let his necktie be of modest black, his other clothes of grave allowable color, and perfectly plain; let all gold chains, gold seals, and costly pins be kept completely out of sight; nor even so much as the plainest ring be seen on his hand. Sectarian preachers can afford to sport these trinkets. For the most part they are propagandists of the heresies of the great Mother of harlots; and there is perfect consistency between such gewgaws and their calling. But on the person of the conscientious and humble preacher of the primitive gospel they are strikingly out of place. It will be well, too, even for the young preacher who can afford something costlier, to provide himself with a plain silver watch. The silver is just as enduring as the gold, is unostentatious, and comports better than a more glittering thing with the deeply serious work in which he is engaged. Especially must I guard my young preaching brother against imitating the studied carelessness and slipthrift manner of a certain type of dandies. The wristband is worn unfastened and allowed to dangle about the hand; the vest is left unbuttoned; the hat is slouched and sits jauntily on the head; the shoe is untied; or the watch-key depends from a tow string. All this is not only in bad taste, but indicates a worldly state of mind wholly at variance with the purity and spirituality of Christianity, and hence with the sacred calling of the preacher. To play the dandy even by accident is utterly unallowable in him who serves in the things of the Spirit. He must scrupulously guard against gliding into such unpreacherly ways.

Next, his conduct in the pulpit. Much will depend on the appearance and manners of a young preacher in the pulpit.

Of course, I do not refer to these as determining the excellence of his discourse, but the impression he may make on his audience, which, in an indirect way, may seriously affect the result of his efforts. Few people hear any thing amiss in a man toward whom they are affected with kindness. A young preacher should, as far as a pleasing manner can accomplish the end, endeavor to enlist in his behalf the most cordial and agreeable emotions his audience is capable of. An inferior speech addressed to laughing eyes, or delivered into warm well-wishing bosoms, is immeasurably more effective than the most compact and powerful argument delivered to sour, repelling hearers. A manner at once dignified, easy, graceful, and perfectly natural, will of itself usually insure attention and respect; and if a young man can begin his speech with these he should feel satisfied.

On rising to go into the pulpit the young preacher's walk should be neither too rapid nor too slow. The former looks excited, and indicates defective breeding; the latter seems artificial and affected. On entering the pulpit he will neither sit down stiffly nor drop down heavily. All his movements should point to a mind, not indifferent, but in perfect repose, and a manner supple and unstudied. His eyes should not be constantly downcast to the pulpit floor, nor wander impertinently and blankly over the house. His look should appear confident, subdued, and modest. In the pulpit he should never loll, lie down, nor assume any other lazy or unseemly attitude. Such exhibitions are utterly unallowable in a young man.

When he arises to pray he should stand perfectly erect, and not commence till the audience have all risen and become still. Then he should begin, but not in a loud, boisterous, and rattling tone. Nothing is more offensive in prayer than bluster. To the truly refined and spiritual minded, few things are more painful than to hear God addressed in a loud, hollow, cracking tone of voice. Equally objectionable is a voice quaint, familiar,

and irreverent. Neither should the voice be so low as to render the words inaudible; nor yet should it be sepulchral and ventral. In prayer, the voice should be full and soft, and every word be distinctly heard. The tone should be solemn and profoundly respectful.

Let me, in the height of earnestness, warn my young preaching brother against all attempts to make fine prayers. Such vain exhibitions are shocking beyond measure. In praying, his words should all be most dignified, but the simpler the better. His sentences should not be too long; neither should they be involved and intricate. As a general rule they should be short, inartificial, and faultlessly chaste and pure. All attempts to be eloquent in prayer, to be sentimental, dramatic, or in any other way affected, are deeply blameworthy and to be scrupulously avoided. When you hear people commenting on a prayer, and saying of it: Was it not fine, was it not grand, was it not eloquent! with no fear of missing the mark you may reply of him who made it, verily, he has his reward. Especially let the young preacher avoid making long prayers. No matter how excellent such may be, they are generally felt to be a bore. It may be laid down as indisputable that there is not one prayer in a hundred which could not be improved by being shortened. Moreover, a prayer should never be delivered in a rapid impetuous manner. Its delivery should be measured, earnest, and sufficiently animated to impart to it vitality and make it penetrating, but nothing more. Comprehension, simplicity, earnestness, and brevity may be safely set down as the true characteristics of a good prayer. On these, therefore, the young preacher will bestow his constant thought.

When about to commence his discourse, several items will demand his attention. He will be especially careful not to intend, and hence not set out to make a great speech. Should he purpose any thing of the kind, he may count with infallible certainty on a failure. Hence, let him not bestow one thought

on the nature of the effort, he is about to make. Let that be left to be determined wholly by the activity, fertility, precision, and glow with which his mind may work. He should, as already said, know his subject well. Then he should begin to speak in the most simple, unstudied, and natural way. It will be easy then to rise. As his mind quickens and warms, and his emotions begin to play, his altitude will gradually and, if he is careful gracefully increase up to the desired height. One constant aim of the young preacher should be to sustain himself well throughout his effort. This he can never do if he commences in a pompous grandiloquent style. Better far that his commencement should be confused, bungling, and excessively commonplace. Below this he can not fall; above it he is almost sure to rise. But especially let him avoid a magnificent beginning. Nothing is more fatal to his success. He will hence have no preformed, eloquent sentences with which to greet his audience on rising. At first the ear of his hearers is cold and dull; he will do well to remember this, and touch that organ accordingly. As his own mind becomes more fervid, expansive, and opulent in thought, that ear will become more appreciative and voracious, and will receive, in kindlier mood, both his enlarged conceptions and his richer style. The speech and the hearing will thus improve together—a circumstance always essential to success in any high degree. We would hence suggest to the young preacher, as aforesaid, that he should first thoroughly master his subject, and then in all the stages of his speech trust to the moment and the circumstances to supply him both with manner and words.

No more important item is likely to engage the attention of the young preacher than the tone of voice in which he opens. On it will most certainly depend, however he may think to the contrary, the effectiveness of his effort and the pleasure with which it will be listened to. Not more important is the key-note in a tune, than is the key-note of a sermon. If the pitch of a

tune is wrong, no matter how accomplished the musician who executes the piece, the performance must prove a failure; and so with the pitch of a speech. Further: if a preacher sets out on the wrong key, his whole discourse will be affected and marred by the circumstance. He is sure never to get right during that speech. It is difficult to indicate intelligibly and with exactitude the precise tone of voice in which a discourse should be commenced. Perhaps no more correct and specific direction can be given than to say that the tone or pitch should be simply that in which we would commence a rather loud unexcited conversation. On this key the sound of the voice is natural, and the voice itself perfectly manageable; and to keep the voice natural and manageable are the points of chief importance in a public speech. When it is too high it becomes monotonous; and nothing is more disagreeable than a high, strained, horizontal tone running throughout a discourse. If in all other respects the discourse is good, this tone of itself will spoil it. Neither should the voice be too low; since here again it is certain to become monotonous; and what is worse than all, to have a dull, lifeless ring which would render ineffectual the best of speeches. If a young preacher sets out on a natural key, both these extremes will be avoided; and besides whatever of native musicalness his voice may possess will be preserved. He will then speak with ease to himself, and this will impart a sense of ease to his hearers. And an object never to be lost sight of by him is to keep his audience constantly in an easy, pleasant mood. If a speaker's voice is strained and painfully out of key, his hearers will sympathize with him to a degree utterly destructive of their pleasure, and which nothing can relieve but the end of the discourse, which end they are sure to pray for with unwonted fervor. The trait to be most desired by the speaker in his voice is range, that is, the ability to rise or fall at will. If he lacks this, or sets out on a key which forfeits it, no other trait will compensate for it; he must

never lose sight of it. Further: the sharpest points in a speech, its finest strokes and deepest touches, will usually depend on emphasis. This can never be employed except when the voice is under the most perfect control of the speaker; and this it never is except when on a perfectly natural key. But when thus under his control, even the most subtle emotion of the soul or attenuated feeling of the heart can be darted through an audience with perfect ease. And on these finer and more delicate characteristics of a speech, more than on its gross matter of thought and logic, will depend the admiration and deep pleasure with which it is received. Nor does it matter on what key the young preacher sets out, he must be careful to avoid a stiff, rigid tone. His voice should always appear and actually be voluble, flexible, and liquid. Nor should it ever have a hollow, barking ring; but always seem somewhat hushed, as if freighted down with thought. Besides, if possible, he should endeavor to infuse into it a soft, coaxing intonation, and to avoid the opposite grating, repelling one. I feel satisfied that if one-fifth of the time which is usually spent on inditing notes and otherwise pre-arranging and cogitating speeches were spent on the voice, that three out of every four speeches we hear would seem one-half the better by the circumstance. Let me impress its importance on the mind of the young preacher.

But other important pulpit items still demand our attention. While delivering his speech, the young preacher should neither stand perfectly still nor be constantly in motion. As a general rule, too much action is worse than not enough. The best of speeches when over acted loses much. Still it is best to keep some part of the body in pretty constant motion; only should the young preacher be very careful that the motion is natural, easy, and graceful. Especially should he refrain from all violent gestures. Throwing the arms wildly about, pounding the pulpit with the clenched fist, stamping the foot violently

on the floor—all these are in very bad taste, and indicate a rude, unmanageable nature in the speaker, but poorly under the restraints of education. Again: elevating the voice to a scream, and then suddenly depressing it to a whisper, rolling up the eyes, and other theatrical practices assumed for the sake of imparting to the discourse a sort of dramatic effect, are exceedingly reprehensible, and to be scrupulously eschewed by the young preacher.

The young preacher must carefully guard against both too slow and too rapid a manner of delivery. His speech should be measured, but not lifeless; animated, but not impetuous. He must preserve that mean which leaves him master of inflection and emphasis. His articulation should be distinct, his pronunciation full, his manner fluent and varied. Especially should he guard against seeming to talk at random, or seeming to talk merely for the sake of talking. Every thing he says should appear to be studied, intended, and consecutive. A show of hollow words is one of the sorest inflections to which a congregation can be subjected. Nor is a boisterous and rapid manner ever attended with deep impressions. If you wish to touch an audience to the quick, let your thoughts flow out in words well spaced, as the printers say, and in a voice full, melting, and completely under your command. Give the soul time to fill *every* word and even every space with its mystic magnetic force, if you wish to reach feeling's deepest seat. But to attain this requires years of thoughtful practice. The young preacher should constantly aim at it, but he must not feel discouraged if he is not at the very first successful.

A stammering, hesitating manner in a young man is to be carefully avoided. It keeps his audience constantly uneasy lest he should trip and let down. A style which is smooth and flowing begets confidence in the speaker and pleasure in the hearer. Still more should the beginner be on his guard against a very common and a very reprehensible fault in speakers—

the fault of repeating his words and sentences. If a word has been distinctly uttered, and a sentence is clear, no sort of necessity exists for repeating them. Sometimes, I grant, it may be done for the sake of emphasis; but it is an emphasis which should not often recur in the same speech.

But once more, in regard to the management of the voice. Some preachers fall into a sing-song manner in preaching, which the beginner should carefully guard against. It consists in the rising and falling of the voice at regular intervals, accompanied by a peculiar cant. Few things are more unpleasant to a truly cultivated audience. On very rude, untutored feelings it sometimes has an effect; but the aversion it causes in other quarters demands its complete disuse. We know some excellent preachers who effectually spoil their exhortations by it. In venerable old men, whose habits were long since formed, it is needless to criticise it; but in the young it should be utterly discountenanced. A word on it, however, is deemed enough.

But here these suggestions and hints are suddenly brought to a close for want of space. What has now been said will therefore be submitted to my young preaching brethren without more for the present. Perhaps they will deem this enough for one reading. We ask for it their careful thought; and hope in the next number of the *Quarterly* to add an end to the foregoing.

PART 7
PRAYERS

THE PRAYERS*

We have seen that the church in Jerusalem . . . "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in the fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers," and we have discoursed to you upon each of the items, enumerated in the second chapter of the Acts, save the last; consequently, your attention is now invited to the "PRAYERS." The words thus cited, have been quoted by certain of our neighbors of the State Church, as authorizing a liturgy. They say "the prayers" must mean a form of prayers received from the apostles. They say this, I presume, merely from the want of a single text or fact indicating the existence of, or sanction for, anything of the sort. In the New Testament there is no form of prayer. Saying prayers from memory, or reading them from a book, has no apostolic sanction. Had a liturgy been intended, the apostles, no doubt, would have been moved to compile it; but no hint of anything of the sort is given. The Lord's prayer, commonly so called, is deemed, by many a prescribed form of prayer. In the State Church it is often used some six times in one service; and I have here a "Plain Guide" to church worship, by a church priest, which says of this prayer, "We must use it whenever we pray." . . . "Always use the Lord's prayer when you pray." . . . "It is well to say a few prayers, if possible, in the middle of the day." Let us, however, remember that "saying prayers" and praying are by no means the same thing, and that "saying prayers" is often worse than doing nothing, because it leads people to consider that they pray when they do not, and thus prevents them from recognizing their prayer-less and godless condition. But the Lord's prayer is not given.

**Memoir of David King, great English preacher, page 443.*

as a form of prayer for the use of His church. His disciples were around Him, and He said to them, "After this manner, therefore pray ye;" and the prayer was given, not as a form for all time, but as a model for that period—not even as a complete model for us; that is to say, it was given as a model prayer for the Jews, under the dispensation which then existed. It is still perfect and precious so far as it goes, but it is not complete as a model for the church of Christ. In it there is no recognition of the Mediator; nothing is asked in His name: It was given during the time of which He subsequently said:

"Hitherto ye have asked nothing in My name," . . . "but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask in My name."

To us it appears somewhat wonderful that orthodox churches should adopt as a form of prayer, one which makes no allusion to the Lord Jesus Christ, nor to the Holy Spirit.

We are sometimes asked why the phrase, "the prayers," should occur in Acts 2, and not rather, "they continued in prayer," if, indeed, prayers provided by the apostles were not used. By "the prayers" we understand the various public and associated supplications of the church. They were daily in the temple praising God; and as not the prayers of one man, nor of one occasion, but the frequent prayers of the many are referred to, there could be no better form of expression than that adopted.

Looking around us, at the churches of our land, we find generally, on the one hand prayers read by priests, and repetitions and responses by the people. On the other hand, we see one man doing all the audible prayer of the occasion. Service after service, year after year, this continues. The members of the church, in the prominent public meetings of the church,

never speak in prayer. They are supposed to respond in heart, but their voices are never heard. The minister is the one man whose voice is heard; he prays some three times in the course of each service. Now much as there is to object to in the liturgical service, it is certainly preferable to this one-man prayer system. But neither one nor the other has any shadow of support from the scriptures of the New Covenant. In this church, I am happy to say, you are free from both these evils. Every brother able to speak to edification can, so far as time permits, lead us in supplication and giving of thanks. Nor are we confined to a given number of prayers, or to a fixed proportion of the time. When the spirit of prayer prevails, let it have free course, even though the morning should be mostly passed in pouring out our desires to God. Of course, there are those who cannot, either in prayer or otherwise, speak to edification. These, then, should hold their peace; and it is the duty of those who have oversight of the church so to require, should any such not discern their own inability. Here, too, we have no routine: prayer may precede or follow the teaching; go before, or come after the breaking of the bread: or prayer may be offered both before and after the one or the other. In this way we have large facility for the heart to direct the exercises. Occasionally we have a short pause; whether the silence will be broken by a hymn, a prayer, or by an exhortation, we don't know. I want a word with you, concerning these brief periods of waiting. I have been asked, whether I do not very much object to them. Whether I object depends upon how we use the time. If you fidget about, wondering who next will do something, and what—if you take a pause of a few seconds, as an evidence of a lifeless condition, and worry over it as a defect—then I object very strongly. But if you will come into the chapel, at least some minutes before the service commences, speak to no one, shake hands with none, till the service is over, spend those few

minutes in communication with the Lord, keep in the spirit of that communion, and renew it whenever there is a pause in the service, shut out every worldly thought as an intruder, and learn to worship in silence, then I believe that these pauses may prove the most blessed seasons of the morning. If, when thus meditating, your heart is drawn to prayer, or the sentiment of a hymn is impressed upon your mind, or you feel like speaking to the brotherhood to comfort or admonish, then rise and speak to God, or to man, as the case may be. Then will your worship, or your address be real, and you will speak from the heart to the heart. To that end I know brief periods of silence, well used, may contribute much.

Now a few words as to posture. I would that we kneel in prayer; but our arrangements as to seats, etc., do not admit of that being generally done. I find in the Bible authority, in the form of example, for kneeling and for standing, but none for sitting. I know two or three texts quoted in favour of sitting, but I am sure they are misunderstood, and that the book contains no sanction for that attitude. Here, then, as we cannot kneel, we have resolved to stand. Now and then we call attention to this; and then for a time everyone stands, or, at least, every one that ought to do so. But, after a little, a few sit during prayer, and then the number of these increases, until a good few do so, as was the case this morning. Now, I ask, had you to prefer a petition to the Queen, would you think of putting yourself at ease in a chair in order to present it? Would you not render honour to whom honour is due, by assuming a becoming attitude? Of course, the aged and the sick and weakly can sit, or even lie, and pray. I would be quite satisfied if a lame brother were brought in upon a couch, and thus united with us in prayer; but for young and healthy people to sit themselves down when prayer is being offered, is painful in the extreme, to the discredit of the church, and an insult to God; that is, unless they intend their so doing to be

taken as indicating that they are not in a spirit of prayer, and wish to be considered as not participating.

"STAND up and bless the Lord;
The Lord your God adore."

Long prayers are in many places a vast evil, tending, most surely, to destroy the spirit of prayer. The Saviour's condemnation of them is recorded. Here we are not noted for the length of our supplications Still there is room for improvement. One person, too, often prays for too many things. I do not mean on the Lord's-day evening when there is but little more than one prayer. I refer to the Lord's-day morning and to our prayer meetings. A more thorough division of topics would aid our devotion. Brethren come to feel that to pray aloud they must flow on over some half dozen distinct topics, and not being sure that they shall just then nicely manage that, the desire to speak in prayer is suppressed. Let this not be You feel a desire for some one blessing, or thankful for some one mercy. Get up and express that desire, or speak out your thankfulness. If only a few sentences it will suffice. Sit down and you will have spoken in a truer spirit than if you had added much more, and the impression made will be greater. Prayers, grasping everything, kill the prayer meeting. As a model take the inspired prayer in Acts 4. That prayer contains but one petition,—God hears; the assembly is filled with the Holy Spirit; and the answer is at once vouchsafed.

O my brethren, what a blessed privilege is prayer! Who, understanding anything of its value, and feeling his own need, would neglect to come up at the appointed seasons? But can we not pray at home? Yes, and if we do not we shall not long continue to pray here. But home prayer, and secret prayer, are aided by our prayers in the assembly. We shall go from a season of prayer here, if we use it aright, far more fitted and inclined for prayer in secret. Then there is a

peculiar power in associated prayer and praise—there is a blending of heart and intensification of desire, which often leads to spiritual elevation, when nothing else would meet our case. Private prayer has, too, its advantages. Therein we come to a fuller out-pouring of secret things than would be desirable in the midst of the congregation. Hence, the Lord has ordained both, and called us to the one as well as the other. Let us respond to the call, and be more than ever men and women of prayer! Let us sing—

"Come let us pray; 'tis sweet to feel
That God Himself is near;
That while we at His footstool kneel,
His mercy deigns to hear:
Though sorrows crowd life's dreary way,
This is our solace—let us pray."

I now submit a proposition which, in a measure, may startle some of you—ALL our prayers should be answered. Every unanswered prayer is a prayer improperly presented, When a prayer is not answered either the petition is improper, or the petitioner asks from wrong motives, or is himself in a condition which disqualifies him for asking anything of God. An apostle says— "Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." The Psalmist wrote: "I cried unto Him with my mouth, and He was extolled with my tongue. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

Now I have painfully come to know that prayer meetings, as generally carried on, tend to make infidels. A young, intelligent, and seemingly honest sceptic recently sought my help. He made me acquainted with the origin of his disbelief, which was begotten by Wesleyan prayer meetings. He put it thus—

"I knew that the Bible makes Christ promise that whatsoever His disciples ask God, in His name, it shall be done. I heard those pious Methodists earnestly pleading for God to do many things that I know He did not do. The proof was clearly before me that either Christ never made that promise, and then the Bible is false; or else, that though the promise was made, it is not fulfilled, and then Christ and God are not true; and, in either case, Christianity falls."

Of course, this young man had failed to understand the teaching of the Bible in reference to prayer, as thousands of others have. The Bible does not teach that God will do whatever His creatures ask Him to do. Limitations are clearly laid down. The wicked are not promised any answer to prayer, but are formally excluded from the right to expect God to hear them. If good men ask for blessings with no higher motive than to expend them upon their own desires, they, too, solace themselves beyond the limit in which answers may be claimed. Then the promise relates to things asked "in the name of Jesus," and that includes asking according to His sanction and by His authority. There are other limitations which a full examination of scripture brings into view either stated or implied, but which we cannot now notice. The young man, then, had erred through not knowing the scriptures. But I cannot dismiss the case and throw all the blame upon him. The prayers of ordinary prayer meetings are largely improper and calculated to produce cases like the one in question. You hear men pray,

"Lord, baptize us with the Holy Ghost, and shake the house as Thou didst on Pentecost"—"Lord put forth Thy saving power, and convert every unsaved soul before we leave this chapel."

Unconverted men hear these prayers, and many others that are never answered, and that they know are not answered;

and many of them can scarcely avoid the impression that prayer is pretty much a delusion. In our own public prayers we do not offer the petitions I have just cited; and the ground for complaint is much narrower. Still I hear from our own members, and even from evangelists and other preaching brethren, prayers which I have no reason to believe will be answered, which they have no authority to offer, and which, when the meeting has closed, any discerning person would know to have been presented in vain. Now I entreat you to see that needful reformation be made. Let no prayer be offered but such as we have the promise of God as to its answer; that is, not unless accompanied by the plainest qualification, as, "if it can be in accordance with Thy will." Let not God be asked to do absolutely what He calls us to do—let Him not be called upon to do now, or then, what does not depend upon Him, but upon the will of those for whom we pray. It is our privilege so to pray, that no one can possibly know that our petitions are not answered, and yet to be definite, ask in faith, and bring upon those for whom we pray divine blessing.

You, of course, understand that my purpose is not now to discourse upon prayer as a whole, and in general; that I am merely dealing with the associated worship of the church of God, to which I take "the prayers," in Acts 2:42, to refer. Let it, then, be remembered that the appointed worship of the church is for the church only. It is not "public worship" in the sense of being open for all comers to participate in, whether known or unknown, godly or ungodly, converted or unconverted. It is public only in the sense that it should be open for the presence of the public as spectators. If we do anything which may be fairly taken as inviting or sanctioning those to unite in the worship of the church whom we could not legitimately receive into its membership, we trespass against the spirit and examples of the apostolic age, and, by

a mistaken courtesy and kindness, or by a cowardly unwillingness to assert the true position of those who do not obey the Saviour, injure the very persons whom we desire to conciliate. Not only so, but we dishonour the divine plan and endorse that subversive policy to which the apostasy owes its origin, and under the influence of which it has been consummated. Some there are who would spread the Lord's table for all who please to come, and who would hand the bread and cup to persons whom they reject from membership. Others who would not do this, are willing to lay their nets to catch the money contributions of the world, and thus aid the treasury of the church. They almost invariably tell you that the Lord's table and the Lord's treasury stand in the same relation to the world as does the worship of the Lord's house, and that they can as freely encourage those whom they would not receive into the church to come to the table, and contribute to the necessary outlay, as they can invite them to the worship. Now, their assertion cannot be denied. They have as much right to do the one thing as the other; but they have no right to do either. Our duty is to avoid affording facilities to those whom the church should not receive into its membership, beyond what is needful for them as hearers and spectators. State-churchism has deluded us in this matter. It declares the nation Christian by virtue of the baptism of infants, and then, quite consistently, opens places of worship for all comers. The Nonconformists have carried over the practice, and too many of us are content to be like our neighbors. We can pray in the presence of the public, and for the public, but we are inconsistent and injurious if we lead the unconverted to feel that they are invited to participate in the worship of the church, or that it is proper for them to do so. The only associated worship that has the sanction of the Lord is that which is offered in the name of the Divine Mediator, and by persons who are in Him. I forbid no one to pray.

do not undertake to say that God will not, under certain I circumstances, hear prayer offered by persons not in Christ. But. if I have any correct idea of the spirit and the letter of 1 the Christian system, the worship of the church is for those only who are recognized as being in Christ; and, therefore, the line should be clearly and undeviatingly drawn. Not only are the avowedly unconverted out of place in the worship of the church, but church members are equally so if they connect themselves with worshipping societies, composed altogether. or in part, of such persons. I can enter a synagogue of the Jews, for the worship of which I am in no way responsible, and to the maintenance of which I contribute nothing, and if there I hear a good petition presented to God, I may make it my own by a heart response: but I should sin against the Lord and against His truth were I to identify myself with that people in keeping up their now unauthorized and Christ-dishonouring worship. Nor would the case be materially changed were I to become a member of a society having an ordained worship, composed of Jews and Christians. I regret to know that some few brethren have not learned this important lesson, and have connected themselves with an association which largely consists of the avowedly unconverted, and which has ordained an utterly incongruous worship.

We desire to urge a very careful consideration of the points contemplated in this article. We are not satisfied with what commonly prevails among us in the matter of public worship. In preaching the Gospel we praise and pray, yet hold that unconverted people are ineligible to do either. Theoretically we put it thus—the assembly is a mixed one; there are, perhaps, more brethren present than unconverted people, and the worship is for the brethren, the preaching for the world, and we are asked why we should withhold our praise because sinners are present? The proper answer may be—There is no reason for so withholding, provided

we make it clear that the worship is only for Christians, and that only such are encouraged to participate, all others being heartily welcome as hearers and spectators. That we have this distinction in mind there is no doubt; but month after month, and year after year, people may attend many of our chapels and discern no difference, in this particular, between our places and those where every comer is welcomed as a worshipper. We shall, no doubt, be told, in reply to this appeal, that we must meet the feelings of the people or they will not attend, and that we cannot expect their conversion if they come not within hearing distance. But we believe the apostolic way to be the only right way, and that by departing from principle, or concealing truth to propitiate the people, we forfeit the approbation and help of God. In this way the apostasy commenced, and upon these lines it has been consummated. Our conviction is, that by the course thus objected to we injure the unconverted by helping them to shut their eyes to their true position, and at the same time prepare many of our own members to wander away into other folds, whither they would not go but for this blinding preparation. Our purpose is not now to argue the case, but merely to urge attention. Brethren, think well on this subject.

I must, however, hasten to conclude. I feel that this subject is of the utmost importance, and that the blessing of God and the co-operation of the Holy Spirit cannot be with churches that refuse to honour the only appointed Mediator; and I confess that I see a putting of Him aside, in every attempt to associate the church and the world in the worship of God; whether by encouraging the world to take part in the worship of the church, and composed, in part, of persons who do not even claim to be born again. Beloved, let us show our faith and love by honouring the law of the Lord in all things, and then may we expect His work to prosper in our hands.