

# **RESTORATION HANDBOOK**

A Study of

**THE CHURCH, THE FALLING AWAY, AND**

**THE RESTORATION**

By

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Editor

**ONE HUNDRED SERMONS**

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**TO**

**MY MOTHER**

**The First in My Immediate Family to Accept  
the Principles of the Restoration  
Movement**

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## PREFACE

In view of the divided condition of professed Christians, there is, perhaps, no greater need among them than a careful and prayerful study of the New Testament church, its departure from the truth, and the subsequent efforts to restore it. If this picture can be successfully put before honest people, thousands of them will, in all probability, gladly endeavor to order their lives, so that the prayer of Jesus for the oneness of his people will not be in vain.

It would be difficult to find a more interesting story for religious people than the story of "The Church, the Falling Away, and the Restoration." However, that story is a long one and not everyone in these times has the time or inclination to "wade through" the many volumes of church history in order to acquaint himself with all the facts in the case. This is a day of "book reviews," and, in keeping with that idea, an effort has been made to present the most important features of this most interesting story in a short and convenient form. References to larger works which have been used in the preparation of this volume have been given, and if the student desires to engage in a more extended study of this subject, the author is glad to recommend these works to him. He also wishes to thank those who have written on this subject before him for the information which has enabled him to prepare this little book.

The plan followed in this study is easy to see. There are four parts, each being divided into convenient subdivisions, and the subject matter is arranged around the principal persons, doctrinal views, and events. This should aid the student in remembering what is read.

This book is intended for individual reading and study, but it may easily be made the basis of group study or class-work. Preachers, especially the younger ones and those who do not have access to large libraries, will find many suggestions for sermons in these pages. However,

the author hopes that many who are not preachers will read this book, for it was that class that he had in mind while preparing it. If the average Christian has a working knowledge of the New Testament and understands the facts and principles which are contained in this book, he can easily become a successful soul winner for Christ. With this idea in mind, this volume will not only serve as a handbook for the missionary, but will also be an ideal book to put into the hand of his neighbors, who still believe that denominationalism is pleasing to the Lord. It is the author's deep conviction that if such people will carefully study this subject, they will readily see the beauty, as well as the necessity, of all professed children of God being one in Christ Jesus.

LESLIE G. THOMAS.

Dickson, Tennessee, March 7, 1941.

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## Part I

### THE CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

#### Matt. 16: 13-18

Introduction: "The Church, the Falling Away, and the Restoration" is one of the most interesting studies to be found in any literature, for not only do we learn from such a study the origin and mission of the church, but also of its struggles and triumphs. The church is the institution for which Christ gave his life, and its welfare, therefore, should be close to the heart of every follower of the Savior of men. Furthermore, it is impossible for one to understand present-day conditions, so far as professed *followers of Christ are concerned, without some* knowledge of the general subject now before us. The first part of this series of studies will have to do with the church itself. Let us consider:

#### I. The Scope of the Investigation

1. Our first aim shall be to get a clear conception of just what the church of Christ was as it existed in New Testament times.

2. We shall then carefully consider those elements which arose in the church, resulting at length in the formation of the Roman Catholic Church, and later on, in the establishment of the major Protestant denominations. Thoughtful people are wanting to know just why it is that we have so many denominations, when only one church is revealed in the New Testament. We can never understand the "how" of Christian unity until we know something of the "how" of division. A consistent study of church history, a thing within the reach of every interested person, would go far toward bringing about the lost unity of professed Christians.

3. And, finally, we shall endeavor to trace the steps which led to the restoration of that church as described at the beginning in the New Testament.

## II. Some Points of Agreement

1. All real students of the New Testament unite in declaring that there was a church in the days of the apostles, following the resurrection of Jesus, known as the church of Christ; that is, the church that Christ established.

2. Furthermore, Bible students are agreed that that church is fully described in the New Testament, and that it is possible for one to know exactly what it was.

3. We will, therefore, always have a pattern to which we can refer, when we would know the facts concerning the primitive church. And, too, it is important that these facts be well understood and firmly fixed in one's mind, for if he does not know the chief characteristics of the New Testament church, he would not be able to recognize it today. What, then, are

## III. The General Characteristics of the New Testament Church?

1. It was built by Christ, "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16: 18), and purchased with his own blood, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20: 28). It was, therefore, a divine institution.

2. It was established in Jerusalem with Christ as its foundation: "And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to



the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2: 2, 3; cf. Mic. 4: 1, 2); "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11: 15); "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16: 18); "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3: 11); "So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2: 19, 20).

3. There were certain divinely appointed names by which it and its members were known: "All the *churches* of Christ salute you" (Rom. 16: 16); "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, unto the church *of God* which is at Corinth, even them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, *called to be saints*, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours" (1 Cor. 1: 1, 2; cf. "And all things that are mine are thine, and thine are mine"—John 17: 10); "To the general assembly and church *of the firstborn* who are enrolled in heaven" (Heb. 12: 23); "And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called *Christians* first in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26). While the possible list of names was probably not exhausted, yet all the New Testament names have their significance, for the Holy Spirit never uses them carelessly nor by accident; and for these names, that is, those in the New Testament, and these alone, is there divine authority.

4. The New Testament church was governed wholly by divine authority: "And he put all things in subjection

under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1: 22, 23); "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything" (Eph. 5: 23, 24); "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17). Human councils, synods, conferences, conventions, etc., are not one time mentioned in the Scriptures with divine approval.

5. It had a specific form of government: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20: 28); "The elders therefore among you I exhort, who am a fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock" (1 Pet. 5: 1-3); "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phil. 1: 1). The various congregations of the church were not bound in the coils of an ecclesiasticism, but were free and independent. The bishops, or elders, were not diocesan, but congregational; and there was not a plurality of churches (congregations) under one bishop, but a plurality of bishops in one church. Its government was not in the hands of a legislative body, but was under the

legislation of Christ, executed by the several congregations through their elders.

6. There were definite conditions of membership: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28: 19); "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16: 15, 16); "And he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24: 46, 47). These passages plainly teach that faith, repentance, and baptism were to be preached as conditions of salvation, while Acts 2: 1-41 shows that those who heeded Peter's instruction on that occasion believed, repented, and were baptized in the order here named. All who thus responded to the gospel message were saved from their past sins and were "added" to the church. See Acts 2: 47. Paul makes it plain that the anathema or curse of God will rest upon any person, divine or human, who alters the gospel message: "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel: only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert [corrupt or change] the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema." (Gal. 1: 6-9.) Mark 16: 15, 16 shows that belief (or faith), baptism, and salvation were to follow the preaching of the gospel in the order named, while Gal. 3: 26, 27 shows that that was exactly what happened

in the case of the Galatians (the ones who received the message just quoted, Gal. 1: 6-9). They were sons of God, which is the same thing as being saved from their past sins, in Christ Jesus, as a result of their faith and baptism: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) Therefore, to preach salvation by faith apart from baptism, as, for example, "He that believeth shall be saved, and he may be baptized if he desires, although it is not essential," is to make a change in the command of the Lord (Mark 16: 15, 16); and all such shall surely come under the anathema of heaven.

7. It had a specific form of worship: "Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5: 19); "What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (1 Cor. 14: 15); "Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching" (1 Tim. 4: 13); "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight" (Acts 20: 7); "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come" (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2); "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2: 42). Thus, the early church sang, prayed, taught the word of God, ate the Lord's Supper, and gave of their means.

8. Baptism was always by immersion. It was immersion: "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the

eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8: 38, 39); "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6: 3, 4). The testimony of the scholarship of the world is to the same effect: "At first Christian baptism commonly took place in the Jordan; of course, as the church spread more widely, in private houses also. Like that of St. John, it was by immersion of the whole person, which is the only meaning of the New Testament word. A mere pouring or sprinkling was never thought of. St. Paul made this immersion a symbol of burial with Christ, and the emerging a sign of resurrection with him to a new life. Baptism is a 'bath.' Of the Ethiopian's baptism it is said that both he and Philip went down into the water, and so the evangelist baptized him."—Dollinger: *The First Age of Christianity and of the Church*, Vol. II, p. 183.

9. The singing was without mechanical instrumental accompaniment. Vocal music in the worship is divinely authorized by the specific statement of inspired men, but mechanical instrumental music is not one time mentioned by them as being in the worship of a single New Testament congregation! Some have endeavored to make it appear that the word *psallo*, from which we have the expression "making melody" in Eph. 5: 19, justifies the use of mechanical instrumental music in the worship, but both the teaching of the New Testament and the scholarship of the world are against that idea. The New Testament authorizes singing alone, and the scholarship of the world confirms the fact that such was the practice of the early church: "In the New Testament *to sing a hymn, to*

celebrate the praises of God in song (James 5: 13)." Thayer: *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Article, Psallo. "The Greek word psallo is applied among the Greeks of modern times exclusively to sacred music, which in the Eastern church has never been any other than vocal, instrumental music being unknown in that church, as it was in the primitive church. Sir John Hawkins, following the Romish writers in his erudite work on the *History of Music*, makes Pope Vitalian, in A.D. 660, the first who introduced organs into churches. But students of ecclesiastical archaeology are generally agreed that instrumental music was not used in churches till a much later date; for Thomas Aquinas, A.D. 1250, has these remarkable words: 'Our church does not use musical instruments, as harps and psalteries, to praise God withal, that she may not seem to Judaize.' From this passage we are surely warranted in concluding that there was no ecclesiastical use of organs in the time of Aquinas. It is alleged that Marinus Sanutus, who lived about A.D. 1290, was the first that brought the use of wind organs into churches, and hence he received the name of *Torcellus*. In the East the organ was in use in the emperor's courts, probably from the time of Julian, but never has either the organ or any other instrument been employed in public worship in Eastern churches; nor is mention of instrumental music found in all their liturgies, ancient or modern."—McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopedia*, Vol. VIII, p. 739.

10. Penitent believers were the only subjects of baptism: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16); "But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8: 12); "And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized" (Acts 18: 8). The scholarship of the world likewise

bears testimony to the fact that such was the practice of the early church: "As Christ enjoins them to teach before *baptizing*, and desires that none but believers shall be admitted to baptism, it would appear that baptism is not properly administered unless when preceded by faith."—John Calvin, *Harmony of the Evangelists*, Vol. III, p. 386. "Nothing but the most violent injustice done to the language of Scripture by a bold and unscrupulous system of interpretation can suffice to get rid of the evidence which, in the case of baptism of converts mentioned in Scripture, connects the administration of the rite with a profession of faith in Christ on the part of the person who was the recipient of it. The association of the person's profession, faith, repentance, or believing, with baptism, appears in a multitude of passages; while not one passage or example can be quoted in favor of the connection of baptism with an absence of profession. 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved'; 'repent, and be baptized every one of you'; 'many having believed, and been baptized\*—these and many other passages of like import connect together, as inseparable in the process by which, under the eye of the apostles, many in their days were added to the Christian church, the two facts of religious profession of the candidate, and the administration of the religious ordinance by which formally he became a member of the church of Christ. In the history, although brief and incomplete, of the baptism of the early converts to the Christian faith, there is almost invariably some statement by which is attested the distinctive Christian profession that stands connected with the administration of the outward rite; while in no instances are there any statements from which it could be proved that baptism ever stood connected with the absence of such profession. ... In connection with the baptism of Lydia, and as preceding the administration of the rite, we have the statement, 'whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.' Con-

nected with the baptism of the Philippian jailer, there stands the statement, And he 'rejoiced, believing in **God** with all his house.' In short, in almost every example of baptism which the New Testament records, there is enough in the narrative, however scanty and compressed it be, to bring out the fact that in close association with the administration of the rite appears the religious profession of the recipient. And, on the other hand, it may be safely asserted that in no example of baptism recorded in the New Testament can it be proved that no such profession was made."—James Bannerman, *The Church of Christ*, Vol. II, pp. 64, 65.

11. Christ was the early church's only creed and the New Testament its only rule of faith and practice: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3: 16); "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17). Thus, their faith was in a person, Christ, and his word was their only guide.

12. The New Testament church was a united church: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17: 20, 21); "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul" (Acts 4: 32); "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1: 10); "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meek-



ness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; **giving** diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all" (Eph. 4: 1-6). Denominationalism was unknown to the primitive followers of Christ.

These twelve characteristics were distinctive marks of the New Testament church, and they must, of course, characterize any church today, if that church is in reality the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Jesse R. Kellems: *The Resurrection Gospel*, p. 242ff. (The Standard Publishing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio.)

J. W. Shepherd: *The Church, the Falling Away, and the Restoration*, p. 6ff. (F. L. Rowe, Publisher, Cincinnati, Ohio.)

G. K. Berry: *The Eight Leading Churches*, p. 11ff. (Published by the Author, 1330 East Salmon Street, Portland, **Oregon.**)



**Part II**  
**THE FALLING AWAY**  
**2 Thess. 2: 3**

Introduction: The New Testament, as observed in the preceding lesson, sets forth the fact that the church of Christ was established on the first Pentecost after his resurrection from the dead. That volume also gives a minute description of the church, as indicated in the study just referred to. For some years the church, generally speaking, remained true to Christ, but that there would come a general falling away, known in history as the "great apostasy," was plainly foretold in the Scriptures. Even during the days of the apostles the deadly work had already begun, and the next few hundred years witnessed the growth and development of several major departures from the original pattern. But, in considering the subject now before us, let us begin with

I. The Testimony of the Scriptures

1. *The Savior's Warning to and Prayer for His Disciples:* "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the., fire. Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:15-20), "I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one" (John 17: 15).

2. *The Falling Away Plainly Foretold:* "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit

hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20: 28-30): "Now we beseech you, brethren, touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know that which restraineth, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of lawlessness doth already work: only there is one that restraineth now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming; even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a he: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2:1-12); "But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with

a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth" (1 Tim. 4: 1-3)

## II. The Major Departures from the Original Pattern

### 1. *The Change in the Form of Church Government*

(1) The rise, growth, and perfection of the papal hierarchy. As was noticed in the previous lesson, the apostolic churches (congregations) each had a plurality of elders or bishops. One of the first manifestations of the departure from the original pattern was as follows:

The elders of any particular congregation would select one of their number to preside at their meetings for the transaction of business, and, in the course of time, the one so selected came to be known as "The Bishop." Thus they made a distinction between the terms "elder" and "bishop," both of which were applied to the same man in the New Testament. See Acts 20: 17, 28; Tit. 1: 5, 7, where the terms are used interchangeably.\*

Little by little "The Bishop" came to feel his importance until he was exalted above his fellow elders. This, however, the elders would not concede. Divisions resulted, and the authority of the bishops, closely united among themselves, was victorious over the elders, who

\*There are six words used in the New Testament Scriptures to designate these who have the oversight of the members of the various communities. These six words may be divided into pairs, each pair expressing a distinct thought. First, we have the words "elders" and "presbyters"; the former of Anglo-Saxon origin, the latter of Greek origin. Next, "shepherds" and "pastors"; the former, of Anglo-Saxon, the latter of Latin origin. Then, the words "overseers" and "bishops"; one of Anglo-Saxon parentage, the other of Greek. We have expressed in these words the three ideas of "experience," "feeding," and "oversight." There are not three different characters represented here with three different degrees of office; and certainly no distinction of title or rank is suggested by the New Testament use of these words. "That they (elders) did not differ at all from the bishops or overseers is evident from the fact that the two words are used indiscriminately. (Acts 20: 17, 28; Tit. 1: 5-7.) (Hayer's, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 536, edition of 1888.) — George A. Klingman, Church History for *Busy People*, pp. 87

opposed them single-handed. The power and authority of these bishops were regulated by the prominence of the cities in which they presided; and as Rome was the chief city of the world at that time, the bishops of cities of less importance came to regard it an honor to themselves to concede to the bishop of Rome the pre-eminence in all things; and he, accordingly, extended his authority from time to time, until almost the whole world bowed before him, resulting, finally, in his being recognized as "Lord God the Pope" and "Vicar of Christ."

Had the professed followers of Christ been satisfied to maintain the type of church government authorized by the New Testament, the hierarchy of Rome never would have existed with all its attendant evils. But when people begin to depart from the New Testament pattern and to follow the opinions and desires of men, institutions and practices unknown to the New Testament will soon be in evidence on every hand.

(2) Some of the results which followed the change in the original form of church government:

A. The elevation of the bishop over the entire congregation, including the elders, thus constituting him the pastor of the church. No such office or position was authorized by the New Testament.\*

\*The clergy claim for themselves the prerogatives, relations, and authority of the Jewish priesthood. Such claims, advanced in the third century by Cyprian, were a great departure from the original spirit and model of the church derived from Christ and the apostles. It was falling back from the New to the Old Testament, and substituting the outward for the inward spirit. It presented the priesthood again as a mediating office between man and his God. It sought to invest the propitiating priest with awful sanctity as the appointed medium by which grace is imparted to man. Hence, the necessity of episcopal ordination, the apostolical succession, and the grace of the ordinances administered by consecrated hands. The clergy, by this assumption, were made independent of the people; their commission and office were from God; and, as a Mosaic priesthood, they soon began to claim an independent sovereignty over the laity. "God makes the priests" was the darling maxim of Cyprian, perpetually recurring in identical and varied phraseology. No change, perhaps, in the whole history of the changing forms of church government can be specified more destructive to the primitive constitution of the church, or more disastrous to the spiritual

B. This elevation of the bishops had a tendency to consolidate the church under their authority. When country churches were established through the efforts of a city church, the elders of the city church would act as their pastors under the direction of the bishop. The result was that each city bishop gradually took the oversight of all the churches in the country near him. The higher the rank of the city, the more influential was the bishop residing in it. The bishops of Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome, became very prominent because those cities were regarded as having been the seats of the apostles in an important sense. The term "archbishop," which was at first applied to all city bishops, was finally applied to them alone. They were eventually called primates of patriarchs.

By the middle of the second century the church was well united under the authority of the bishops, who were regarded as successors of the apostles. The power to rule was gradually transferred to the bishops of the larger cities. The council of Sardica, in 343, decreed that bishops should not be appointed in the smaller towns.

C. The distinction between the clergy and the laity. "Without reference to the causes which occasioned the distinction between the clergy and the laity, this is worthy of notice as another important change in the constitution of the church, which gradually arose in connection with the rise of episcopal power. In opposition to the idea of universal priesthood, the people now became a distinct and inferior order. They and the clergy began to feel the force of conflicting interests and claims, the distinction widens fast, and influence, authority, and power centralize in the bishop, the head of the clerical order."—Lyman Coleman.

This distinction between the so-called clergy and laity

interests. "This entire perversion of the original view of the Christian church," says Neander, "was itself the origin of the whole system of the Roman Catholic religion—the germ from which sprang the popery of the Dark Ages."—Lyman Coleman.

is specifically condemned in the New Testament, Matt. 23: 8-10; cf. 1 Pet. 2: 5, 9; Rev. 1: 5, 6, where the universal priesthood of all Christians is set forth.

D. The origin of conventions,, councils, synods, etc., resulting in the enactment of human laws and regulations for the church. "During a great portion of this century (second) all the churches continued to be, as at first, independent of each other, or were connected by no associations or confederations. Each church was a kind of small, independent republic, governing itself by its own laws, enacted, or at least sanctioned, by the people. But in the process of time it became customary for all the Christian churches within the same province to unite and form a sort of larger society or commonwealth; and in the manner of confederated republics to hold their conventions at stated times, and there deliberate for the common advantage of the whole confederation. This custom first arose among the Greeks, with whom a political confederation of cities, and the consequent convention of their several delegates, had been long known; but afterward, the utility of the thing being seen, the custom extended through all the countries where there were Christian churches. Such conventions of delegates from several churches assembled for deliberation were called by the Greeks synods and by the Latins councils; and the laws agreed upon in them were called canons; that is, rules."—Mosheim.

"In the second century synods were organized and the bishops presided over them. The lay element was gradually excluded. The laws passed by these assemblies were called canons, and were considered binding on those who took part in their enactment. They claimed that the Holy Spirit guided them in their deliberations. The power of the bishops was greatly increased through these gatherings."—G. K. Berry.

This, too, is in direct violation of the letter and spirit of



the New Testament, as may be seen by considering such passages as 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.

E. The multiplication of church offices. "Few and simple were the offices instituted in the church by the apostles; but after the rise of episcopacy, ecclesiastical offices were multiplied with great rapidity. They arose, as may appear in the progress of this work, from different causes and at different times; many were the necessary results of changes in the church and in society; but, generally, they will be found to have, as their ultimate effect and end, the aggrandizement of the episcopate. They are an integral, if not an essential, part of the ceremonial, the pomp and power of an outward religion, that carnal perversion of the true idea of the Christian Church, and the legitimate consequence of beginning in the Spirit and seeking to be made perfect in the flesh."—  
Lyman Coleman,

, "These councils—of which no vestige appears before the middle of this [second] century—changed nearly the whole form of the church. For by them, in the first place, the ancient rights and privileges of the people were very much abridged; and, on the other hand, the influence of the authority of the bishops was not a little augmented. At first the bishops did not deny that they were merely the representatives of their churches, and that they acted in the name of the people; but little by little they made high pretensions, and maintained that power was given them by Christ himself to dictate rules of faith and conduct to the people. In the next place, the perfect equality and parity of all bishops, which existed in the early times, these councils gradually subverted. For it was necessary that one of the confederated bishops of a province should in those conventions be entrusted with some authority and power over the others; and hence originated the prerogatives of metropolitans, and lastly, when the custom of holding these councils had extended over the Christian world and the universal church had

acquired the form of a vast republic composed of many lesser ones, certain head men were to be placed over it in different parts of the world as central points in their respective countries. Hence, came the patriarchs, and ultimately the prince of patriarchs, the Roman pontiff."—Mosheim.

However, it should be kept in mind that the only officers that the New Testament churches had were elders and deacons. See Phil. 1: 1.

"In the New Testament, as we have seen, there are two classes of officers in each church called, respectively, elders or bishops, and deacons. After we cross the limit of the first century, we find that with each board of elders there is a person to whom the name of 'bishop' is specially applied, although, for a long time, he is likewise often called a presbyter. In other words, in the room of a twofold, we have a threefold, ministry."—George P. Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, p. 51.

"The changes which the constitution of the Christian Church underwent during this period related especially to the following particulars: (1) the distinction of bishops from presbyters and the gradual development of the monarchico-episcopal church government; (2) the distinction of the clergy from the laity and the formation of a sacerdotal caste as opposed to the evangelical idea of the priesthood; (3) the multiplication of church offices."—Neander.

## 2. *A Change in the Name by Which the Church Was Known*

(1) The names recorded in the New Testament, which the Lord saw fit to select, are, obviously, the ones which he expected his people to use in referring to his body, the church.

(2) But by the middle of the second century, as already indicated, the church was well under the authority of the bishops, who were regarded as the successors of the apostles; and in opposition to heretical and schismatic

parties, it claimed to be the "catholic" church (the word "catholic" means "universal").

(3) Later on the expression, "Holy Catholic Church," came into use, and, Anally, "The Holy Roman Catholic Church." McClintock and Strong's Cyclopedia contains the following statement regarding the claims of the Roman Catholics to this title: "The Roman Church arrogantly claims the name Catholic as exclusively her own, and designated all who do not belong to her communion as heretics and schismatics. It is bad enough in the Church of Rome to make this claim of the title 'Catholic'; it is still worse for Protestants to concede it. The result of this concession, in most Protestant countries, is that common people have really no conception of the true use of the word catholic. The words 'Papist,' 'Papal,' and 'Romanist' are all properly applicable to the Church of *Rome*, and imply *no offensive meaning*, as they are legitimately derived. At all events, the word 'Roman' should always be prefixed to 'Catholic,' if the latter term be used as part of the title of the Church of Rome."

(4) Thus, a human name for the church was introduced, and the way was paved for the use of other human names, a practice which continues to this day by Protestants as well as Catholics.

### 3. *A Change in the Subject of Baptism—Infants as Well as Believers*

(1) There is no evidence in the New Testament, whatsoever, that the apostles ever baptized anyone who was too young to hear the gospel, believe it, and repent of his sins, nor that any such person was ever baptized by their authority. But early in the third century some began to advocate the baptism (immersion, for then there was no such thing as sprinkling for baptism) of little children. It was argued that infants were born in sin and that they could be regenerated in baptism. The first writer to mention the subject was Tertullian (born in

Carthage about A.D. 160 and died there between A.D. 220 and 240). He was opposed to the practice and gave good reasons for his opposition. He flourished in the early part of the third century of the Christian era and wrote as follows:

"Our Lord says, indeed, do not forbid them to come. Therefore, let them come when they are grown up. Let them come when they understand, when they are instructed whither it is that they come. Let them be made Christians when they know Christ. What need their guiltless *age* make such haste to the *forgiveness of sins*? Men will proceed more warily in worldly goods; and he that should not have earthly goods committed to him yet shall have heavenly! Let them know how to desire this salvation that you may appear to have given to one that asketh."

But Origen, who was born in Alexandria about sixteen years later than Tertullian, favored the baptism of infants. He wrote as follows: "If there were nothing in infants that wanted forgiveness and mercy, the grace of baptism would be needless to them." Again, he said, "Having occasion given in this place, I will mention a thing that causes frequent inquiries among the brethren. Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Of what sins? Or when have they sinned? Or how can any reason of the laver in their case hold good, but according to that sense we mentioned even now—none is free from pollution, though the life be but the length of one day upon the earth. And it is for that reason, because by the sacrament of baptism (a Roman Catholic expression) the pollution of our birth is taken away, that infants are baptized."—*History of Infant Baptism*, Vol. I, pp. 205, 206, by Dr. William Wall.

It is significant, therefore, that the first person to mention the subject of infant baptism wrote in opposition to it. But he was not able to stem the tide, for as the "falling away" became more pronounced, the practice

became more firmly established, as the following quotations will show.

"Prominent among the early departures from the divine order was the substitution of infant baptism for that of believers. This practice originated in the third century and grew out of the doctrine of original sin. It was contended that baptism was regeneration in the sense of washing away original sin; that infants were depraved by original sin, and could not be saved without this washing away of that sin, and therefore they baptized infants that they might be saved."—J. W. Shepherd.

"But when now, on the one hand, the doctrine of corruption and guilt, cleaving to human nature in consequence of the first transgression, was reduced to a more precise and systematic form, and, on the other from duly distinguishing between what is outward and what is inward in baptism (the baptism by water and the baptism by the Spirit), the error became more firmly established that without external baptism no one could be delivered from that inherent guilt, or could be saved from the everlasting punishment that threatened him, or raised to eternal life; and when the notion of a magical influence, a charm connected with the sacraments, continually gained ground, the theory was finally evolved of the unconditional necessity of infant baptism. About the middle of the third century this theory was already generally admitted in the North African Church."—Neander, *Church History*, Vol. I, pp. 426, 427.

"The practice of infant baptism in the church, with the customary formula, 'for the remission of sins,' and such accompanying ceremonies as exorcism, presupposes the dominion of sin and of demoniacal powers even in infancy. Since the child, before the awakening of self-consciousness, has committed no actual sin, the effect of baptism must relate to the forgiveness of original sin and guilt. This was a very important point from the beginning of the controversy, and one to which Augustine

frequently reverted. . . . Constrained by the idea of original sin, and by the supposed necessity of baptism to salvation, he does not shrink from consigning unbaptized children to damnation itself. . . . The Catholic doctrine of the necessity of outward baptism to regeneration and entrance into the kingdom of God forbade him a more liberal view respecting the endless destiny of that half of the human race which die in childhood."—Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. III, pp. 835, 836.

"Thus it was that infant baptism rested upon two speculative and totally unscriptural doctrines: (1) Heredity, total depravity, or that an infant is born in sin, and is a sinner through and through, depraved in nature; and (2) baptismal regeneration, or that baptism will take away sin, even though there be no faith. Those who today practice infant baptism, so called, should keep these facts well in mind, for, while it may be now that the act is but an act of dedication, it was not true at the time of its origin. It is not baptism and has never been in any sense baptism, for baptism must be the act which comes out of the very soul of the one baptized."—Jesse R. Kellems.

In addition to the testimony of historical and theological writers, there is an abundance of expert testimony—the testimony of scholars, men who have given expression to the result of their efforts to ascertain the facts in the case rather than the simple recording of historical data. The following quotations are among the hundreds of such statements which might be reproduced in this connection.

"As to the baptism of infants, it is a mere human tradition, for which neither precept nor *practice* is to be found in all the Scriptures."—Robert Barclay, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, eighth edition, London, 1780—English Quaker.

"I do believe and know that there is neither precept nor example in Scripture for pedobaptism [children

baptism] nor a just evidence for it for over 200 years after Christ; that Tertullian condemns it as an unwarrantable custom. . . ."—Thomas Barlow, Letter, in Denver's *Treatise on Baptism*, London, 1674—Church of England.

"As Christ enjoins them to teach before baptizing, and desires that none but *believers* shall be admitted to baptism, it would appear that baptism is not properly administered unless when preceded by faith."—John Calvin, *Harmony of the Evangelists*, Vol. III, p. 386—Founder of the Presbyterian Church.

"On the subject of *infant* baptism I have said nothing. The present occasion did not call for it; and I have no wish or intention to enter into the controversy respecting it. I have only to say that I believe in both the propriety and expediency of the rite thus administered; and therefore accede to it *ex ammo* [heartily]. Commands, or plain and certain examples, in the New Testament relative to it, I do not find. Nor, with my view of it, I do not need them."—Moses Stuart, *Mode of Christian Baptism*, pp. 189, 190—Congregationalism

"The baptism of the children of Christians, of which no trace is found in the New Testament, is not to be held as an apostolic ordinance, as, indeed, it encountered long resistance; but it is an institution *of the church*, which gradually arose in post-apostolic times in connection with the development of ecclesiastical life and of doctrinal teaching, not certainly attested before Tertullian, and by him still decidedly opposed, and, although already defended by Cyprian, only becoming general after the time of Augustine in virtue of that connection."—H. A. W. Meyer, *Commentary on Acts*, p. 312—German Lutheran.

"There is no trace of infant baptism in the New Testament. All attempts to deduce it from the words of institution, or from such passages as 1 Cor. 1: 16, must be given up as arbitrary. Indeed, 1 Cor. 7: 14 ('For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in the brother: else were

your children unclean; but now are they holy') rules out decisively all such deductions; for, if pedobaptism were taught by Paul, he would have linked the salvation of the children with their baptism, and not with the faith of their parents."—George E. Steitz, Article, Baptism, in Schaff-Herzog's *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. I, p. 200—German Lutheran.

"Infant baptism was established neither by Christ nor the apostles. In all places where we find the necessity of baptism notified, either in a dogmatic or historical point of view, it is evident that it was only meant for those who were capable of comprehending the word preached and of being converted to Christ by an act of their own will. A pretty sure testimony of its nonexistence in the apostolic age may be inferred from 1 Cor. 7: 14, since Paul would certainly have referred to the baptism of children for their holiness (cf. Neander, *History of the Planting, Etc.*, Vol. I, p. 206). But even in later times several teachers of the church, such as Tertullian (*De Bapt.* 18) and others, reject this custom; indeed, his church in general (that of North Africa) adhered longer than others to the primitive regulations. Even when baptism of children was already theoretically derived from the apostles, its practice was, nevertheless, for a long time confined to a maturer age."—Justus Ludwig Jacobi, Article, Baptism, in *Kitto's Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature*, Vol. I, p. 287—German Lutheran.

#### 4. *A Change in the Form of Baptism—the Substitution of Sprinkling and Pouring for Immersion*

About fifty years after the rise of infant baptism—and let it be remembered that infants were immersed in accordance with the universal custom of the church at that time—came the first substitution for the baptism commanded by the Lord Jesus and practiced by the New Testament church; that is, a burial in and a resurrection from water, in the likeness of the burial and resurrection of Jesus. (See Rom. 6: 3, 4; Col. 2: 12.) The first case



in history of any man having water poured on him for baptism, as a substitute for that which the Lord expressly commanded, was that of Novatian in AD. 251. Novatian was seriously ill and the church leaders thought that he could not be immersed. Something, of course, had to be done, for he had not been baptized; and if he should die in that condition, he would have no promise of salvation in the next world. These men felt that since the Holy Spirit dwelt in them, the Spirit would approve whatever they did; and feeling that Novatian was not physically able to submit to immersion, they decided to pour water all over him as he lay in the bed. Such "baptism" was called "clinic baptism." from the Greek word, *Mine*, a bed. This form of baptism was permitted in the case of one already a candidate for baptism whose life was endangered; but if he recovered, he was not held eligible to hold an office in the church. Eusebius, who has been called "the father of church history," writes of this revolutionary act as follows: "Being delivered by the exorcists, he fell into a severe sickness, and, as he seemed about to die, he received baptism by affusion on the bed where he lay, if indeed we can say that such a one did receive it." (*The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. I, pp. 288, 289.) Similar doubts were expressed by others. However, Cyprian (Epist. 76) strongly insisted that a clinic baptism was just as valid and efficient as any other. (See McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopedia*, Vol. II, p. 389, Article, *Clinic Baptism*.)

But Novatian did not die. He recovered and became so influential in the church that one faction elected him bishop of Rome. However, there was serious objection to this on account of his so-called baptism; that is, his clinic baptism. Dr. William Wall writes of this case as follows: "In the year of our Lord 251, Novatian was, by one party of the clergy and the people of Rome, chosen bishop of that church in a schismatical way and in opposition to Cornelius, who had been before chosen by the

major part, and was already ordained. Cornelius does, in a letter to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, vindicate his right, and shows that Novatian cannot canonically come to the orders of the priesthood, much less was he capable of being chosen bishop, for that all the clergy and a great many of the laity were against his being ordained presbyter; for it was not lawful, they said, for anyone who had been baptized in his bed, in time of sickness, as he had been, to be admitted to any office of the clergy." —*History of Infant Baptism*, Vol. I, pp. 204, 205.

Thus, the origin of sprinkling and pouring for immersion was purely a *substitution* on the part of the Roman Catholic officials. But Rome (and Protestants, too, as we shall see later) is great for precedents, and this act in the case of Novatian's so-called baptism established a precedent. From that time on, that is, A.D. 251, in cases of illness, pouring was substituted for the immersion of the whole body, and was called clinic baptism.

That what has been said regarding the substitution of sprinkling and pouring for immersion is true is admitted by the great Catholic authorities and world-renowned scholars. The Catholic *Encyclopedia*, in an article on baptism, says: "The word 'baptism' is derived from the Greek word *bapto*, or *baptizo*, to wash or immerse." "Three forms of ablution have prevailed among Christians, and the church [that is, the Roman Catholic Church] holds them all to be valid because they fulfill the requisite significance of the baptismal laving. These forms are immersion, affusion, and aspersion. The most ancient form usually employed was unquestionably immersion. This is not only evident from the writings of the fathers, and the early rituals of both the Latin and oriental churches, but it can be also gathered from the Epistles of St. Paul, who speaks of baptism as a bath. (Eph. 5: 26; Rom. 6: 4; Tit. 3: 5.) In the Latin church immersion seems to have prevailed until the twelfth century. After that it is found some places even as late

as the sixteenth century. Affusion and aspersion, however, were growing common in the thirteenth century and gradually prevailed in the western church."

Philip Schaff, the great Presbyterian scholar and writer, in speaking of the substitution of sprinkling and pouring for immersion, says: "The question now arises, when and how came the mode of sprinkling and pouring to take the place of immersion and emersion as a rule? The change was gradual and confined to the western churches. The Roman Church, as we have seen, backed by the authority of Thomas Aquinas, the angelic doctor, took the lead in the thirteenth century, yet so as to retain in her rituals the form of immersion as the older and better mode. The practice prevailed over the theory and the exception became the rule."—*Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, p. 51.

The late Cardinal Gibbons speaks in the same general strain when he says: "For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, baptism was usually conferred by immersion, but since the twelfth century the practice of baptizing by infusion has prevailed in the Catholic Church, as this manner is attended by less inconvenience than baptism by immersion."—*Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 266.

Dollinger, one of the greatest Catholic historians and theologians, uses even stronger language than that employed by Cardinal Gibbons, when he declares: "At first Christian baptism commonly took place in the Jordan; of course, as the church spread more widely, in private houses also. Like that of St. John, it was by the immersion of the whole person, which is the only meaning of the New Testament word. A mere pouring or sprinkling was never thought of. St. Paul made this immersion a symbol of burial with Christ, and the emerging a sign of resurrection with him to a new life. Baptism is a 'bath.' Of the Ethiopian's baptism it is said that both he and Philip went down into the water and the evangelist

baptized him."—*The First Age of Christianity and of the Church*, Vol. II, p. 183.

The Roman Catholics were accustomed to holding "councils" for the purpose of discussing and deciding questions of faith, points of order, etc. There was such a council held in Ravenna, Italy in 1311, which is famous in history on account of its authorizing the substitution of sprinkling and pouring for immersion. This was done by making them equally valid along with immersion. Up to this time the general rule of the church had been immersion, the exceptions being as a rule, clinic baptisms; but in 1311, by the authority of the Roman Catholic Council, which met in Ravenna, Italy, sprinkling and pouring became *legal* baptism. The general effect of the action of this council in legalizing sprinkling and pouring for baptism may be plainly seen by considering the two following quotations by John Calvin, the founder of the Presbyterian Church: "Whether the person baptized is to be wholly immersed, and that whether once or thrice, or whether he is only to be sprinkled with water, is not of the least consequence. Churches should be at liberty to adopt either according to the diversity of climates, although it is evident that the term baptize means to immerse, and that this was the form used by the primitive church." (*Institutes*, Vol. III, p. 344.) "Wherefore the church did grant liberty to herself since the beginning to change the rites somewhat, excepting the substance. It is of no consequence at all whether the person that is baptized is totally immersed or whether he is merely sprinkled by an effusion of water. This should be a matter of choice to the churches in different regions."—*Institutes*, Vol. IV, chapter 15.

There are three things to be considered in the question of baptism—viz. (1) the action commanded to be done; (2) the subject specified; and (3) the meaning, design, or purpose of that action. The New Testament plainly teaches that Jesus commanded a certain character to be

the subject of a certain action, for a specific *purpose* or *design*. The questions, then, are: What is that action? Who is the subject? What is the design?

### *The Action of Baptism*

The action is indicated by a word as definite and clear as any word in any language that was ever spoken by the tongues of men. Besides, in all laws and institutions, and more especially in those that are of a positive, rather than a *moral* nature, all words having both a literal and figurative meaning, a common and a specific signification, are to be understood in their literal and common, and not in their figurative and uncommon import and acceptance. This has been the decision of all judges of law and languages from time immemorial.

That definite and unambiguous word, as almost universally known in these days of controversy, is *baptisma*, or *baptismos*, anglicized, not translated, *baptism*. The primary means by which the meaning of the word is ascertained are the following:

(1) The ancient lexicons and dictionaries; (2) the ancient and modern translations of the New Testament; (3) the ancient customs of the church; (4) the place and circumstances of baptizing, as mentioned in the New Testament; (5) the allusions to this ordinance and the expositions of it in the apostolic epistles. Each of these shall be briefly considered in the order just named.

The *Ancient Lexicons and Dictionaries*.—The ancient lexicons, with one consent, give *immersion* as the natural, common, and primary sense of this word. There is not a single exception on record. Neither is there a received lexicon, ancient or modern, that ever translates this word by the terms sprinkling or pouring. Since there are but three *actions* considered to be Christian baptism; and as the original words, both verbs and nouns, are translated *immerse* and *immersion*, in all lexicons, and never sprinkle or pour; does it not follow, then, that neither sprinkling nor pouring is Christian baptism?

The question is not, whether these words are ever, like other words, used figuratively; whether they may not *metonymically* mean *wetting* or *washing*, for these may be the effects of either sprinkling, pouring, or dipping. The question is not, whether these words may be so used; but the question is, whether the action commanded in *baptizo* is sprinkling, pouring, or immersing a person. All authorized Greek dictionaries, both ancient and modern, with one consent, affirm that action to be immersion, and not sprinkling or pouring.

*The Ancient and Modern Translations of the New Testament.*—Scholars are united in the affirmation that all Latin, English, German, and French versions of the New Testament sometimes translate these words—*baptisma* or *baptismos*—their derivatives or compounds, by words equivalent to *immersion*; but on *no occasion* ever translate them by sprinkling or pouring, or by any word equivalent to these terms. This is evidence of great importance; for if these versions have nineteen times in twenty been made by those who practice sprinkling or pouring in the name of the Lord; and if these words occur about 120 times in the New Testament, is it not very singular that never once have such translators rendered the words by sprinkling or pouring? Isn't this decisive proof that such a translation was not possible? Indeed, any English student, who has only heard that baptism is a Greek word, can determine for certain that it means neither sprinkling nor pouring by substituting the definition for the term and trying its sense in all places where the ordinance is spoken of. This is an infallible method of interpretation. *The proper definition of a term substituted for it will always make as good sense as the term itself.* Now, if an English reader will try sprinkling or pouring in those places where he finds the word baptism, he will soon discover that neither of these words can possibly represent it if the above proposition is true. For instance, we are told that Judea and Jerusalem went

out to John and were baptized of him in the Jordan. Which gives the proper sense—he sprinkled them in the Jordan; he poured them in the Jordan; or he immersed them in the Jordan? Is it possible for anyone to be in doubt as to which one of these correctly represents the original in such passages? One may sprinkle or pour water upon a person; but to sprinkle or pour them into water is impossible. The passage does not say that he baptized water upon them, but that he baptized them in water in the river.

*The Ancient Customs of the Church.*—The ancient church, it is admitted by all scholars, practiced immersion. This is made abundantly clear by Roman, Greek, and English historians.

*The Place and Circumstances of Baptizing as Mentioned in the New Testament.*—The places where baptism was anciently administered, being rivers, pools, and places of much water, present strong evidence that it was not sprinkling and pouring. They went down *into* the water and came up *out* of it. John the Baptist baptized where there was *much* water. Cf. Matt. 3: 5, 6; John 3: 23. And even Paul and Silas went out of the Philippian jail to baptize the jailer at night rather than send for a cup of water. See Acts 16: 29-34.

*The Allusions to This Ordinance and the Expositions of It in the Apostolic Epistles.*—It is, for example, alluded to and explained under the figure of a burial and resurrection as relating to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. See Rom. 6: 3, 4; Col. 2: 12.

Many clear and conclusive arguments may be drawn from these topics, on which it is not now the purpose of the present study to dwell. If, indeed, any one of these five topics is correct, the action that Christ commands is forever settled. But how much more, when they all concur in asserting the same interpretation! There is, then, but one baptism, and not two, under the Christian administration.

### *The Subject of Baptism*

*Characters*, not *persons*, as such, are the subjects of baptism. Penitent believers—not infants nor adults, not males nor females, not Jews nor Greeks—are the proper subjects of baptism. "But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1: 12, 13.) "He that believeth and is baptized," not he that is baptized and believeth, "shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.) "And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." (Acts 18: 8b.) "And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him." (Heb. 11: 6a.)

### *The Purpose of Baptism*

John the Baptist "came into all the region round about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins." (Luke 3: 3.) "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." (Luke 24: 47.) Therefore, Peter said to the believing Pentecostans, "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." (Acts 2: 38.) "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) See also Rom. 6: 1-7.

Baptism, then, is designed to introduce the subject of it into the participation of the death and resurrection of Christ, who "died for our sins" and "rose again for our justification." But the ordinance has no abstract efficacy. Without previous faith in the blood of Christ, and deep and unfeigned repentance before God, neither immersion in water, nor any other action, can secure to us the blessings of pardon and peace. It merits nothing in and of itself. Still to the believing penitent it is the means of receiving a formal, distinct, and specific absolu-



tion, or release from guilt. Therefore, none but those who have first believed the gospel, the testimony of God, and have repented of their sins, and that have been intelligently baptized into his death, have the full and explicit testimony of God, assuring them of pardon. To such only as are truly penitent, dare we say, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (Acts 22: 16.) And to such only can we say with assurance, "But ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6: 11.)

5. *A Change in the Creed of the Church—the Introduction of Human Creeds*

Even a cursory reading of the New Testament will reveal that the early Christians did not try to reduce their faith to a creedal statement. They did not, as a matter of fact, believe in a written creed at all. Their creed was a person—the living Christ—and they were united in their common religious relation to God through him. However, during the first few centuries after the death of the last apostle, uninspired men, in order to defend themselves against the attacks of heretics, and, as they thought, to preserve the unity of the church, began to reduce the main facts of Christianity, as they conceived them to be, into short creedal statements. This short creed was erroneously called "The Apostles' Creed." For several hundred years it was thought that the apostles of Christ had actually composed it, but later researches have utterly discredited this theory. The following statement should throw some light on this question:

"It is now generally admitted that the creed, in its present form at least, is not of later date than the fourth century, (a) Neither Luke in the Acts of the Apostles nor any ecclesiastical writer before the fifth century makes mention of an assembly of the apostles for the purpose of forming a creed, (b) The fathers of the first

three centuries, in disputing against heretics, endeavored to prove that the doctrines contained in this creed were taught by the apostles, but they never pretended that the apostles composed it. (c) Had the apostles composed it, it would have been the same in all churches and ages. But it is quite otherwise. . . ."—McClintock & Strong, *Cyclopedia*, Vol. II, p. 560.

This creed, translated into English, reads as follows:  
"I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen."—*Ibid.*, p. 559.

The so-called conversion of Constantine to the Christian religion in A.D. 323 was a momentous occasion in the history of Christianity. Thinking that his victory over his rival for the throne at Milvian bridge, under the walls of Rome, was the direct will of the God of the Christians, because he is said to have seen a flaming cross in the heavens, beneath the sun, bearing this inscription, in hoc *signo* unices; that is, "By this sign thou shalt conquer," he adopted Christianity as the religion of the empire. It is further stated, on the same authority, that Christ himself appeared to him the following night and ordered him to take for his standard an imitation of the fiery cross which he had seen. From that time on he converted men by edict, which, of course, was entirely contrary to the method ordained by Jesus as set forth in the New Testament. The union of church and state, which was thus brought about, meant that the old

Roman Empire, dying, should not die, but that it should live on in the Roman Catholic Church. This, incidentally, had a further tendency to consolidate the church under the power of the bishop of Rome.

In A.D. 325 Constantine convened a church council at Nice, in Bithynia, a place easily accessible to the majority of the bishops, especially those of Asia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Greece, and Thrace. A maximum number of 318 bishops is said to have attended, being accompanied by a larger number of presbyters, deacons, and other attendants.

"Various theories have been propounded to explain Constantine's aim in calling this council. By some it is represented as having served a political purpose (based on Eusebius, *Vita Constant*, iii, 4); by others it is regarded as intended to restore quiet in the church, and unite all its parties in the great Trinitarian question on which the church was at that time greatly divided—there existing three parties: one, which may be called the *orthodox* party, held firmly to the doctrine of the deity of Christ; the second was the *Arian* party; and the third, which was in the majority, taking conciliatory or middle ground, and consenting to the use of such christological expressions as all parties could consistently agree upon; they acknowledged the divine nature of Christ in general Biblical terms, but avoided the use of the term *homoousios*, which the Arians described as unscriptural, Sabellian, and materialistic. According to Pusey, 'he (i. e., Constantine) did not understand the doctrine, and attached as much or more importance to uniformity in keeping Easter as to unity of faith. Indeed, he himself at this time believed in no doctrine but that of Providence, and spared no terms of contempt as to the pettiness of the dispute between Alexander and Arius' (*Councils of the Church*, p. 102); yet it would seem that Constantine only called a council when he believed it impossible to restore peace between the contending parties, led re-

spectively by Arius and Alexander, and now turned over the case for settlement to the bishops, who appeared to him to be the representatives of God and Christ, the organs of the Divine Spirit 'that enlightened and guided the church,' and he *appears to* have hoped that when the council assembled, analogous to the established custom of deciding controversies in the single provinces by assemblies composed of all the provincial bishops, they would be able to dispose of the present controversy."—McClinck & Strong, *Cyclopedia*, Vol. II, pp. 44, 45.

One of the results of this council was the adoption of the Nicene Creed, which was destined to become the basis of all the creeds of the so-called Christian world. Thus, we have added to the New Testament order of things a human creed, by which all men who desire to become and be Christians are to be judged. From this time on, a human document is to be the standard of faith. Instead of people believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and being united in their common faith in him and the common experience which the preaching of his life and teaching evoked within them, they are to be judged by an interpretation of him as made by men.

#### 6. *A Change in the Form of Worship—the Addition of Instrumental Music*

No fact connected with Christian worship has been more definitely established than that unaccompanied singing was the only music employed by the early church and authorized by *Christ and* the apostles. There is not a single mention of mechanical instrumental music in the worship of any New Testament congregation, nor in any instance of Christian worship throughout the apostolic age. Its first appearance in history in so-called Christian worship was about the sixth century, A.D., the exact date of its introduction varying in different localities and according to different authorities, but there was no general attempt to introduce it until after the eighth century. Infant baptism, the substitution of sprinkling

and pouring for immersion, the burning of incense, and auricular confession; that is, the confession of sin into *the* ear of the priest, were all introduced before instrumental music, and by the same authority. Furthermore, from the very earliest introduction of this practice, it excited strenuous and prolonged opposition.

Joseph Bingham, the well-known author of *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, and said to be one of the greatest scholars the Church of England has ever produced, says: "Music in churches is as ancient as the apostles, but instrumental music not so." Then, after noticing the use of organs in the churches of the thirteenth century, he continues: "The use of the instrument, indeed, is much ancients, but not in church service. ... In the western parts, the instrument was not so much as known till the eighth century; for the first organ that ever was seen in France was one sent as a present to King Pepin by Constantinus Copronymus, the Greek emperor (an. 766). . . . But, now, it was only used in princes' courts, and not yet brought into churches; nor was it ever received into the Greek churches, there being no mention of an organ in all their Liturgies, ancient or modern."—*Works*, Vol. 2, pp. 482-484, London Ed. as quoted by M. C. Kurfess in *Instrumental Music in the Worship*, pp. 169, 170.

The human heart is the instrument mentioned and authorized by the New Testament for accompanying worship singing—"speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5: 19)—but the wisdom of men saw fit to add to what God has ordained and changed the divine worship to include mechanical instrumental music.

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J. W. Shepherd: *The Church, the Falling, and the Restoration*, pp. 49ff., 54ff. (F. L. Rowe, Publisher, Cincinnati, Ohio.)

G. K. Berry: *The Eight Leading Churches*, p. 18ff. (Pub-

lished by the author, 1330 East Salmon Street, Portland, Oregon.)

Jesse R. Kellems: *The Resurrection Gospel*, p. 260ff. (The Standard Publishing Company, Cincinnati, Ohio.)

A. Campbell: *The Christian System*, p. 58ft\*. (Christian Board of Publication, St. Louis, Missouri.)

M. C. Kurfees: *Instrumental Music in the Worship*, p. 21 (Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, Tennessee.)

### Part III

## THE REFORMATION\*

### Rev. 10: 1-11

Introduction: (1) The history of the Roman Catholic Church is one of continual corruption, both in doctrine and practice, and by the sixteenth century the corruption was so deep and widespread that further degradation seemed impossible. Apostolic order and ordinances had given place to those of the "man of sin," and "the mystery of lawlessness" stood out in full review. (2) However, notwithstanding all this, there were forces at work in different parts of Europe moving on to conflict and reform that were destined to break the all but universal sway of the papacy. Among them were the invention of printing, the revival of learning, and the enlarged acquaintance with and respect for the Scriptures. (3) Measured by the standard of the New Testament, the Reformation was far from what the apostles left, yet under existing conditions, it was probably the best that human beings could do. John Wycliffe, who flourished in the latter part of the fourteenth century, is popularly called the "Morning Star of the Reformation," and he, together with others, such as John Huss, to a large extent, paved the way for the great work that was later done, yet our study proper will begin with the early part of the sixteenth century, and will center around the work of five men—viz.:

#### I. Martin Luther

This great man was born in Eisleben, Germany, on November 10, 1483. His parents were poor, but they placed a high value upon religion and education. His father, Hans Luther, was in some ways a very kindhearted

•Or The Origin of the Churches.





































































































