

# *Age of Enquiry,*

*The Christian's*  
**Pocket Companion**  
AND  
DAILY ASSISTANT;

**CALCULATED ALSO FOR THE**  
BENEFIT OF THE RISING GENERATION, IN LEADING  
THEM INTO TRUTH.

By ELIAS SMITH

**Him shall ye hear in all things—*Peter.***  
Train up a child in the way he should go,—*Solomon.*

Part of the  
**Jimmie Beller**  
**Memorial eLibrary**  
[www.TheCobbSix.com](http://www.TheCobbSix.com)

*EXETER:*  
Published by Abel Brown  
1825

**Contents**

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.....3  
    To Ministers, Saints of Every Denomination, Parents And  
    Children. .... 3  
A DIALOGUE BETWEEN AN ENQUIRER AND A  
CHRISTIAN.....6  
SECOND ENQUIRY ..... 9  
    Concerning The Church Of Christ,   Called “Christians.” ..... 9  
THIRD ENQUIRY ..... 12  
    Concerning The Rule   For Christians To Walk By. .... 12  
FOURTH ENQUIRY ..... 15  
    Concerning Baptism..... 15  
FIFTH ENQUIRY ..... 19  
    Concerning The Lord's Supper. .... 19  
SIXTH ENQUIRY ..... 20  
    Concerning The Officers In Christ’s Church. .... 20  
SEVENTH ENQUIRY ..... 23  
    Concerning What Christ’s Ministers Preached To The World,  
    Being Sent By Him ..... 23  
EIGHTH ENQUIRY ..... 25  
    Concerning Public Worship ..... 25  
NINTH ENQUIRY ..... 26  
    Concerning The Meaning Of The Word Bishop. .... 26  
    **THE Age of Enquiry *PART II.***  
    1. Ancient and Modern Things concerning Ministers. .... 30  
    2. Ancient And Modern Things Concerning Baptism. .... 51  
    3. Ancient And Modern Things Concerning Churches. .... 58  
A SERMON, ..... 63  
    On The Sacred Import of The Word “Christian.” ..... 63

## INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

### ***To Ministers, Saints of Every Denomination, Parents And Children.***

HISTORIANS mention the Golden age, the Silver age, the Brass age, the Iron age, besides these, we have had, the Popish age, the Episcopal age, the Presbyterian age, the Congregational age, the Baptist age, the Methodist age, and the Hopkinsian age.

There has been times, when some one of these have for a while triumphed over all the rest; either by ruling the others, or in boasting that their arguments were best supported from scripture. Among the rest, one age, improperly called, "*the age of reason*" has, in swift succession passed by those of the present generation with the other ages. These ages are behind all of the present day; excepting those who have the disadvantage of having their eyes the back side of their heads, instead of having them below their foreheads.

At such a time as this, when multitudes are looking forward for something better than can be found in any of the above named ages; can it be amiss to begin another age, "The Age of Enquiry," to enquire into what is wrong and leave it behind, and enquire what is right, and possess it forever? I think this is worthy of being attended to by all of the present generation.

I here mention a few particulars to shew the propriety of an age of enquiry.

1. It is the command of God—Ezek. 36:37, Thus saith the Lord, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel,

2. The prophets are an example for us in this, 1 Pet. 1:10, "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired, and searched diligently."

3. It is a direction of one of the prophets, Isa. 21:12, "The watchman said, the morning cometh and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."

4. There is a way for us to enquire to advantage, that is, in the word of God, 1 Kings, 22:5. "And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, enquire, I pray thee, at the word of the Lord to day.

Those who wish for more encouragement to begin the age of enquiry than these four things given are requested to begin their *enquiry* after truth in the scriptures of truth, and they will find a reward in proportion as they *enquire* at the word of the Lord Jesus.

I close this introduction, with an address to four classes of people.

1. To Ministers of the gospel, of every denomination.—Brethren, you must be sensible that there is at this day a want of that oneness which Christ prayed for, among those who give considerable evidence of being called to preach the gospel of Christ. This gives the world occasion to think that the Father has not sent the Son; and that the Son has not sent those who say they are Christ's ministers. This we all know is the case in our day. On this account there is great need of our entering into an enquiry, to know the cause of this. I think one great difficulty among ministers is this; endeavoring to prove different things from the scriptures. There is but one doctrine true, and that is plainly revealed.

The only remedy I can think of in this affair is, not to search for proof for one thing or another for that truth which is there revealed. To do this we must lay aside everything of our own, and all the commands and doctrines of men, hear Christ in all things, and be willing to be the ministers of Christ without any human *isms*, or *ians* connected with it. In this way, we shall be united, and in no other. All such I invite into the present age of enquiry, to endeavor to enquire wisely, concerning this thing.

2. To Saints of every denomination.—Beloved brethren, of the great family of our Lord Jesus the everlasting Father; Jesus has named all his family after himself—Christian is the name by which he has called his Children, and this is the name you ought to own. In this name, we may all agree, but we can never all agree in the names which have been given us in Mystery Babylon. These are what makes the confusion in the present day, and this confusion will never cease, till all the party names cease, by which saints are called. I do not recommend this little book to you as a rule; but as an index, pointing you to the rule Christ has given for Christians. Remember, my brethren, that all who are born again belong to Christ's Church; and are members of his family; as such, it is our duty to love each other. As Christ has made us one, let us not be divided by human doctrines, or names; but endeavor to keep the

unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." Whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. As many as walk according to this rule, peace be unto them."

3. To Parents.—My friends, the charge committed to us as parents is great, as it respects the bodies and souls of our children, To attend to their bodies is something, to their minds is still greater. Need I tell you the importance of teaching your children right? You are commanded by the apostle to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; you cannot do this, without teaching them the word of God.

A certain Deist who denied the scripture as a revelation from God; was one day teaching his children the new testament; a friend coming in said, "I wonder at your teaching your children that book." Said the Deist, "What can I teach them that is better than this book?" True. As you believe it true, do not neglect to teach it to them. If you find this little book of any service to them, in understanding some of the excellencies of that blessed rule, let them read it instead of the catechisms which abound with contradictions, and impossibilities. When that was written, it was as far as the people had advanced from popery: but shall we keep the minds of our children back to the attainments of two or three hundred years past, when there is so much greater light in the present day? This is not doing them a kindness. Teach them the fear of the Lord, and not the commandments of men.

4. To Children.—Dear Children of the present day. God has favored you beyond any who have gone before you, you are early taught to read the scripture. As that contains an account of the birth, life, death, resurrection, and reign of him who said suffer little children to come unto me; be entreated to read his word, learn what he requires of you; so you will obey your parents, live happy, die blessed, rise glorious, and live forever with Christ in heaven.

May God Almighty bless Ministers, Saints, Parents, Children, and let the whole earth be filled with his praise. Amen.

## A DIALOGUE BETWEEN AN ENQUIRER AND A CHRISTIAN.

*Enquirer*—Sir, what name do you bear as a professor of religion?

*Christian*—My name is recorded in Acts, 11:26, “And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”

*Enquirer*—Did the apostles own the followers of Christ by that name in their day?

*Christian*—Yes. Peter says, 1 Epistle 4:19, “Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”

*Enquirer*—Did the apostles consider the name of Christ the most worthy and honorable of all names for his followers to be called by?

*Christian*—They surely did. James, Chap. 4:7, “Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? Paul says, Eph. 1:21, “Far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.” Phil. 2:9. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.” *Enquirer*.—Did Christ ever promise to give his name to his followers?

*Christian*—Yes. He says, Rev. 2:17, “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.” Chap. 3:12, “And I will write upon him my new name.”

*Enquirer*—*Did*. Christ authorize his disciples to gather together in his name?

*Christian*—Yes. He says, Matt. 18:20, “For, where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

*Enquirer*—What is required of those who name the name of Christ, or are called Christians?

*Christian*—Paul says, 2 Tim. 2:19, “Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

*Enquirer*—Why do you prefer that name to all others by which

professors are called?

**Christian**—Because, First, Peter says, Acts 4:12, “Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Second, because all other names will come to nothing, but this will endure forever. David says, Psalm 72:17, “His name shall endure forever, his name shall be continued as long as the sun.” Third, Because Christ’s name is the one I was baptized in, according to what Peter says, Acts 2:38, “Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” Fourth, Because his name is the one through which I have life. John 20:20, “And that believing ye might have life through his name.”

**Enquirer**—Is there any important meaning to the name Christian?

**Christian**—Yes. Christ signifies God’s anointed. It is said in Acts 4:26, 27, “The kings of the earth stood up and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ, for, of a truth, against thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles.” God anointed his Son to be a prophet to teach, a priest to intercede, and a king to rule; and a Christian signifies one taught by Christ, prayed for by Christ, and ruled by him; and one who believes and hears him in all things.

**Enquirer** —Are there any prophecies which mention that professors of religion should be called by this new name?

**Christian**—Yes. I remember two, Isa. 52:2, “And thou shalt be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord shall name.” Chap. 65:15, “For the Lord God shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name.”

**Enquirer**— How do you know that the name Christian was given by the Lord and not by his enemies?

**Christian**—I know by this, that the name agrees with the prophecies, with the new testament, and with Christ’s new *name*; had it been given by Christ’s enemies they would not have given them the right name; but would lied in calling them wrong. Moses says, Deut. 33:29, “And thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee.”

**Enquirer**—What will you do with all the different names by

which professors of religion are called, in the present day, such as Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Methodist, Baptist, Freewiller, Quaker, Universalist, Lutheran, Calvinist, Hopkinsian, Arminian, &c. &c.

**Christian**—I will leave them to those who love such *antichristian* names more than the name of Christ, and consider them the name of the beast, instead of the Lamb; according to what is said in Rev. 13:17, 18, “And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man, and his number *is* six hundred three score and six.”

**Enquirer**—Your answers concerning your name are so scriptural and reasonable, that I am fully convinced of the propriety of rejecting all other names for the name of Christ only.

**Christian**—Blessed be the Lord who has shewed you and me a name which will do to name, to trust in, to bow in, to ask in, to gather in: which will endure forever, and be continued so long as the sun. Amen and amen.



## SECOND ENQUIRY

### ***Concerning The Church Of Christ, Called "Christians."***

**Enquirer**—Sir, though I am satisfied concerning your name, yet there are several things more which I wish to enquire after. The first is your belief concerning the church of Christ?

**Christian**—I am ready to answer you from the same book where the name is recorded, which you have asked after.

**Enquirer**—What is the meaning of the word church, in the New Testament?

**Christian**—The word signifies a company of believers in Christ, whether male or female, who are born again of the spirit.

**Enquirer**—What is the foundation of Christ's church?

**Christian**—Jesus Christ is the only foundation, Paul says, 1 Cor. 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Christ says, Matt. 18:18, "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

**Enquirer**—I have observed in the New Testament the words church, house, household, family, general assembly, body and kingdom, I wish to know if these words all mean one thing?

**Christian**—These different words all mean one company of people. I will here place them together, that you may see how they agree in one. The first word you mentioned is church. The first time this word is mentioned in the Bible, is in Matt. 16:18. "And upon this rock will I build my church." The next word is house. That the word *house* means the same as church, is plain from 1 Tim. 3:16. "But if I tarry long, that thou may know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." In this verse the house of God is said to be the church of the living God. That the words house and household, mean the same, is plain from Eph. 2:19. "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." In this verse Paul calls the saints the household of God. In chap. 3:10, he calls the household the church. That the word family means the

same as the church, house, and household, is plain. In chapter iii verse 15, he calls the church, the family: "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." That the words "general assembly," mean the church of Christ, is plain, from Heb. 12:23, "To the general assembly, and church of the first born, which are written in heaven." In this verse, the general assembly is called the church of the first born, this first born means Christ. That the word body means the church, is plain, from Eph. 1:22, 23, "And gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body." In this verse the church is said to be Christ's body. This is plain. That the word kingdom means the church, is plain, from Matt. 16:18, 19, "And upon this rock will I build my church." "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." What is called the church in one verse, is called the kingdom of heaven in the next.

**Enquirer**—These things appear plain to me as you have stated them from the scriptures, and now will you tell me how people come into the church of Christ?

**Christian**—They come in by being born of the spirit; or they are born into the kingdom. Christ says, John 3:5, "Verily, verily I say unto you, except a man be born of water, and the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." To be born of water means a natural birth: to be born of the spirit means a spiritual birth. This agrees with what Paul says, Col. 1:13, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son." This birth means a change of situation, a being brought from one kingdom to another, through faith in Christ.

**Enquirer**—But, are not people, according to the scriptures, baptized into the church?

**Christian**—No. Men do not obey laws before they come into a kingdom; but obey laws after they come into the kingdom, that they may enjoy the privileges of the kingdom. If people are baptized into the church, then men add them, but the Bible says, Acts 2:57. "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

**Enquirer**—The scriptures mention one church in several places, and in some places mention is made of churches, how does this agree with the other places which speak of only one church?

**Christian**—When the word churches is mentioned, it means

the different companies of brethren, in different cities, who were all under the government of Christ, the head of the whole body of believers: called the whole family in heaven and earth.

## THIRD ENQUIRY

### *Concerning The Rule For Christians To Walk By.*

*Enquirer*—SIR, having received satisfactory answers to my former enquiries, I wish to make a further enquiry concerning Christ's church. I wish to know what rule the church of Christ are to walk by?

*Christian*—The rule given by Christ is the New Testament, where his will is made known in plain words.

*Enquirer*—Is not the Old Testament to be considered as a rule with the new?

*Christian*—No: for there is no man on earth who can walk by both, they are different from each other, as life and death. Paul says, 2 Cor. 3:6. "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but: of the spirit, for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Paul calls the Old Testament the ministration of death, verse 7; the New he calls the ministration of the spirit. The old, he says, is done away, the new remains.

*Enquirer*—What do you mean by the Old Testament?

*Christian*—I mean the law given by Moses, or all from Genesis to the last chapter of Deuteronomy. In Christ's time he divided the scriptures which the Jews had, into three parts, the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms. Luke 24:44.

*Enquirer*—Do you think that it is our duty to hear Christ in everything, and to believe and do no more than what he has left us in die New Testament?

*Christian*—I certainly do, and I will give you a reason for it. Moses says, Deut. 18:15, 18, 19, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me: unto him shall ye hearken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all I shall command him; and it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken - unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." That this prophet means Christ, whom we are to hear in all things, is plain from the New Testament. Peter says, Acts 3:22,

23. "For Moses truly said unto the fathers: a prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me: him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." When Christ was transfigured, it is said, Matt. 17:5, "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and, he heard a voice out of the cloud, which said, this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him. Paul says, Heb. 1:1, 2, "God who at sundry times, and in divers manners; spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son." Chap. 12:25. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for if they escaped not who refused him who spake on earth," [meaning Moses] "much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." This means Christ, who came down from heaven, to speak what he had received of him that sent him. Here is enough to convince us that we all ought to attend to what Christ has said in the New Testament.

**Enquirer**—How do you consider what is commonly called the old testament?

**Christian**—I consider the law of Moses done away in Christ, as the light of the moon is done away by the light of the sun, according to what Paul says, 2 Cor. 3:11, "For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." The law of Moses (excepting what is brought into the Testament) is not now binding on the Jews nor Gentiles. That law prophesied until John, and foretold a great sacrifice to come. Matt. 11:13, "For all the prophets, and the law prophesied until John."

**Enquirer**—How do you consider the prophecies from Isaiah to Malachi?

**Christian**—I consider many of them accomplished, and the rest to be yet fulfilled: when I read those which are fulfilled, they strengthen my faith in what is contained in the New Testament; when I find that the prophets prophesied of these days.

**Enquirer**—How do you consider the Psalms?

**Christian**—Part of the Psalms I consider to be prophecies, and part the experience of ancient saints, and all profitable in our day, being written for our learning: and while I have this belief of the ancient writings, I still believe that all I am required to believe and

do, is contained in the book called the New Testament, and that there is no command of ordinance in the Old Testament binding on a Christian, unless it is in the New Testament, any more than though it had never been commanded.

***Enquirer***—As you have stated the things, it appears consistent and reasonable, but I wish your mind now concerning several things contained in the New Testament.

***Christian***—This I am ready to do when you state your enquiries.

## FOURTH ENQUIRY

### *Concerning Baptism.*

*Enquirer*—SIR, as you mentioned something concerning baptism, be so kind as to tell me what the New Testament says concerning that command. What is the origin of it?

*Christian*—The origin of baptism is from heaven. Christ says, Mark 11:30, “The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? Answer me.” Baptism was a command from heaven, and John was the first who baptized, and on this account was called “the baptist.” He was the only baptist ever in the world.

*Enquirer*—Was John’s baptism gospel baptism?

*Christian*—Yes, for there never was any baptism commanded before. It is said, Mark 1:1, 4, 5, “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the son of God. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.”

*Enquirer*—What is the mode of baptism according to the New Testament?

*Christian*—The mode is a burial in water. Paul says, Rom. 6:4. “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death.” Col. 2:12. “Buried with him in baptism.”

*Enquirer*—Are there any other places in the New Testament, which leads you to think that people were buried in water when they were baptized?

*Christian*—Yes, the places where they were baptized, and. the manner in which the New Testament says they were baptized, prove that they were buried in baptism. When Christ was baptized, it is said, Matt. 3:16, “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.” It is said, Mark 1:5, “And were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan.” It is said of Philip and the Eunuch, Acts 8:38, 39, “And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.” These places shew as plainly as words can express it, that they went down into the water, and came up out of the water. Had

they gone to a meeting house, and sprinkled them: surely it would not have been recorded in this manner.

**Enquirer**—What is the first and simple meaning of the word *baptism*?

**Christian**—The word *baptism*, is from the Greek. The native Greeks must understand their own language better than foreigners: they have always understood the word to signify *dipping*, and to this day they have baptized by immersion. Their practice is a true and certain explanation of the word. The translators never translated the word, had they done this, there would have been no dispute about baptism. The word signifies two things: to dip, and color, as a dyer dips a piece of cloth, to give it another color. When Christ was baptized, he was not only immersed in water: but distinguished from all other men on earth by a voice from heaven, which said, “This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.” When John and the apostles baptized any, they were by that distinguished from all other men on earth.

**Enquirer**—What is the real design of that baptism commanded in the Testament?

**Christian**—There are several things designed by it. First, it is meant to shew the believer’s faith in Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. When Peter preached Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection, to the Jews, they asked him what they should do. Acts 2:38. “Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.” He called them to repent of their sins, and to be baptized, to prove that they believed in him that was risen from the dead.

Second. Baptism is appointed for a believer to shew, that he is dead to his former life, and that he is commanded to live a new life. Rom. 6:4, “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” In this verse anew life is mentioned. Third. Baptism is meant to shew the believers faith in his own death, burial, and resurrection at the last day. Col. 2:12, “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” According to this, the believer shews in being baptized, that he believes God will at last operate on his body, and raise it out of the grave, as it is raised out of the



water after he has been buried in baptism. This agrees with what Paul has said in Rom. 6:5, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."

**Enquirer**—Are any required to be baptized but believers in Christ?

**Christian**—These are the only persons who are required to submit to this command. Christ has said, Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

**Enquirer**—How do you know that Christ meant that men must believe in him, before they were baptized?

**Christian**—The conduct of the apostles in obeying Christ's command, is a certain explanation of his command to them to teach and baptize. When Peter preached repentance and baptism after Christ ascended, it is said, Acts 2:41, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized." Acts 8:12, "But when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men & women." This shews that they believed first. When the Eunuch asked Philip, what hindered his being baptized: he said to him, verse 37, "If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,"—"And he baptized him."

Cornelius was a believer, and he and his family and friends had received the holy ghost. Peter said, Acts 10:47, 48, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the holy ghost as well as we?" The Jailor and all his house were believers and were baptized as such; Acts 16:33, 34, "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway, and when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." When Paul preached at Corinth, those who were baptized were all believers. Acts 18:8, "And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house, and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized." All the new testament agrees with these places concerning believers being the only persons who ought to be baptized.

**Enquirer**—Is there anything to engage a believer to submit to

this command?

**Christian**—Yes, there are several things: first the example of Christ, who was baptized in the river Jordan for an example, and in his baptism says, “Follow me.” Second, it is a command of Christ to imitate him in this glorious ordinance of heaven. Third, a believer in obeying this command has the example of all the followers of Jesus in ancient times. Fourth, he has a promise of happiness in obeying, from him who has said, “If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them.”—

**Enquirer**—As baptism stands so plain in the new testament, what shall we think of those ministers who deny the propriety of this baptism?

**Christian**—We must conclude they are either very ignorant men, or very great liars; for no man can read the new testament and then honestly say infant sprinkling is a command of Christ in the new testament; for there is neither precept nor example of it, nor for it in the whole Bible: but is a human invention, a command and doctrine of men which will soon perish in the using.

## FIFTH ENQUIRY

### *Concerning The Lord's Supper.*

*Enquirer*—WHAT is meant by the Lord's Supper in the New Testament?

*Christian*—It is an appointment of Christ, for his followers to show forth his death till he comes: consisting of broken bread and wine. We are told when he appointed it, Matt. 26:26, 27, 28, 29, "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

*Enquirer*—Have the apostles written anything concerning the Lord's Supper?

*Christian*—Yes, Paul has mentioned it. 1 Cor. 11:23, 24, 25, 26, "For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night, in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood, this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death 'till he come."

*Enquirer*—Is there any place in the new testament, which proves that the churches in the time of the apostles did attend to this Supper?

*Christian*—Yes, there are several accounts of it, Acts 2:46, "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart." Acts 20:7, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them."

*Enquirer*—Who ought to attend to this command?

*Christian*—None but believers in Christ who love him and keep his commandments.—

## SIXTH ENQUIRY

### *Concerning The Officers In Christ's Church.*

*Enquirer*—WHAT officers has Christ appointed in his church?

*Christian*—At the first building of the church there were in it, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers, these were in office for the good of the whole. Paul says, Eph. 4:11, “And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers.” At the present, there are no apostles, nor prophets in the church. Evangelists and pastors are still in the church. The evangelists are men called to travel and preach, pastors are called to labor more particularly in the church: each of these are called to

preach and baptize. Besides these, there is an office which respects the temporal affairs of the church, these are called Deacons, or church treasurers. 1 Tim. 3:8, “Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, and let these also first be proved, then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.”

*Enquirer*—Where is the first account of these affairs?

*Christian*—In Acts 6:1-3, 5, the occasion of their being appointed was this, the poor widows in the church were neglected of their daily administration, and the apostles thinking it wrong to leave preaching to attend to these things, appointed seven men to attend to such business, that they might attend wholly to preaching the word. Besides these officers there are others who are called to improve in the church by exhortation, prayer, helping, and governing according to the rule given them by Christ the head of the church.

*Enquirer*—In what manner are these officers appointed in the church?

*Christian*—The account of their being appointed or ordained, and the manner in which it is to be done, is recorded in the New Testament. Paul says Titus 1:5, “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I have appointed thee.” Acts 14:23.

“And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed.” Whenever a man is appointed to preach, he is then ordained.

**Enquirer**—Who ordained the officers in the first church?

**Christian**—The apostles were ordained by Christ; Mark 3:14, “And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,” John 15:16, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.” Matthias was ordained by the church, Acts 1:23, “One must be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.” Barnabas and Saul were ordained by the church in Antioch. Acts 13:1, 2, 3, “Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the holy ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.” The elders in the church at Antioch in Pisidia, were ordained by Paul and Barnabas, Acts 14:23, “And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they believed.” The elders in Crete were ordained by Titus. Titus 1:5, “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.”

**Enquirer**—According to this account who ought to ordain elders in the churches, or to travel and preach?

**Christian**—The right of ordaining belongs to the church, and every minister whom the church appoints to ordain others.

**Enquirer**—In what manner were elders ordained according to the New Testament?

**Christian**—It was done in a church meeting, by fasting, prayer, and laying hands on them, with giving them the hands of fellowship. The account of those who were ordained to travel and preach is recorded in Acts 13:3,

“And when they had fasted, and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.” The manner of elders being ordained in the church at Antioch, is recorded in Acts 14:23,

“And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had

prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed.” This is the simple account of ordaining elders in the New Testament, which is as different from common ordination as Christ is from Antichrist.

**Enquirer**—What do you think of the manner of ministers being ordained among the different denominations at the present day?

**Christian**—I think and know it to be a part of the man of sin, which belongs to mystery Babylon; the great whore which sitteth on many waters. How different is the practice from the scriptures! A council, a feast, instead of a fast, a Popish parade, a pompous sermon, a flashy charge, and a formal hand of fellowship, with many other highly esteemed abominations; such as installing, reorganizing, investing, and an abundance of such trumpery, which is not confined to the Romish, Episcopalian, and Congregational clergy, but has even extended itself to the Baptist clergy, who have mingled themselves among the heathens, and learnt their ways.

**Enquirer**—How are the deacons ordained or appointed to their work?

**Christian**—The deacons were ordained by prayer and laying on of hands. Acts 6:6, “Whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.”

## SEVENTH ENQUIRY

### *Concerning What Christ's Ministers Preached To The World, Being Sent By Him*

*Enquirer*—I WISH to know what the ministers of Christ preached to the world, and what they now ought to preach, to obey what Christ commands them?

*Christian*—The substance of the doctrine of Christ which he commanded his ministers to preach to the inhabitants of the earth, is contained in six particulars; called the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Heb. 6:1-2:

1. Repentance from dead works
2. Faith towards God
3. Doctrine of baptisms
4. Laying on of hands
5. Resurrection of the dead
6. Eternal judgment.

The ministers of Christ in ancient days told the wicked, they must repent of their wickedness, they told the unbelieving to believe, they told the believers to be baptized, they laid their hands on the baptized and they received the Holy Ghost; they told those who received the Holy Ghost, that they should rise at the resurrection of the just that they should stand in the judgment, and live forever afterwards. They told the world that if they remained impenitent and unbelieving, God would raise them at the resurrection of the unjust, and call them to an account at the day of judgment, and there punish them with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power.

*Enquirer*—Were they commanded to preach these things to all men?

*Christian*—Yes, to all without exception: Christ said, “Preach the gospel to every creature.” “Now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent.”

*Enquirer*—What were they to preach to those who were believers?

*Christian*—What is recorded in the New Testament directed to the saints, which is summed up in this, “to live soberly, righteous-

ly, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ.



## EIGHTH ENQUIRY

### *Concerning Public Worship*

**Enquirer**—In what manner are the disciples of Christ to attend the public worship of God?

**Christian**—The first thing concerning public worship, is assembling together. This is enjoined in Heb. 10:25, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.” The design of meeting together, is

1. To glorify God
2. To edify each other
3. To benefit those who do not believe.

This is to be done by preaching, praying, singing, exhorting, reproving, rebuking, and admonishing one another.

**Enquirer**—Is there not some particular form laid down in the New Testament, to be attended to in every public meeting?

**Christian**—No. The order is this, to do that which is most to edification when we come together. If it is most to edification to have all praying, or preaching, or singing, or exhorting, or some of all these: this is the order of the meeting. All are allowed to speak one by one, when it is to edification. Paul says, 1 Cor. 14:26, “How is it then, brethren, when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation? Let all things be done unto edifying.”

**Enquirer**—How are churches gathered according to the New Testament?

**Christian**—*They* are gathered by Christ. When any number are born again, whether two or more, and are united in love, they are a church, according to the New Testament. The minister’s duty is to baptize them, acknowledge them a church of Christ, and they to consider themselves so, and as such to walk according to the New Testament, and as manly as walk according to this rule, peace to them and the Israel of God. Having a council to constitute a church, giving them articles of faith, and making them a church, is a part of mystery Babylon, there is not one word for the practice in the New Testament.

## NINTH ENQUIRY

### *Concerning The Meaning Of The Word Bishop.*

**Enquirer**—WHAT is the meaning of the word bishop in the New Testament?

**Christian**—This word signifies an overseer, or one appointed to attend to what belongs to another. It is applied, First, To Christ. 2nd. To his ministers. Christ is called the bishop in 1 Pet. 2:25, “For we were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls.” Christ as man. is an overseer or bishop under his father, “Head over all things.” He has the whole command of the church, and all orders respecting the church comes from him as the bishop of souls. Under this great bishop are other bishops appointed by him, to oversee what belongs to the universal bishop Jesus Christ. The word bishop when applied to men means the same as an elder. All elders are bishops, no one is above another, all are brethren. This name given to the ministers of Christ, is to shew, that their work is to watch over, care for, and instruct their brethren. The New Testament does not admit any to this office except he be blameless, the husband of one wife, if married at all, vigilant, Sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler, nor covetous.” 1 Tim. 3, Titus 1. The office of bishop is not above that of a pastor, but in the three first centuries every pastor was considered a bishop.

**Enquirer**—How are we to consider Christ as bishop, and his ministers *bishops* under?

**Christian**—The universal bishop, Jesus, has the whole command, and as such, has given directions to his ministers and the saints in the New Testament. This book contains all he requires of all his followers. The *bishops* are there directed what to preach, what to tell the world, and the saints; and are commanded not to add anything to it, nor keep back any part of what is there enjoined.

**Enquirer**—Will you illustrate this by a similitude?

**Christian**—Yes. The government of the *bishop* of Rome, the

*bishop* of England, or the government of the *bishop* of the Methodists, will serve as a similitude, for they are all antichristian governments, being exactly in opposition to that of the great bishop Jesus Christ. As the government of the Methodist bishop is more known in this country than any of the others, I will use this as a similitude. In this government the *bishop* is over all the Methodist ministers, and all the Methodist people—he gives the ministers their orders, and the orders for the people to attend to—the people are accountable to the *bishop*, so are the ministers. The bishop is accountable to that authority which made him so—the ministers receive from the *bishop*, a book of rules, called a discipline, for themselves and the people: if a minister, or any of the people, refuse to comply with what is required there, the bishop turns them out of the government.

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is bishop over all the saints, as the Methodist bishop is over all the Methodists. As the Methodist ministers are under the command of the *bishop*, to preach what he says, and where he says: so the ministers of Christ are bound to preach what he commands, when and where he says, and the people are bound to hear and obey what Christ says by his ministers, who are *bishops* under him.

**Enquirer**—If this is the case, what need is there of these *bishops* over other ministers?

**Christian**—There is no need of them, they are the cause of divisions and contentions, among the saints, because, instead of being where Christ's ministers ought to be, they have, and are claiming that power, which belongs only to Christ; and these forms of government will finally come to nothing, when ministers and all believers are willing to be where and what Christ commands them to be.

**Enquirer**—What is the difference between the words dipping, pouring, and sprinkling in the Greek language.

**Christian**—The word which dipping come from is Baptizantes. Pouring comes from the word, Proschusin. Sprinkling comes from the word, Rantizosa. All the learned know that these three words are used to express these three different actions, dipping, pouring, and sprinkling. Those who contradict this, are either ignorant of the original words, or not men of truth.

**Enquirer**—Is there any such word as Trinity mentioned in the

New Testament?

**Christian**—No. It is an unscriptural word, invented to express something not mentioned in the word of God. This, with the words *sacrament, depravity, morality, chaplain, doctor of divinity, reverend, parson, divine*, etc. ought to be laid aside by the ministers of Christ, and all his followers, as unwholesome words, and not the words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Enquirer**—I wish you to state to me the New Testament form of ordaining an elder, to the work of the ministry.

**Christian**—This I will do in the following-particulars:1. The church agree that Christ has called him to the work. —2. In a church meeting the elder, or elders, in behalf of the church, lay their hands on him and pray, according to Acts 13:3. “And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”—3. The elders give the hands of fellowship; if there is only one elder he gives the hand of fellowship; according to Gal. 2:9, “And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.” This is the most we can find concerning ordaining elders in the New Testament. All more than this belongs to the commandments and doctrines of men, which are all to perish in the using.

**Enquirer**—I am fully satisfied concerning these things, which you have mentioned, and while I compare them with human doctrines, rules, and practices, it appears to me that the difference must be very great; and I now wish you to contrast the ancient things in the new testament, concerning ministers, baptism, and churches, that all may see the difference.

**Christian**—This I am ready to do, and this shall be a second part of your enquiry.

THE

*Age of Enquiry*

*PART II.*

*Ancient and Modern Things Contrasted.*

# ***1. Ancient and Modern Things concerning Ministers.***

## **ANCIENT.**

*And how shall they preach, except they be sent? Rom. 10:15.*

ACCORDING to the Apostle's declaration in this chapter, a man must be sent of Christ to preach his gospel. The question in the text supposes, that a man cannot preach who is not sent of God for that purpose. A man who is sent of God is one who loves him; a man who loves God is born of God; every natural man is a hater of God, and therefore is not sent of him to preach.

No man can be sent of God unless he understands the nature of the Gospel, which is good news to sinful, wretched men; to understand this, a man must be an experimental sharer in the blessings of the gospel; "the husbandman must first be a partaker of the fruits of the earth." The same power which brought light out of darkness, enlightens the mind of the man who is sent of God to preach; "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." A man without regeneration can no more preach the gospel of the grace of God, than a blind man can judge of colors, or a deaf man teach music.

## **MODERN.**

*And how can they preach except they are sent to college?*

THIS text contains the modern doctrine of clerical qualifications to preach college gospel; this is a point which the clergy have contended for many years. It has been said by them that no man can be a preacher, unless he has a college education; but they prove their own doctrine false of late; for they begin to ordain those who have not a college education, and according to this, it is false that a man cannot preach without a college education: that no more qualifies a man to preach the gospel than a man's working with a barber qualifies him to make watches. The fact is, the clergy meant to have it so that no man should pretend to preach unless he was sent to the college, and from the college sent to them, and by them sent to impose on a whole town, who should be obliged to support them for life, because they had spent their money for that

purpose. A clergyman was once asked this question: Can a converted man preach the gospel without a college education? He answered, No. Can he preach the gospel if he has a liberal education without regeneration? he answered, Yes.

### ANCIENT.

*Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit, for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. 2 Cor. 3:6.*

THE same Apostle who asks the question, how can they preach except they be sent? in this text tells us what kind of ministers those are whom Christ sends, and how they are made.

“Who also hath made us able ministers.” Jesus Christ makes his ministers; states and kingdoms make theirs; and the Devil makes his. Christ’s ministers are endowed with natural and spiritual abilities from him: they are ministers of the New Testament; they are blessed with a New Testament spirit; preach the Mediator of the New Testament; New Testament doctrine, ordinances, church and practice. The effect of their preaching is life to their hearers; the New Testament is spirit and life, and where it is preached with the spirit it giveth life to those who are dead in trespasses and sins. The Apostles considered the Old Testament done away" in Christ; and to preach that was to reject the New, and to seek to be justified by the deeds of the law, and not by grace.

### MODERN.

*Which (the college) also hath made us popular ministers of Morality: not of the spirit but of the letter, for the spirit giveth life, but the letter killeth.*

THIS text will naturally lead the clergy to remember their Creator, (the college) or at least their birth place: it may be said of many, “this and that man was born there.” One Clergyman said “that Cambridge college was the river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God.” From that time to this, the clergy pray that from this fountain may annually flow streams (that is, ministers) to make glad the city of God; but that place is more like a *Volcano* which annually vomits columns of fire and hot lava, which makes

every green thing die, and proves destruction to all around. The fountain is *Moralitism*, and the streams are worse if possible. However, these ministers are popular, for by reading Morality, they keep people in ignorance by this dark veil, and there is no life in the ministers, nor much, if any, in the people. They oppose the New Testament preachers, knowing, that the Lord owns them, in giving life to many through their preaching.

### ANCIENT.

*For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.* Gal. 1:12.

FROM this passage we learn that those ministers who are sent by Christ, and are made able ministers of the New Testament, do not receive it from man, neither are they taught the nature of it by man; but by the instruction of that Spirit which leads into all truth. The gospel is spiritual, and therefore cannot be known by any without the Spirit. No man knoweth the things of God, but by the Spirit of God. *“The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* In this way all the ministers of Christ received an understanding of spiritual things in ancient times; that being the true way then, it must be the only way now; a man might as well learn Latin or Greek from one who never knew those languages, as to know the nature of the gospel without divine instruction.— The gospel consists of four parts; “our gospel came not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;” as one part of the gospel is the Holy Ghost, it must be received by a revelation of Jesus Christ.

### MODERN.

*For I received it of man, and I was taught it by man, and not by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

THIS modern text teaches us the difference between Christ’s ministers, and Anti-Christ’s. They are taught by man to say prayers by rote, and they receive from men like themselves a license to preach, and often old notes to read over to the people. One of this sort once told me, that “when they first begin to preach, they are allowed to take other men’s works and read.” One minister in New



Hampshire was settled upon this plan, to deliver his old notes once in so many years. This plan of imposing on towns and parishes they receive of men, and they are taught it by men; they are not taught it by the revelation of Jesus Christ, for he never taught religious fraud. The clergy in general, do not pretend to be so enthusiastic, as to be moved by the Holy Spirit. They are generally moved by a spirit as different from this as they are different from the ministers of Christ. One young man, as I am informed, not thirty, when reading an old minister's notes, said, I have been preaching to you these forty years, yet many of you remain as unconcerned as when I first began my ministry among you.

### **ANCIENT.**

*For God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 4:6.*

THIS text teaches us that even the Apostles' minds, before their conversion, were as dark as the earth before God commanded the light to shine upon it; and that nothing short of the same power could enlighten their minds, the darkness was so great. The light which they received was the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ. This shews that though a man may have some knowledge of God's glory in his works, yet they cannot have a knowledge of the glory of his grace unless it is revealed to him by that spirit which glorifies Christ. The Apostle gives the reason why this was done, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ that is, that they might communicate the same glory to the world which they had received. The Apostles' work was to hold up the glory of Christ. Had the Apostles preached any other glory, short of the glory of God in Christ, their hearers would have thought that they had either forgotten their errand, or changed their sentiments. While the Apostles and primitive ministers enjoyed this divine light, they gloried as much in it, or more, than college ministers do in this, that the college and their learning has made ministers of them.

### **MODERN.**

*For men, who commanded a college to be built, have made us*

*shine, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of human learning in the face of us who profess to be masters of arts.*

I DO not mention this text to speak against human learning; but to shew that many come forth pretending to preach with no other qualifications than what they obtain there, unless they gain a little more by a few weeks or months study with some master of arts. I believe that the greatest part of those college ministers study but little divinity there, and other people would think so too, if they knew what is practiced at the college. After commencement day they obtain favor of those who preside, and they have the glory of human learning, which is, generally, to introduce a man into some office which he is not fit for, and that for life. The greatest part of the towns experience this by being obliged to maintain one man handsomely for life, because he has received a college education, and is called the *Parson*.—These men profess to be masters of arts: I have no doubt but they are masters of some arts; they have the art of keeping the people in fear of them; the art of living with little work, of keeping people in ignorance, and of opposing the gospel. In their *books* they style themselves A. M. and the people do very wrong in not calling them as they call themselves.

### ANCIENT.

*But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. 2 Cor. 4:7.*

THE Apostle, in these words, considers the gospel a treasure, a valuable collection of glorious things. This treasure consists of all the blessings of the gospel, such as pardon, peace, adoption, joy, hope, and eternal life; finally, all the glories of grace to be enjoyed in this life, and that which is to come. This treasure is in “earthen vessels.”

By earthen vessels, are meant ministers of the gospel, who like earthen vessels are made for common use; (not golden or silver ones) it is said “the treasure is in the vessels in the mind which is capable of retaining it. Earthen vessels are not all of a size, though they are all of one nature: thus it is with the ministers of Christ; they are all partakers of the divine nature, though some are capable of containing more than others. The reason why this treasure is in earthen vessels is, that “the excellency of the power may be of

God.” God commits the gospel to men, which is itself the power of God, to shew that though men preach it, yet if God does not apply it to men’s hearts, it would be preached in vain. Paul says, “I have planted and Apollos watered; but God gave the increase; so then he that planteth is nothing, and he that watereth is nothing, but God who giveth the increase.”

### **MODERN.**

*But we have this treasure in our notes, that the excellency without the power may be of us, and not of God.*

THIS modern text teaches us the difference between the clergy and the ministers of Jesus Christ. Some of this sort who have this treasure in their notes, when asked to preach, have made this reply: “I am not prepared that is, I have not my notes with me. Sometimes they have gone to the meeting house and left their treasure at home; had it been in them they could not have left it behind. One of this modern kind of ministers (said a preacher) going up the pulpit stairs, dropped his divinity through the floor; he labored for some time to repossess it, but it was all in vain; however, he ascended the sacred desk (as it is profanely called) and after praying and singing, he stood up and addressed the gazing assembly in these words: “My friends, there is good matter under the floor, but I cannot get it; however, I will read you a chapter or two which will be better than all of it.” In these written discourses the excellency consists (generally) in the manner and not in the matter; for the power which is peculiar to the gospel is not contained there. He who coldly tells the people what his paper says, is almost as cold and lifeless as his paper. The power of a pretty voice being the most that is known.

### **ANCIENT.**

*Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world. Amen. Matt.*

28:18, 19.

IN these words are contained the orders given to those who are called, and have the treasure of the gospel committed to

them.—Their orders are extensive: “Teach all nations.” They are to “preach the gospel to every creature.” After the people are taught, the first thing required of them is baptism, which was designed to act out their faith in the death, burial and resurrection of him, in whom they believed. The ministers of Christ are here commanded to teach the saints “all the counsel of God” revealed in his word; and as an encouragement, he promised them his presence to the end of the world. Notwithstanding these orders are so plain, yet many have endeavored, from age to age, to prove that ministers ought to be confined within the limits of a town or parish. I believe if some who pretend to preach had what they merit, they would be confined to a smaller circle than a town or parish: for they would be confined to some other business.

### MODERN.

*Go ye therefore into a town where there is no settled minister, and read piety and morality to all who come where you are; sprinkling their children in the room of circumcision, in the name of the Trinity, teaching them that the commands of Christ are not essential; and lo, rich worldly men will be with you as long as you live.*

*Amen.*

HOW different is this modern text from the ancient one! yet this is an exact description of the clergy in our day. After they have received their commission, (or license) from those who make such ministers, they set out in pursuit of a vacant parish, or town, with their morality in their saddle-bags; when employed by the town, they read over their rules of piety and morality to the people, whether they are asleep or awake. When anything is mentioned concerning baptism, they read a discourse shewing that infant baptism came in the room of circumcision, and is a seal of the covenant; and as there is no proof of it in the scriptures, the people take their word for it, if they please. Their method of evading the commands of Christ, is, to do as all other *rebels* do; that is, to say Christ’s commands are not essential. In so doing, the chief men of the city receive him, and oblige the poor to support him for life.

### ANCIENT.

*Withal, praying for us, that God would open a door of utterance to*

*speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds.* Col. 4:3.

THIS passage of scripture shews that even the Apostles, who had such great manifestations of divine things, stood in need of the prayers of the saints; not being sufficient to think anything of themselves. They considered the gospel a mystery, and that they knew it only in part, and were suffering even unto bonds while they were preaching it unto sinful men.—If the Apostles needed the prayers of their brethren, surely the ministers of Jesus need the prayers of the saints. One of this sort was complained of for not preaching so well as he once did; he owned it, and told his brethren that the reason of it was, “that he had lost his prayer book.” They asked him if he used one? he told them that the prayers of his brethren was the prayer book, which he had enjoyed for many years, and that if they could procure that for him again, he had no doubt but he should preach as well as ever.

### MODERN.

*Withal praying for us, that the town would open unto us the door of the meeting-house, that we may speak the mystery of iniquity, which we are at liberty by law to do.*

THIS text intimates that unconverted ministers ask their unconverted brethren to pray for them though it is not very common: when they do, they pray to the town, or court, that individuals or the town may be obliged to do that which they do not think the scripture commands them. They are sometimes heard to pray for themselves; their prayer is generally this, “that God would direct them to a suitable portion of his word, and enable them rightly to divide the word of truth:” and at the same time it is all divided, and wrote down, and must come from their notes whether there is force enough in it to reach the hearers or not. What they generally deliver is the mystery of iniquity, described in these words, “do as well as you can, and all will be well,” this is what the laws of men allow them to do.

### ANCIENT.

*The Elders which are among you I exhort, who also am an Elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among*

*you; taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly: not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being Lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples of the flock; and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away, 1 Peter, 5:1-4.*

IN this ancient text are several things worthy of notice.—The first is the name given to Christ's ministers, which is Elder. The words *Elder*, *Bishop*, and *Overseer*, all mean one thing. They signify one, appointed to take care of that which belongs to another: Paul says, "feed the flock of God which he has purchased with his own blood." These elders had no command of the churches. The elders belonged to the churches, and not the churches to them. They considered themselves servants of the churches, and not masters. They took the oversight of them, and their work was to feed the flock of God, that is, to instruct them from the word of God, taking the oversight out of love to Christ and his flock; not for the sake of gain; yet while they feed the flock, they were to be supported. "Who feedeth a flock, and eateth not the milk of the flock? Who goeth a warfare at his own charges? There is a great difference between eating the milk of the flock, and eating the flock. A person may eat the milk, while a dog may tear and eat the flesh of the animal who gave the milk. The text does not allow them to be Lords over God's heritage, but to be ensamples to the flock. Christ is Lord, and ministers must be servants; they must pay such respect to Christ's commands as to engage their brethren to obey Christ through their example. Christ's ministers are taught not to look for a crown in this world, but in that which is to come. They must expect, if they call the master of the house Beelzebub, they will his household. Christ says,— "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you, for so did they of the false prophets." Christ's ministers are to have at last a crown of glory which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them.

How consoling must this be to the ministers of Jesus, while their names are cast out as evil, and they considered the filth of the earth, and the off-scouring of all things; and they made a spectacle to the world, to angels and men; amidst all this to believe, that their names are written in heaven, that a crown is laid up for them there, and that ere long they shall be received to read their name, to wear their crown, and to be ever with the Lord.

## MODERN.

*THE reverend clergy who are with me I advise, who am also a clergyman, and a D. D. a member of that respectable body, who are numerous, and "who seek honor one of another and a partaker of the benefit of it: feed yourselves upon the church and parish over which we have settled you for life, and who are obliged to support you whether they like you or not; taking the command, by constraint, for filthy lucre; not of a ready mind; as lords over men's souls, not as ensamples to them. And when commencement day shall appear, you shall receive some honorary title, which shall make you appear very respectable among the reverend clergy.*

THIS modern text shews the difference between that which is scriptural, and that which is human. Instead of Elder, a title suitable for the ministers of Christ, Anti-Christ's ministers style themselves Clergy, Doctor of Divinity, Parson, Lord Bishop, Lord Arch-Bishop, Right Reverend Father in God, Cardinal, His Holiness, our Lord God the Pope, another God upon earth, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. "The Pope doeth whatsoever he listeth, even things unlawful, and is more than God: His Holiness being God's vicar, cannot be. Subject to the judgment of men." These names were never heard of till after the appearance of the man of sin; they all belong to Antichrist, and when Mystery Babylon falls, those names will fall with it. Were any of the clergy to be called *Elder*, they would almost think themselves imposed on. I do not think that all who bear these names are Antichrist's ministers; but all who bear these titles are beholden to Antichrist for them, and often have to pay dear for their Antichristian name.

This plan of settling ministers over towns is contrary to the scriptures: no such thing is mentioned there. When I see those things I have these thoughts; if these men are Christ's ministers, they have a poor opinion of his word, for they will not take his word for a living, unless the town is bound for him, that if he fails them, the town shall be accountable for the money. Instead of taking the oversight, they take the command of the town or parish they pretend to possess; calling them "my people," or "my parish." Instead of feeding the people, they feed themselves. Ezekiel says, "Woe to the Shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should

not the Shepherds feed the flock ?" They are not examples to the flock, but are like post-guides, placed out of the road, reading to people about a way they never were in. For all this tyranny they are honored by each other; they have the honorary title of A.B.A.M. and they are sometimes placed as high as D.D.A.A.S.S.H.S. "they proceed no further."

## ANCIENT.

*And as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord on whom they believed. Acts 13:2-3, and 14:23.*

THESE two passages of scripture contain an account of the ancient way of ordaining Elders. The first mentions their ordination to travel; the last, their ordination in the churches. It is evident that the holy ghost called these men to preach, and that those who laid their hands on them approved of what the holy ghost had done. Another thing is evident, and that is, that after they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on them; after this they sent them away to preach the glorious "gospel of the grace of God."

When they ordained Elders in the churches, they did it in the same way, by fasting and prayer, and laying their hands on them, commending them to the Lord, on whom they believed. Is there anything here to make a person think there was a council of ministers called, a sermon on the occasion, the right hand of fellowship, and a charge, in the manner it is now done among almost all denominations? Surely no. From this account, it is evident that the ministers of Christ were ordained to different works: on this account some were ordained to travel, and others to be in the churches: some were qualified, for evangelists to preach from place to place, others as pastors and teachers to take care of the churches. Those ministers who were ordained in churches, were considered as servants of the church, having no command of them. Paul says, "And ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." In ancient times, the ministers belonged to the churches; but in these modern



times, the ministers think the churches belong to them! You will often hear the clergy say, "*my church*," and to see the manner in which it is built, any man might think it belonged to them. The scriptures say, Christ gave gifts, (that is, ministers) to men; but modern times say, he gave men to the gifts.—Mention is made here of Elders being ordained in the churches, but not as lords over them neither is there anything mentioned concerning settling ministers over towns and parishes. How happy must these Elders feel, while they are chief among their brethren, and at the same time servants of all!

### MODERN.

*And as he read and said prayers to the people, the town said, separate us this man to the honor we have conferred on him. And when they had given him a CAUL, and he had accepted it, the clergy and their servants came, gave him the right hand of fellowship, and a sham charge, and settled him for life over the town. And when this was done, they commended him to the town and church, on whom he depended for a living.*

THIS modern text explained will shew the difference between the ancient way of ordaining Elders, and the present mode of settling the clergy.

The young gentleman who expects the honors of the town, first comes and reads two short pieces in a week; is respected and flattered by the first characters in the town. If they think he will do to make an Idol shepherd of to worship, they talk of settling him; Col. A. Capt. B. Esq. C. Major D. Deacon E. Merchant F. with Mr. X. who wishes to be respected whether he deserves it or not, are asked how they like the gentleman? one says "he has a good voice," another "he performed very well," another "he is short," another, "I am afraid our town will not be so lucky as to obtain him." However, these few who rule, call a town-meeting, the candidate retires, mentions a Caul in another town, they vote for him, the poor waiting to see the rich men's hands go up first; if a majority are for him, they agree to give him a *caul*; that is, so many hundred dollars settlement; and so many hundred dollar salary for life, or so many ounces of silver. This being done, the *caul* is sent to the young gentleman: if he accepts it, he gives his answer publicly as

liberal as their *caul*. “Vox populi vox Dei.” The voice of the people, is the voice of God. This being done, a day is set for his ordination: it is an high day. A council of clergy are sent for, who come in awful pomp: they examine his caul and credentials, and without any evidence of his being a man of experimental religion, they agree to ordain him, or rather to crown him king over a number of people who must be ruled by him. The whole town is moved, and the towns around them. The fiddlers, the retailers, &c. are all animated, After this, they make a hypocritical parade, like that in Rome, when the Pope is placed on the altar. Their powdered heads, their Popish bands and surplices, and hypocritical appearance, testify that they are related to the church of Rome, that mother of such harlots as these. The young gentleman is settled for life. The people are pleased; they have now a king like other towns, who will “rule over them with rigor.” *Feasting, drinking, fiddling, dancing, &c.* end the solemnities of the day.

### ANCIENT.

*For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me, and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay: but in him was yea.* 2 Cor. 1:19.

THIS passage contains the manner of the apostles’ and primitive minister’s preaching. Jesus Christ, or his doctrine, was what they all preached: they all agreed, because they all spake the same thing. Paul did not preach one thing, Silvanus another, and Timotheus a third: had they done this, they would have proved themselves false witnesses, not agreeing in what they said. In the days of the apostles, there was no such things as *doctrines* of Christ mentioned; it was the doctrine of Christ consisting of six principles. These are mentioned in Heb. 6:1-2. “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgments.” Here are six principles of this doctrine.

1. Repentance from dead works.
2. Faith towards God.
3. Doctrine of baptisms.

4. Laying on of hands.
5. The Resurrection of the dead.
6. Eternal Judgment.

This doctrine they received from Christ, and preached to the world according to their Master's orders.

### **1. *Repentance from dead Works.***

The apostles could not have preached repentance, had it not been for the propitiation made by Christ. On account of this, God could be just in pardoning the penitent. Men are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, or condemned to die as sinners. On this account the apostles were ordered by Christ to preach repentance. This was the first thing that Christ preached after he was baptized. See Mark 1:15, "And saying, the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent ye, and believe the gospel." Luke 13:3, "But except ye *repent*, ye shall all likewise perish." When Christ sent out his apostles to preach, it is said, Luke 6:12, "And they went out, and preached that men should *repent*." When Peter preached to the multitude, his first word to the distressed was, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. When the people ran together to see the lame man, Peter told them, they had killed the Prince of life; and then said, Acts 3:19, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." According to some modern preachers, Peter ought to have said, "Your sins must be blotted out, that you may be converted and repent." When Peter perceived that Simon was in the gall of bitterness, he said, "Repent of this thy wickedness, and pray God," &c. Acts 8:22. When Paul preached in Athens, repentance was his first subject. Acts 17:30, "But now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent." In his address to the elders of the church of Ephesus, he says, chap. 20:21, "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." When Paul stood before Agrippa, he told him his orders from Christ. Acts 26:20-21, "But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance." "For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and

went about to kill me.” Were all preachers to preach this principle of the doctrine of Christ, there would be no room for yea and nay, about it.

## **2. Faith towards God.**

This is another principle of the doctrine of Christ, which he and the apostles uniformly preached. When Christ preached to the Pharisees, he charged them with omitting faith, or living in unbelief. He said, Matt. 23:23, “Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint, and anise, and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and *faith*.” In almost all Christ’s preaching, he held up the importance of *believing* in God and Christ. When he preached to Nicodemus, he said, John 3:15, “That whosoever *believeth* on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Ver. 16, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Ver. 18, “He that *believeth* on him, is not condemned; but he that *believeth not*, is condemned already, because he hath not *believed* in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” When Paul preached Christ in the synagogue at Antioch, he concluded with saying, “And by him, all that *believe*, are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” Acts 13:39. In verse 41, he told them the consequence of not believing in him. “Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise *believe*, though a man declare it unto you.” Jesus Christ and the apostles ever held that the turning point of salvation was *faith*, and that of damnation was *unbelief*. “He that *believeth* and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that *believeth not* shall be damned.” In this principle, the apostles all agreed. Their preaching this, was not yea and nay: but yea and *amen* to the glory of God.

## **3. The Doctrine of Baptisms.**

This is another principle of the doctrine of Christ. There were two baptisms in the days of the apostles, that of the Holy Ghost, and of water. The baptism of the Holy Ghost was that miraculous operation of the Spirit on believers, by which they were enabled to speak with tongues, prophesy, and work miracles. This was given to the apostles and others: every person who was baptized with the Holy Ghost, could work miracles. There were many who were re-

newed by the Holy Ghost, and yet not baptized with it. The baptism of water was that by which believers manifested their faith in the *death, burial, and resurrection* of Christ. This, Christ and the apostles uniformly preached. When any believed they were baptized immediately; but never before: they baptized none but believers, and they had but one mode of baptism; which was by *burying* the believer in water. Paul says, Rom. 6:4, "Therefore we are *buried* with him by baptism Col. 2:12, "*Buried* with him in baptism," &c. In this part of the doctrine they were agreed: their preaching was not *yea* and *nay*, or one saying one thing, and another contradicting him, as is the case with many in this day.

#### **4. Laying on of hands.**

This is another principle of the doctrine of Christ. He laid his hands on little children and blessed them. The apostles laid their hands upon believers, that they might receive power to speak with tongues, prophesy, and work miracles. This power came from Christ, and proved that he had sent the apostles. This power Simon wished to buy of Peter. This principle of laying on of hands in appointing officers in the church, remains to this day; but not to confer the Holy Ghost, to work miracles.

#### **5. The Resurrection of the Dead.**

This is another principle of the doctrine of Christ. This Christ and the apostles uniformly preached. Christ says, John 5:29, "And shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the *resurrection* of life, and they that have done evil, unto the *resurrection* of damnation." When the apostles preached in Jerusalem, it is said in Acts 4:2, "Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the *resurrection* from the dead." This principle Paul preached at Athens. Acts 17:32, "And when they heard of the *resurrection* of the dead, some mocked." The apostles uniformly preached this to the world, and their preaching was *yea*. and *amen*.

#### **6. Eternal Judgment.**

This was another principle of the doctrine of Christ which they preached. By the eternal *judgment* is meant the final sentence which will be passed on the righteous and the wicked, by the Judge at the day of *judgment*, which will remain forever. This Christ preached. He says, Matt. 11:24, But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of *judgment*, than for thee." Paul says, 2 Cor. 5:10, "For we must all appear before

the *judgment* seat of Christ.” Peter says, 2 Pet. 3:7, “But the heavens and the earth which now are, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of *judgment*, and perdition of ungodly men.”

There is not one thing more evident in the Scriptures, than this kind of preaching: and this is the reason why they agreed among themselves. Had each one brought a system of his own to preach, as many do in this day, their preaching would have been, as a great part of the preaching is at this day, *yea* and *nay*, or one preaching one thing, and another contradicting it.

Ministers who contradict each other, themselves, and the scriptures too, will never all be considered true by the thinking part of the world. And ministers will never see that harmony they speak so much of, till they all unite to preach these six principles of the doctrine of Christ; leaving all human systems out, as *wood*, *hay*, and *stubble*.

### MODERN.

*For the son of perdition, Anti-Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by the Pope and Jesuits, and the Clergy in general, was not yea, but in him was yea and nay.*

THIS modern text contains the substance of what Anti-Christ’s ministers preach; which is the son of perdition: or doctrines which are contrary to godliness. Those who preach these *doctrines*, preach *yea* and *nay*. This is the way the clergy preach and practice; they not only contradict the Scriptures, but they contradict, each other, and themselves. In ancient times the ministers were divided into two classes; Christ’s ministers, and Satan’s; but in this day there are a number of divisions besides these. Men are called *Roman Catholic* ministers of Christ—*Church of England* ministers of Christ—*Congregational* ministers of Christ—*Methodist* ministers of Christ—*Baptist* ministers of Christ—*Universalist* ministers of Christ—*Quaker* ministers of Christ—*Predestinarian* ministers of Christ—*Arminian* ministers of Christ—*Calvinistic* ministers of Christ—*Hopkinsian* ministers of Christ. What a figure a man would make among these ministers were he to leave out these adverbs, and call himself nothing but a *minister of Christ*, he would look like a *speckled* bird, and all these birds of prey against him. If

men are not fools they must know these cannot be all right, though they may all be wrong. This is the appearance those who are called ministers of the gospel make in the present day. This variety of ministers belongs to Antichrist's kingdom, not to Christ's: and though I have no doubt but there are some among many of the Antichristian names, who are children of God: yet I believe they are in Mystery Babylon, and are trading in the wares of that city, instead of having the pearl of great price—the durable riches of Christ, which are so valuable, that they would do well to sell all this Antichristian *wood, hay and stubble*, for the *merchandize* of wisdom, consisting in *gold, silver and precious stones*; or the pure revelation given by Jesus Christ in the New Testament, to New Testament ministers. I believe there are some ministers whom God has owned, who believe and preach some things contrary to the New Testament, and yet think they are right. Among all the *yea* and *nay* preaching, I shall notice, what is called *Predestination, Calvinism, Hopkinsianism, and Arminianism*.

### **I. *Predestination*.**

What is called *Predestination* in the present day is (if I understand it) as different from what is mentioned in the Scriptures, as infant sprinkling is different from believers' baptism. Modern *Predestination* appears to be this, "that God predetermined a certain number to salvation, and others to destruction, before the foundation of the world;" or that he has *foreordained whatsoever comes to pass*. This sentiment, according to the best information I can get, originated in the *brain of Mahomet*, and is one of the six principles of the doctrine of the Mahometans. His faith consisted of six principles,

1. *Belief in God.*
2. *In angels.*
3. *In the Scriptures.*
4. *In his prophets.*
5. *In the resurrection and judgment.*
6. *In Gods absolute decrees or predestination.*

The doctrine of predestination, which they call orthodox, is, that whatsoever doth or shall come to pass in the world, whether it be good or bad, proceedeth entirely from the divine will, and is irrevocably fixed and recorded, from all eternity, in the *preserved table*: and that God hath secretly pre-determined not only the ad-

verse and prosperous fortune of every person in the world in the most minute particulars, but also his obedience and disobedience, and consequently, his everlasting happiness or misery after death: which fate, or predestination, it is impossible to avoid.” Though the Mahometans believe this, yet the *Koran* says, “that whoever denies free-will, and attributes human actions to the sole influence of the Deity, sins against religion: and if he persists in his error, he becomes an *infidel*, and deserving death.” They assert that notwithstanding this, men ought to look to God for illumination, and after this everyone should consult his own mind, and do what is most prudent. It is only after these means have been employed that human events may be attributed to the decrees of Heaven, to which mankind ought ever to submit with the most unlimited resignation. Notwithstanding this explanation, almost the whole nation believes the principle of immutable *destiny*. Here is predestination as it was held by Mahomet and his followers. This sentiment was first propagated by Mahomet in the sixth century. In the *ninth* century a German monk by the name of *Godeschalcus* propagated a sentiment called *predestination*; he was the first who was called a Predestinarian. His sentiments may be summed up in the following particulars: 1. That God had predestinated a certain part of the world to *salvation*, and the rest to *damnation*, before they were created. 2. That God predestinated the wicked to eternal punishment, in consequence of their sins, which were freely committed, and eternally foreseen. 3. That Christ came not to save all men: and that none shall perish for whom he shed his blood. 4. That since the fall, mankind cannot exercise freewill, only to do that which is evil. The difference between Mahomet’s and Godeschalcus’ sentiment upon *predestination*, consists chiefly in the words they use to express their belief; Mahomet believed God had predetermined every person’s state for eternity; so did Godeschalcus. Mahomet taught that though this was true, yet men ought to look to God for direction, and then, if they sin after they know their duty, they will be lost. Godeschalcus says, God predetermined to punish men as sinners. What jargon is this! God predetermined my disobedience, and I act freely in performing what he *predetermined should take place* and then I am punished for doing what God meant I should do!!!

## II. The next kind of *yea* and *nay* doctrine is what is called



***Calvinism: this may be summed up in five particulars;***

1. That God has chosen a certain number in Christ to everlasting glory; without the least foresight of *faith*, good works, or any condition performed by the creature; and that the rest he was pleased to pass by, and ordain to eternal wrath, to the praise of his vindictive justice.
2. That Jesus Christ made an atonement only for those chosen in him from *all eternity*.
3. That by sin we are made subject to death, and all miseries, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.
4. That though these elect are all in Christ before the foundation of the world; yet by nature they are in as bad a situation as those who are made for damnation, until God calls them out of that state by his word and Spirit.
5. That those whom God calls and sanctifies shall never fall from a state of grace. This is true upon the plan that they were all safe in Christ while children of wrath. I cannot see much difference between Mahometan predestination, and that held by Godeschalcus and *Calvin*.

**III. The Hopkinsian plan** has this in it, that God has exerted his power in such a manner as he purposed should be followed with the existence and entrance of *moral evil* in the system. And that the introduction of *sin*, is, upon the whole, for the *general good*. Here is Mahomet's belief under the name of *Hopkinsianism*! This, that God proposed to have *sin* in the world, and that it is for the *general good*, is the same as this: God has *for his own glory foreordained whatsoever comes to pass*. See Catechism divinity in the *Primer*.

**IV. The Arminian plan is this:**

1. That God has not fixed the future state of men by an absolute unconditional decree.
2. That Christ has made an atonement for the sins of the whole world; yet that none but those who *believe* in him can finally be benefited by it.
3. That mankind are not totally depraved, and that depravity does not come upon them by virtue of Adam's being their public head.
4. That there is no such thing as irresistible grace, in the conversion of sinners.
5. That those, who are united to Christ by faith, may fell from

their faith, and forfeit finally their state of grace.

These *yea* and *nay* sentiments are embraced by different denominations at the present day, and this makes the confusion among ministers; these things are certainly different from the doctrine of Christ, as mentioned before under ancient. I think it certain that the Mahometan *predestination*, embraced by many in this day under the name of *Calvinism*, *Hopkinsianism* &c. leads to *licentiousness* as much as it does among the Mahometans or among the *monks* in Germany.

Mahomet made great use of his predestination to propagate his faith. He encouraged his followers to fight without fear, telling them everything was predestinated, and that not only the time but the manner of their death was unalterably fixed from, all eternity. When people believe all is fore-ordained that takes place, they are encouraged in unbelief, saying, If I am to be saved, I shall be, and if not, I shall be lost.

I here propose a question to be answered by the candid:--Was Mahomet right in believing, as many ministers do, concerning predestination in this day? or are many ministers of this day wrong in believing as Mahomet did concerning predestination in his day?

## ***2. Ancient And Modern Things Concerning Baptism.***

### **ANCIENT.**

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized. Acts 2:41,*

THIS text contains the first account of the Conduct of believers after Christ's ascension to glory, and the descent of the Holy Ghost. Peter preached Christ's death and resurrection to a great multitude, according to his master's orders: those who heard were "pricked in their heart, and cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter said, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you." Can anyone think that those people were taught to sprinkle their children? Surely no. They gladly received His word, they believed it with their hearts; they first repented of their sin in putting the Son of God to death. After this they received the Holy Ghost, which made them believers, by which they were suitable subjects of baptism. This was the Apostle's direction, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." As soon as they believed in Christ, they saw the propriety of his commands, and loved them as his, and manifested their love to him by submitting to what he had commanded. This baptism was appointed by Christ for believers to submit to, as an evidence of their belief in his death, burial and resurrection.

### **MODERN.**

*Then they that ignorantly owned the covenant, had their children sprinkled,*

THIS modern text contains an account of the manner of baptizing among those who reject the Scriptures of truth. Those who own the covenant, "know not what they do." They are ignorant except that the minister has told them they must own the covenant, after they are propounded, and then they may have their children christened; but, say they, I knew not what it meant, only that I must stand in the aisle as others did, and make a bow or curtesy, after the minister had read over something to me which he called the covenant. This is what some call the covenant of grace, (or, more properly, the covenant of ignorance) for after they get into this, they are generally confirmed in their ignorance and opposition to

the gospel. After this is done, their children are brought in, and before the whole assembly are sprinkled in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and thanks returned to God, that another child has received the seal of their covenant, which thing is an abomination in the sight of God. I asked a man, not long ago, why he had his children sprinkled? "Why," said he, "because it is the fashion." "This witness is true."

### ANCIENT.

*And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water; and the Eunuch said, See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch: and he baptized him.—And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the Eunuch saw him no more, and he went on his way rejoicing. Acts 8:36-39.*

WHAT a pleasing example is here recorded for every gentleman and believer to imitate: the Eunuch, a gentleman from Ethiopia, riding in his chariot, and at the same time taking the Scriptures along with him for amusement, through the deserts of Gaza. While he read, he thought what it meant. An instructor was at hand by the name of Philip, who is invited into the chariot. Though he had the charge of all the treasures of Candace, yet, possessing a spirit of enquiry, he was willing to receive instruction from a poor footman. No sooner had he received instruction concerning the accomplishment of an ancient prophecy, but with his heart he believed it. Philip preached to him Jesus, proclaimed him a lawgiver, and mentioned the first command to all hearty believers, which was, that they should be immersed in water as a proof that they believed in the death, burial, and resurrection of the Son of God. The command appeared so reasonable that the believing Eunuch, so far from saying, "it is not essential," felt his heart fired with love to the commander and command; and, at the sight of the stream which flowed by the way, said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? Did Philip say, If you will go to Jerusalem and be propounded, and own the covenant, thou mayest? No. If

thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. The words he spake proved to Philip, that his heart was in the matter. They came unto the water, they alighted from the chariot, and descending both into the gentle stream, he was buried with Christ in baptism. Being planted in the likeness of his death, and raised from the water to walk in newness of life, they came up put of the water. Philip's work being done, the Spirit caught him away, while the happy Eunuch, receiving a name better than son or daughter, re-ascends his chariot, rejoicing in him whom Philip preached, of whom Isaiah spake, and David sung; in whom "believing he rejoiced not barely because he shared in his love; but in the prospect of spreading among the tawny race of Ethiopia's burning sands, the glories of him of whom David said, "I will make mention of thee to Ethiopia; this and that man was born there." What person but an enemy of Jesus will wish to explain away this pleasing history of the baptized Eunuch? This part contains the example for all who believe in the same Christ. While you read this, hear the Savior saying, "go thou and do likewise."

### MODERN.

*And as they went on their old way, they came to a certain congregational meeting house, and the parent said to the Parson, see here is water in the basin, what doth hinder me to have my children christened? And he said, if thou art propounded, and ownest the covenant, thou mayest. And the parent answered (by a bow) I do. And he commanded the child to be brought and they both came to the deacon's seat, both the Parson and the parent, with the child in his arms, and when he had sprinkled the child, they both went away from the basin, and the spirit of Antichrist caught away the Parson up into the sacred desk, and the parent went on his way with the child in his arms crying.*

CAN one thing be more opposite to another, than this is to what is related before under ancient? Those who practice according to this text, go on in the old way, instead of the new and living way. The reason they give for it is, my father, grandfather, great-grandfather, great-great-grandfather practiced in this way, and all the good old fathers that are gone to heaven beside; and they might say, with all the bad old fathers, and all the Popes and Jesuits in the

church of Rome, who are dead and gone to hell, to receive their reward. This fashion of bringing children to the meeting house, I think is founded on two things: first, from their bringing the male children into the temple. This was a law among the Jews recorded in Leviticus 12; the male child was to be circumcised at eight days old, and in thirty three days after that, she was to bring the child and an offering to the Priest, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: this almost makes it a congregational meetinghouse,

This, to many, amounts to a command to sprinkle children in the meeting house. Many think that Christ was brought into the temple to be circumcised, but he was circumcised thirty- three days before he was brought into the temple; he was forty-one days old when he was brought into the temple. From this, people are intoxicated with the notion of giving up their children to the Lord, (that is, to the Priest) who is lord over men's souls. Another thing in favor of bringing children to the meeting house, is, that the church of Rome, that mother of this, and all the harlots and abominations of the earth, used to baptize in fonts made in the porches of what they called churches, in these they dipped the children till they changed the mode. Since that time the font has become small, consisting of a basin, where, instead of dipping the child, the priest (as he calls himself) dips his fingers, and lets the child feel the effects of his dipping. This owning the covenant is a plan imported from the church of Rome, along with infant baptism. When we see the parent coming up with the children to the basin, and the Parson coming down from the desk, does it look like Philip and the Eunuch? Surely no, but like Popish abominations. See them part: the Parson moves back to his throne, and the little infant is carried away crying. Every person who is not drunk with the wine of the great whore of Babylon, must see the folly of such conduct as this.

### ANCIENT.

*And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house; and he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway: and when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. Acts*

16:32, 33, 34.

EVERY candid person who reads and understands this account of the jailer and his family, may see that the arguments to prove that there were infants in the family are all groundless. They spake to them all: the whole family believed: were baptized, and rejoiced in God. Some pretend that they were baptized in the jail; I should like to hear them prove it, by some argument beside presumption. In this town of Philippi, Paul baptized Lydia and her believing family in the river near where they met. One clergyman who undertook to explain away this expression, "he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house," said, that in the original it meant, he rejoiced believing in God all 'round the house. Another said, he believed, and his house rejoiced in it; but it is not strange that blind men do not see clearly.

### MODERN.

*And he spake the word of tradition to him, and not to all that were in his house; and he took them, and sprinkled him and all he could in his house; and he trembled, believing in infant sprinkling for all his children.*

EVERY person who speaks in favor of infant baptism, speaks the words of tradition; because there is not one word in the Bible for it. It is tradition received from their fathers; those clergymen who speak of this Popish rite, do not say much about it to children; but to their parents, and direct them to bring their children while young to this regenerating seal, as they call it. Sometimes the parents neglect this uncommanded duty, till the children grow stubborn and refuse to submit to it. I knew one clergyman go to a house to sprinkle a family of children, one of the boys seeing what was going forward, climbed up the chimney, and escaped out of their hands: the clergyman told them that as he refused the privileges of the covenant, it was best to let him alone. While the parents are going through this operation in the broad aisle, they often have a trembling task to perform: but having gone through it they believe in it for their children, though often the children inject this belief to their joy, and parents' grief.

### ANCIENT.

*The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us, (not the*

*putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

1 Peter 3:21.

THIS figure mentioned, has reference to the ark in which Noah and his family were saved from the flood, “wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.” The water did not save them, but the ark which was in the watery so baptism does not save the believer, but Christ the ark which was in the water of Jordan; the believer being in Christ is saved, and his being baptized or immersed in water, is to shew that he is in him who was baptized, even Christ. Noah and his family left the old world to go into the ark, and in the ark discovered the new one; so the believer leaves his old company, is “buried by baptism,” and rises to newness of life. The Apostle says, baptism does not put away the filth of the flesh, but answers a good conscience, because he does it knowing that Christ has commanded it, and is happy in manifesting his love to him by obeying his commands. Baptism saves by the resurrection of Christ; when the believer is raised up from the water, he shows that his salvation depends on him who was raised from the dead, of which baptism is a figure.

### **MODERN.**

*The like figure, namely, circumcision, whereunto sprinkling doth now save our children, (not the putting away the filth of their flesh, but the answer of our conscience towards the Parson) by putting on them the seal of his covenant.*

THIS modern test contains the belief of those who have their children sprinkled, they have a belief that it does something towards their salvation, or that on this account they are entitled to salvation. Many people when their children are like to die will send for a minister to come and sprinkle them, thinking that the child will be lost if it is not christened, because the law said, those who were not circumcised should be cut off. This sentiment led the church of Rome to make a law that if a child was like to die soon after it was born; if a priest could not be obtained to christen it, the midwife or nurse might do it, rather than the child should be damned; and if they could not obtain water, they might use sand. People who do this, answer their consciences, but it is towards the



minister; it cannot be towards God, for God never commanded it. When they have done it they feel easy, because they have done as the minister said; he Says, baptism is a seal of the covenant, and they believe it.

### **3. Ancient And Modern Things Concerning Churches.**

#### **ANCIENT.**

*And upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Matt. 16:18.*

BY the *Rock* mentioned is meant Jesus Christ, the stone laid in Zion for a foundation, that whosoever believeth on him should not be ashamed. Christ is a foundation of his church as a sacrifice for sin, and as king and lawgiver. This foundation remains unmoved, and will throughout all ages, world without end. The church built on this rock, means the same as his kingdom. This means men who are subject to his laws, being redeemed from among men by his blood. Jesus Christ has but one way of building his kingdom, and that is the way he begun it. No natural men are members of his church or kingdom; he says, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God: and except a man be born of *water* and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." To be born of water is a natural birth: all children are born of water, as every person must know if he considers the nature of it. To be born of the Spirit is to be brought out of darkness into marvelous light, by the Spirit of God, and by that to be made a spiritual man. Whenever a man believes in Christ with all his heart, and submits to him, bowing his knee at his name, he is in his kingdom. Submission to Christ makes him a member of his kingdom: yet he does not manifest himself to the world as a member of Christ's kingdom, only by submitting to the laws given by Christ, for everyone to obey who is born again, The first law given to a person born again, is baptism This is the first thing Christ requires of a believer, and he does not require of it any others. This is to shew the person's faith in Christ's *death, burial, and resurrection*: that he is dead to sin, buried to it, and risen to newness of life, and that he is devoted to him only. By this he shews that he believes that though his body must die; yet his King will raise it up again at the last day: by baptism he puts on Christ and names his name, declaring himself to be for the Lord and no other. Paul says, Gal. 3:27, "For as many of you as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ." In this way Christ built his church in the days of the apos-

bles; they called on men to repent, and promised them the Holy Ghost as the consequence of repentance. Having the love of God in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, in breaking bread, and prayers.

Their form of doctrine and church government is contained in the New Testament. Those only are Christ's church who are built in this way. Though a person is a member of Christ's kingdom when he believes on him, or is born of the Spirit; yet he does not manifest himself to the world as a member of his kingdom, unless he is *buried* with him in baptism, and walks in newness of life. It is thought by many that the New Testament is not a sufficient rule to walk by, unless there is some platform, creed, or covenant besides: if it is not, then this kingdom is imperfect, and is dependent on some of the subjects for part of the laws to govern it. Supposing that after the constitution and laws of this State were completed, someone should say, This is not enough, we must have a particular platform drawn from this, for each town to be regulated by: What would be the consequence? Surely it would be *confusion*, and every evil work. This is the consequence concerning platforms, In the days of the apostles, the churches had one uniform rule of faith. They continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, *As soon as this was left, and confessions, of faith, creeds, and platforms* were introduced, divisions and contentions were the unavoidable consequences of it. All that is needful now, is, to lay aside all these weights, and take the New Testament as a rule in everything; then, and never till then, shall we see ministers and churches united.

Jesus Christ says in the text, The gates of hell shall not prevail against his church, built on this rock. By the gates of hell are meant the powers of hell and earth combined against his kingdom. The doctrine and laws of Christ's church have remained almost eighteen hundred years, and are the same now as ever. Every plan has been laid to overthrow it, that wicked men and devils could invent: yet it remains to this day, as a most astonishing proof of the truth of what Christ said. Every kingdom, state, town, church, or individual, who has opposed this kingdom, has been broken. There are some, I believe, who are born again, who feel afraid of being prevailed against, or broken up. The reason of this is, they are sensible that in their manner of Church building, they have something unscriptural, or else, that they are not willing to conform to a scrip-

ture rule. The fact is this, those who think they are near the New Testament rule, have something besides that rule which they hold dear, and when they say they are afraid their church will be broken up, they mean they are afraid that which they hold, which is not found in the Scriptures, will be rejected. This is the way some of the Baptist churches stand in this day, though they are nearer to the rule than others as to many, things; yet there are five things in which they are unscriptural:

1. In their name.
2. In their manner of constituting churches.
3. In their manner of ordaining and supporting ministers.
4. In their manner of associating churches.
5. In some parts of the doctrines held by them.

### MODERN.

*And upon our Platforms have we built our churches, and the gates of heaven prevail against us.*

THE word *platform* signified the model or pattern of a thing, when applied to things of this world: but when a *platform* is mentioned to build churches upon, it means something contrary to the Scriptures. *Platforms, creeds, covenants, and articles of faith*, are all alike unscriptural. It may be said of *platforms*, as Moses said of the gods Israel worshipped, after they forsook the true one. He said they served gods which came newly *up*; they could not be good ones, for they came the wrong way, they came *up*: had they been the right sort, they would have come *down* instead of *up*. So it is with *platforms*; they came newly *up* out of the brains of men who rejected the scriptures.

This *platform fashion* was invented at *Rome*, where the mother of these abominations lives. From *Rome* the fashion has spread and varied, according to the climate of fancy where people live. The *platform* of the church of *Rome* placed the power on the bishop's shoulder, and considered him infallible, so that he may make any law he pleases, and his subjects are obliged to submit to it. The *platform* of the church of *England*, makes the king the head of the church: so that when the king dies, the church loses her old head, and then has a new head on an old body. Though the king thinks he is head of the church: yet the bishop has the power of crowning

him. According to this, the church and head are dependent on the bishop, which makes him the POPE of England, in disguise. According to this platform, a late writer was not far from truth as some think, when he praised the *British Constitution* as a masterly performance of the human mind. I believe the devil himself never contrived a plan more completely calculated to bind men, soul and body, than this platform does. The bishop rules the king, the king rules the parliament, part of the parliament, (the lords temporal) see that laws are made to command the bodies and purses of the people. The lords spiritual, (the bishops who in parliament represent the church) make laws to keep the people's souls in subjection to their spiritual rulers; so that between the upper *millstone* of *clerical oppression*, and the lower one of *civil tyranny*, the common people are ground as flat as a *board nail*, when it goes through a grist-mill.

The Presbyterian platform places the power in the Presbytery and ruling elders, and in a Synod of Divines, as they are called. Their platform is aristocratic. The Congregational platform places the power in the whole church, who in this country have a *Parson*, as he is called. A *Parson* signifies one in whom the whole church is presented: so that when you see the *Parson*, you see the whole church. What he says, the church says: If he says, "Open the meeting house," it is the voice of the church: if he says, "Shut it," this is the voice of the whole. Were this word spelled a little different, it would be nearer the thing than it is now. Instead of P-a-r-s-o-n, should it be spelt P-o-p-e, it would then spell what it means.

Every unscriptural denomination has an unscriptural plan of church building, and this is the reason why the Baptists, (who are nearer to the Scriptures as to baptism than any other denomination) have an unscriptural *platform*. Their platforms are what they call their articles, or confession of faith; these differ one from another. The churches do not all have platforms alike: every minister can make a *platform* to please himself. I do not know of one denomination in this country that is so divided in sentiment, as the Baptists. The reason of it is, because they are nearer to the rule than the other denominations, as to the persons who compose the church, and the manner of baptizing. The denomination will finally come to an end, with all the rest; for there is no such denomination as *Baptists* mentioned in the Scriptures, any more than there are *Con-*

*gregationalists*, or *Presbyterians*. All the Baptists believe, which is scripture, will stand. It is astonishing to see the contest there has been in the two Baptist churches in Boston within a few months past, on account of their *unscriptural platforms*. The old platforms which the two churches were built upon lasted above an hundred years, but being made of *wood*, they grew rotten. These *platforms* agreed with the platforms of the churches which composed the Warren Association. One of these churches has made a new platform, very different from the old one, which held particular Election. This new one does not mention the word Election. So that the first Baptist church is liable to be called to an account by the Association for making a new platform, contrary to the one which the Association has received. As near as I can understand, the platform business in the two churches stands here: The platforms do not agree with the sentiments of the ministers: the platforms contradict each other, and the Bible too. Now, if they would but throw away these unscriptural things, and walk according to the divine rule, peace would be unto them. Every denomination who build on *platforms* have in their turn cried out, You are breaking up our churches. I am sorry the Baptists have learned this old song, sung to the tune of *Jargon*, and that they begin to sing this inharmonious sound. If we have the truth on our side, we cannot be broken up; if we have not, we cannot hold together. The gates of heaven will certainly prevail against those who build on *platforms*, instead of the Rock Christ. I believe the time is come, when God is shaking the *heavens*, *earth*, *sea*, and *dry land*; and everything which is contrary to the Scriptures in the Baptist churches, will be shaken, as well as in other churches.

## A SERMON,

### *On The Sacred Import of The Word "Christian."*

By *Samuel Davies*, sometime President of the College in New Jersey.<sup>1</sup>

MERE names are empty sounds, and but of little consequence: and yet it must be owned there are names of honor and significance; and, when they are attended with the things signified by them, they are of great and sacred importance. Such is the Christian name; a name about seventeen hundred years old. And now, when the name is almost lost in party-distinctions, and the thing is almost lost in ignorance, error, vice, hypocrisy, and formality, it may be worth our while to consider the original import of that sacred name, as a proper expedient to recover both name and thing.

The name of Christian was not the first by which the followers of Christ were distinguished. Their enemies called them Galileans, Nazarenes, and other names of contempt: and among themselves they were called Saints, from their holiness; Disciples, from their learning their religion from Christ as their teacher: Believers, from their believing in him as the Messiah; and Brethren, from their mutual love and their relation to God and each other. But after some time they were distinguished by the name of Christians. This they first received in Antioch, an heathen city, a city infamous for all manner of vice and debauchery: a city that had its name from Antiochus Epiphanes, the bitterest enemy the church of the Jews ever had. A city very rich and powerful, from whence the Christian name would have an extensive circulation: but it is long since laid in ruin, unprotected by that sacred name: in such a city was Christ pleased to confer his name upon his followers: and you cannot but see that the very choice of the place discovers his wisdom, grace,

---

<sup>1</sup> This Sermon agrees so much with my belief of the name Christian, that I cannot express my mind better than Mr. Davies has for me. This sermon will shew, that I am not alone in rejecting all party names, for the name of Christ only. I thought of abridging it; but I cannot find what to leave out, the whole is so good.

and justice.

The original word, which is here rendered *called*, seems to intimate that they were called Christians by divine appointment, for it generally signifies an oracular nomination, or a declaration from God; and to this purpose it is generally translated. Hence it follows, that the very name Christian, as well as the thing, was a divine original; assumed not by a private agreement of the disciples among themselves, but by the appointment of God. And in this view it is a remarkable accomplishment of an old prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 62:2. *The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all Kings thy glory, and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.* So Isaiah 65:15. *The Lord shall call his servants by another name.*

This name was at first confined to few: but it soon had a surprisingly extensive propagation through the world. In many countries, indeed, it was lost, and miserably exchanged for that of Heathen, Mahometan, or Musselmen. Yet the European nations still retain the honor of wearing it. A few scattered Christians are also still to be found here and there in Asia and Africa, though crushed under the oppressions of Mahometans and Pagans. This name has likewise crossed the wide ocean to the wilderness of America, and is worn by the sundry European colonies on this continent. We, in particular, call ourselves Christians, and should take it ill to be denied the honor of that distinction. But do we not know the meaning and sacred import of that name? Do we not know what it is to be Christians indeed? That is, to be in reality what we are in name: certainly it is time for us to consider the matter: and it is my present design that we should do so.

Now we may consider this name in various views: particularly as a name of distinction from the rest of the world, who know not the Lord Jesus, or reject him as an impostor; as a patronymic name, pointing out the Father and Founder of our holy religion and the Christian church; as a badge of our relation to Christ as his servants, his children, his bride: as intimating our unction by the holy spirit, or our being the subjects of his influences; as Christ was anointed by the holy spirit, or replenished with his gifts above measure (for you are to observe that *anointed* is the English of the Greek name *Christ*, and of the Hebrew, *Messiah*), and as a name of appropriation, signifying that we are the property of Christ, and his



peculiar people. Each of these particulars might be profitably illustrated. But my present design confines me to consider the Christian name only in two views; namely, as a catholic name, intended to bury all party denominations: and as a name of obligation upon all that wear it to be Christians indeed, or to form their temper and practice, upon the sacred model of Christianity.

**I. Let us consider the Christian name as a catholic name, intended to bury all party denominations.**

The name Gentile was odious to the Jews, and the name Jew was odious to the Gentiles. The name Christian swallows up both in one common and agreeable appellation. He that hath taken down the partition-wall, has taken away partition-names, and united all his followers in his own name, as a common denomination. For now, says Paul, *there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all.* Col. 3:11. And *ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* Gal. 3:28. According to a prophecy of Zechariah, *The Lord shall be king over all the earth; and in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one.* Zech. 14:9.

It is but a due honor to Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, that all who profess his religion should wear his name; and they pay an extravagant and even idolatrous compliment to his subordinate officers and ministers, when they take their denomination from them. Had this humor prevailed in the primitive church, instead of the common name Christians, there would have been as many party names as there were apostles or eminent ministers. There would have been Paulites from Paul; Peterites from Peter; Johnites from John; Barnabites from Barnabas, &c. Paul took pains to crush the first risings of this party spirit in those churches which he planted; particularly in Corinth, where it most prevailed. While they were saying, *I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas: and I of Christ,* he puts this pungent question to them: "Is Christ divided?" Are his servants the ringleaders of so many parties? "Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in or into the name of Paul," that ye should be so fond to take your name from him? He counted it a happiness that providence had directed him to such a conduct as gave no umbrage of encouragement to such a humor. "*I thank God,*" says he, "*that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius: lest any should take occasion to say, I baptized*

*into my own name, and was gathering a party for I myself."* 1 Cor. 1:12-15.

But alas! how little has this convictive reasoning of the apostle been regarded in the future ages of the church? What an endless variety of denominations taken from some men of character, or from some little peculiarities, has prevailed in the Christian world, and crumbled it to pieces, while the Christian name is hardly regarded? Not to take notice of Jesuits, Jansenists, Dominicans, Franciscans, and other denominations and orders in the popish church, where, having corrupted the thing, they act very consistently to lay aside the name, what party-names have been adopted by the protestant churches, whose religion is substantially the same common Christianity, and who agree in much more important articles than in those they differ: and who therefore might peaceably unite under the common name of Christians? We have Lutherans, Calvinists, Arminians, Zuinglians, Churchmen, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and a long list of names which I cannot now enumerate. To be a Christian is not enough nowadays, but a man must also be something more and better; that is, he must be a strenuous bigot to this or that particular church. But where is the reason or propriety of this? I may indeed believe the same things which Luther or Calvin believed; but I do not believe them on the authority of Luther or Calvin, but upon the sole authority of Jesus Christ, and therefore, I should not call myself by their name, as one of their disciples, but by the name of Christ, whom alone I acknowledge as the Author of my religion, and my only master and Lord. If I learn my religion from one of these great men, it is indeed proper I should assume their name. If I learn it from a parliament or convocation, and make their acts and canons the rule and ground of my faith, then it is enough for me to be of the established religion, be that what it will: I may with propriety be called a mere conformist; that is my highest character: but I cannot be properly called a **Christian**; for a Christian learns his religion, not from acts of parliament or from the determinations of councils, but from Jesus Christ and his gospel.

To guard against mistakes on this head, I would observe that every man has a natural and legal right to judge and choose for himself in matters of religion: and that is a mean supple soul indeed, and utterly careless about all religion, that makes a compli-

ment of this right to any man, or body of men upon earth, whether pope, king, parliament, convocation, or synod. In the exercise of this right, and searching for himself, he will find that he agrees more fully in lesser as well as more important articles with some particular church than others: and thereupon it is his duty to join in stated communion; with that church; and he may, if he pleases, assume the name which that church wears, by way of distinction from others: this is not what I condemn. But for me to glory in the denomination of any particular church as my highest character; to lay more stress upon the name of a Presbyterian or a churchman, than on the sacred name of Christian; to make a punctilious agreement with my sentiments in the little peculiarities of a party the test of all religion; to make it the object of my zeal to gain proselytes to some other than the Christian name; to connive at the faults of those of my own party, and to be blind to the good qualities of others, or invidiously to misrepresent or diminish them: these are the things which deserve universal condemnation from God and man; these proceed from a spirit of bigotry and faction, directly opposite to the generous catholic spirit of Christianity, and subversive of it. And yet how common is this spirit among all denominations! And what mischief has it done in the world! Hence proceed contentions and animosities, uncharitable suspicions and censures, slander and detraction, partiality and unreasonable prejudices, and a hideous group of evils, which I cannot now describe. This spirit also hinders the progress of serious practical religion, by turning the attention of men from the great concerns of eternity, and the essentials of Christianity, to vain jangling and contest about circumstances and trifles. Thus the Christian is swallowed up in the partisan, and fundamentals lost in extra-essentials.

My Brethren, I would now warn you against this wretched mischievous spirit of party. I would not have you entirely skeptical and undetermined even about the smaller points of religion, the modes and forms, which are the matters of contention between different churches: nor would I have you quite indifferent what particular church to join with in stated communion. Endeavour to find out the truth, even in these circumstantial, at least so far as is necessary for the direction of your own conduct. But do not make these the whole or the principal part of your religion: do not be excessively zealous about them, nor break the peace of the church

by magisterially imposing them upon others. "Hast thou faith in these little disputables," It is well; "but have it to thyself before God," and do not disturb others with it. You may, if you please, call yourselves Presbyterians and dissenters, and you shall bear without shame or resentment all the names of reproach and contempt which the world may brand you with. But, as you should not be mortified on the one side, so neither should you glory on the other. A Christian! a Christian! let that be your highest distinction; let that be the name which you labor to deserve. God forbid that my ministry should be the occasion of diverting your attention to anything else. But I am so happy that I can appeal to yourselves, whether I have during several years of my ministry among you, labored to instill into you the principles of bigotry, and make you warm proselytes to a party: or whether it has not been the great object of my zeal to inculcate upon you the grand essentials of our holy religion, and make you sincere practical Christians. Alas! my dear people, unless I succeed in this, I labor to very little purpose, though I should Presbyterianize the whole colony.

Calumny and slander, it is hoped, have by this time talked themselves out of breath: and the lying Spirit may be at a loss for materials to form a popular plausible falsehood, which is likely to be credited where the dissenters are known. But you have heard formerly, and some of you may still hear strange and uncommon surmises, wild conjectures, and most dismal insinuations. But if you would know the truth at once, if you would be fully informed by one that best knows what religion I am of, I will tell you (with Mr. Baxter) 'I am a Christian, a mere Christian; of no other religion: my church is the Christian church.' The Bible! the Bible! is my religion: and if I am a dissenter, I dissent only from modes and forms of religion which I cannot find in my Bible: and which therefore I conclude have nothing to do with religion, much less should they be made terms of Christian communion, since Christ, the only lawgiver of his church, has not made them such. Let this congregation be that of a Christian society, and I little care what other name it wears. Let it be a little Antioch, where the followers of Christ shall be distinguished by their old catholic name, Christians. To bear and deserve this character, let this be our ambition, this our labor. Let popes pronounce, and councils decree what they please: let statesmen and ecclesiastics prescribe what to believe: as

for us, let us study our Bibles: let us learn of Christ; and if we are not dignified with the smiles, or enriched with the emoluments, of an establishment, we shall have his approbation, who is the only Lord and Sovereign of the realm of conscience, and by whose judgment we must stand or fall forever.

But it is time for me to proceed to consider the other view of the Christian name, on which I intend principally to insist; and that is,

**II. As a name of obligation upon all that wear it to be Christians indeed, or to form their temper and practice upon the sacred model of Christianity. The prosecution of this subject will lead me to answer this important inquiry, What is it to be a Christian?**

To be a Christian, in the popular and fashionable sense, is no difficult or excellent thing. It is to be baptized, to profess the Christian religion, to believe, like our neighbors, that Christ is the Messiah, and to attend upon public worship once a week, in some church or other that bears only the Christian name. In this sense a man may be a Christian, and yet be habitually careless about eternal things: a Christian, and yet fall short of the morality of many of the heathens: a Christian, and yet a drunkard, a swearer, or a slave to some vice or other; a Christian, and yet a willful impenitent offender against God and man. To be a Christian in this sense is no high character; and, if this be the whole of Christianity, it is very little matter whether the world be Christianized or not. But is this to be a Christian in the original and proper sense of the word? No that is something of a very different and superior kind. To be a Christian indeed, is the highest character and dignity of which the human nature is capable: it is the most excellent thing that ever adorned our world: it is a thing that Heaven itself beholds with approbation and delight.

To be a Christian is to be like unto Christ, from whom the name is taken: it is to be a follower and imitator of him; to be possessed of his spirit and temper; and to live as he lived in the world: it is to have those just, exalted, and divine notions of God and divine things, and that just and full view of our duty to God and man, which Christ taught: in short, it is to have our sentiments, our temper, and practice formed upon the sacred model of the gospel. Let me expatiate a little upon this amiable character.

1. To be a Christian, is to depart from iniquity.

To this the name obliges us; and without this we have no title to the name: *Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. 2:19: that is, let him depart from iniquity, or not dare to touch that sacred name. Christ was perfectly free from sin; he was *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners*. His followers also shall be perfectly free from sin in a little time; ere long they will enter into the pure regions of perfect holiness, and will drop all their sins, with their mortal bodies, into the grave. But this, alas! is not their character in the present state, but the remains of sin still cleave to them. Yet, even in the present state, they are laboring after perfection in holiness. Nothing can satisfy them until they are conformed to the image of God's dear Son. They are hourly conflicting with every temptation, and vigorously resisting every iniquity in its most alluring forms. And though sin is perpetually struggling for the mastery, and sometimes in an inadvertent hour, gets an advantage over them, yet, as they are not under the law, but under grace, they are assisted with recruits of grace, so that no sin has any habitual dominion over them. Rom. 6:14. Hence they are free from the gross vices of the age, and are men of good morals. This is their habitual universal character; and to pretend to be Christians without this requisite, is the greatest absurdity.

What then shall we think of the drunken, swearing, debauched, defrauding, rakish, profligate, profane Christians, that have overrun the Christian world? Can there be a greater contradiction? A loyal subject in arms against his sovereign, an ignorant scholar, a sober drunkard, a charitable miser, an honest thief, is not a greater absurdity, or a more direct contradiction. To depart from iniquity is essential to Christianity, and without it, there can be no such thing. There was nothing that Christ was so remote from as sin; and therefore for those that indulge themselves in it to wear his name, is just as absurd and ridiculous as for a coward to denominate himself from Alexander the Great, or an illiterate dunce to call himself a Newtonian philosopher. Therefore, if you will not renounce iniquity, renounce the Christian name: for you cannot consistently retain both. Alexander had a fellow in his army that was of his own name, but a mere coward. "Either be like me," says Alexander, "or lay aside my name." Ye servants of sin, it is in vain

for you to wear the name of Christ, it renders you the more ridiculous, and aggravates your guilt: you may with as much propriety call yourselves lords, or dukes, or kings, as Christians, while you are so unlike Christ. His name is a sarcasm, a reproach to you, and you are a scandal to his name. His name is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you.

2. To be a Christian is to deny yourselves and take up the cross, and follow Christ.

These are the terms of discipleship fixed by Christ himself. *He said to them all, If any man will come after me; let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow me.* Luke 9:23. To deny ourselves is to abstain from the pleasures of sin, to moderate our sensual appetites, to deny our own interest for the sake of Christ, and in short, to sacrifice everything inconsistent with our duty to him, when these come in competition. To take up our cross, is to bear sufferings, to encounter difficulties, and break through them all in imitation of Jesus Christ, and for his sake. To follow him is to trace his steps, and imitate his example, whatever it cost us. But this observation will coincide with the next head, and therefore I now dismiss it. These, Sirs, and these only are the terms, if you would be Christians, or the disciples of Christ. These he honestly warned mankind of when he first called them to be his disciples. He did not take an advantage of them, but let them know beforehand upon what terms they were admitted. He makes this declaration in the midst of a great crowd, in Luke 14:25, &c. *There went a great multitude with him, fond of becoming his followers: but he turned, and said unto them, if any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.* By hating is here meant a smaller degree of love, or a comparative hatred; that is, if we would be Christ's disciples, we must be willing to part with our dearest relations, and even our lives, when we cannot retain them consistently with our duty to him. He goes on: *Whosoever does not bear his cross, and encounter the greatest sufferings after my example cannot, be my disciple.* The love of Christ is the ruling passion of every true Christian, and for his sake he is ready to give up all, and to suffer all that earth or hell can inflict. He must run all risks, and cleave to his pause at all adventures. This is the essential character of every true Christian.

What then shall we think of those crowds among us who retain the Christian name, and yet will not deny themselves of their sensual pleasures, nor part with their temporal interest for the sake of Christ? Who are so far from being willing to lay down their lives that they cannot stand the force of a laugh or a sneer in the cause of religion, but immediately stumble and fall away? or, are they Christians, whom the commands of Christ cannot restrain from what their depraved hearts desire? No a Christian, without self-denial, mortification, and a supreme love to Jesus Christ, is as great a contradiction as fire without heat, or a sun without light, a hero without courage, or a friend without love. And does not this strip some of you of the Christian name, and prove that you have no title at all to it?

3. I have repeatedly observed, that a true Christian must be a follower or imitator of Christ.

*Be ye followers of me*, says St. Paul, *as I also am of Christ*. 1 Cor. 11:1. Christ is the model after whom every Christian is formed: for, says St. Peter, *he left us an example that we should follow his steps*. 1 Pet. 2:21. St. Paul tells us, that *we must be conformed to the image of God's dear Son*, Rom. 8:29, and that *the same mind must be in us, which was also in Christ Jesus*, Phil. 2:5.; unless we partake of his spirit, and resemble him in practice; unless we be as he was in the world, we have no right to partake of his name.

Here I would observe, that what was miraculous in our Lord's conduct, and peculiar to him as the Son of God and Mediator, is not a pattern for our imitation, but only what was done in obedience to that law of God which was common to him and us. His heart glowed with love to his Father, he delighted in universal obedience to him: it was his meat and his drink to do his will, even in the most painful and self-denying instances; he abounded in devotion, in prayer, meditation, fasting, and every religious duty. He was also full of every grace and virtue towards mankind: meek and lowly, kind and benevolent, just and charitable, merciful and compassionate; a dutiful son, a loyal subject, a faithful friend, a good master, and an active, useful, public-spirited member of society. He was patient and resigned, and yet undaunted and brave under sufferings: he had all his appetites and passions under proper government, he was heavenly-minded, above this world in heart



while he dwelt in it. Beneficence to the souls and bodies of men was the business of his life; for *he went about doing good*. Acts 10:38. This is an imperfect sketch of his amiable character: and in these things every one that deserves to be called after his name, does in some measure resemble and imitate him. This is not only his earnest endeavor, but what he actually attains, though in a much inferior degree; and his imperfections are the grief of his heart. This resemblance and imitation of Christ is essential to the very being of a Christian, and without it, it is a vain pretense. And does your Christianity, my brethren, stand this test? may one know that you belong to Christ by your living like him, and discovering the same temper and spirit? Do the manners of the divine Master spread through all his family; and do you shew that you belong to it by your temper and conduct? Alas! if you must be denominated from hence, would not some of you with more propriety be called Epicureans from Epicurus, the sensual Atheistic philosopher, or Mammonites from Mammon, the imaginary god of riches, or Bacchanals from Bacchus, the god of wine, than Christians from Christ, the most perfect pattern of living holiness and virtue that ever was exhibited to the world?

If you claim the name of Christians, where is that ardent devotion, that affectionate love to God, that zeal for his glory, that alacrity in his service, that resignation to his will, that generous benevolence to mankind, that zeal to promote their best interests, that meekness and forbearance under ill usage, that unwearied activity in doing good to all, that self-denial and heavenly mindedness which shone so conspicuous in Christ, whose holy name you bear? Alas! while you are destitute of those graces, and yet wear his name, you burlesque it, and turn it into a reproach both to him and yourselves.

I might add, that the Christian name is not hereditary to you by your natural birth, but you must be born anew of the spirit to entitle you to this new name; that a Christian is a Believer, believing in Him after whom he is called as his only Savior and Lord, and that he is a true penitent. Repentance was incompatible with Christ's character, who was perfectly righteous, and had no sin of which to repent; but it is a proper virtue in a sinner, without which he cannot be a Christian. On these and several other particulars I might enlarge, but my time will not allow: I shall therefore conclude with a

few reflections.

*First,* You may hence see that the Christian character is the highest, the most excellent and sublime in all the world: it includes everything truly great and amiable. The Christian has exalted sentiments of the supreme Being, just notions of duty, and a proper temper and conduct towards God and man. A Christian is a devout worshipper of the God of heaven, a cheerful observer of his whole law, and a broken-hearted penitent for his imperfections.

A Christian is a complication of all the amiable and useful graces and virtues; temperate and sober, just, liberal, compassionate and benevolent, humble, meek, gentle, peaceable, and in all things conscientious. A Christian is a good parent, a good child, a good master, a good servant, a good husband, a good wife, a faithful friend, an obliging neighbor, a dutiful subject, a good ruler, a zealous patriot, and an honest statesman: and as far as he is such, so far, and no farther, he is a Christian. And can there be a more amiable and excellent character exhibited to your view? It is an angelic, a divine character. Let it be your glory and your ambition to wear it with a good grace, to wear it so as to adorn it.

To acquire the title of kings and lords is not in your power: to spread your fame as scholars, philosophers, or heroes, may be beyond your reach: but here is a character more excellent, more amiable, more honorable than all these, which it is your business to deserve and maintain. And blessed be God, this is a dignity which the meanest among you, which beggars and slaves may attain. Let this therefore be an object of universal ambition and pursuit, and let every other name and title be despised in comparison of it. This is the way to rise to true honor in the estimate of God, angels, and good men. What though the antichristian Christians of our age and country ridicule it? Let them consider their own absurd conduct and be ashamed. They think it an honor to wear the Christian name, and yet persist in unchristian practices; and who but a fool, with such palpable contradiction, would think so? A beggar that fancies himself a king, and trails his rags with the gait of majesty, as though they were royal robes, is not so ridiculous as one that will usurp the Christian name without a Christian practice; and yet such Christians are the favorites of the world. To renounce the profession of Christianity is barbarous and profane; to live according to that profession, and practice Christianity is preciseness and

fanaticism. Can anything be more preposterous? This is as if one should ridicule learning, and yet glory in the character of a scholar: or laugh at bravery, and yet celebrate the praises of heroes. And are they fit to judge of the wisdom and propriety, or their censures to be regarded, who fall into such an absurdity themselves?

*Secondly*, Hence you may see that, if all the professors of Christianity should behave in character, the religion of Christ would soon appear divine to all mankind, and spread through all nations of the earth. Were Christianity exhibited to the life in all its native and inherent glories, it would be as needless to offer arguments to prove it divine, as to prove that the sun is full of light; the conviction would flash upon all mankind by its own intrinsic evidence. Did Christians exemplify the religion they profess, all the world would immediately see that *that* religion which rendered them so different a people from all the rest of mankind, is indeed divine, and every way worthy of universal acceptance. Then we should have no such monsters as Atheists, Deists, and Infidels in Christian countries. Then would Heathenism Mahometism, and all the false religions in the world, fall before the heaven-born religion of Jesus Christ. Then it would be sufficient to convince an infidel just to bring him into a Christian country, and let him observe the different face of things there from all the world beside. But alas!

*Thirdly*, How different is the Christian world from the Christian religion?

Who would imagine that they who take their name from Christ have any relation to him, if we observe their spirit and practice? Should a stranger learn Christianity from what he sees in popish countries, he would conclude it principally consisted in bodily austerities, in worshipping saints, images, relics, and a thousand trifles, in theatrical fopperies and insignificant ceremonies, in believing implicitly all the determinations of a fallible man as infallibly true, and in persecuting all that differ from them, and shewing their love, to their souls by burning their bodies. In protestant countries, alas! the face of things is but little better, as to good morals and practical, religion. Let us take our own country for a sample. Suppose an Heathen or Mahometan should take a tour through Virginia to learn the religion of the inhabitants from their general conduct, what would he conclude? Would, he not conclude, that all the religion of the generality consisted in a few Sun-

day formalities, and that the rest of the week they had nothing to do with God, or any religion, but were at liberty to live as they please; And were he told these were the followers of one Christ, and were of his religion, would he not conclude that he was certainly an impostor, and the minister of sin? But when he came to find, that notwithstanding all this licentiousness, they professed the pure and holy religion of the Bible, how would he be astonished, and pronounce them the most inconsistent bare-faced hypocrites! My brethren, great and heavy is the guilt that lies upon our country upon this account. It is a scandal to the Christian name it is guilty of confirming the neighboring Heathen in their prejudices, and hinders the propagation of Christianity through the world. O let not us be accessory to this dreadful guilt, but do all we can to recommend, our religion to universal acceptance!—I add,

Fourthly, and lastly, let us examine whether we have any just title to the Christian name; that is, whether we are Christians indeed; for if we have not the thing, to retain the name is the most inconsistent folly and hypocrisy, and will answer no end but to aggravate our condemnation. A lost Christian is the most shocking character in hell; and, unless you be such Christians as I have described, it will ere long be your character. Therefore, be followers of Christ, imbibe his spirit, practice his precepts, and depart from iniquity, otherwise he will sentence you from him at last as workers of iniquity. *And then will I profess unto them* (they are Christ's own words) *I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* Matthew 7:23.