

A LETTER ON THE LATTER-DAY WORK OF THE LORD. NO. 2.

“BUT THOUGH WE, OR AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN, PREACH ANY OTHER GOSPEL UNTO YOU THAN THAT WHICH WE HAVE PREACHED UNTO YOU, LET HIM BE ACCURSED.”—*Gal. 1: 8.*

Come with me now, to the day of Pentecost, when the disciples of Jesus were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. See Acts 2: 1-4. Peter you remember, being filled with the Holy Ghost, preached to the assembled multitude, Christ and Him crucified; “and they being pricked in their hearts said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, men and brethren what shall we do?” Now as this is the first question asked by every truly awakened soul, will we not do well to heed the reply? Peter, let us remember, was filled with the Holy Ghost, the promise of the Father which was to bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever the Savior had taught them, and was to guide them into *all truth*. Think you that Peter was, or was not able to answer? Let us see. “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2: 38, 39.

Now then dear M—here is the plain direction of the inspired apostle. They believed his words, therefore they believed Christ to be the Son of God: the fact of their being pricked in their hearts, and asking what shall we do, is evidence of this. Faith already existing, Peter commands them to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins, and they shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Why is it my friend, that these plain and imperative directions of the apostle, have been taken with such latitude by the churches of this day? None of them pretend to deny that immersion was the apostolic mode of baptism. The Son of God demanded baptism at the hands of John, and when John forbade Him, he says, “Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” Jesus, the immaculate Son of God, buried

beneath the waters of Jordan, in order to do the will of His Father, and yet for you and I sin cursed and guilty mortals, the sprinkling of a few drops in infancy (when we have no sins to be forgiven, and know not right from wrong, much less know how to repent) or the pouring of a little upon our heads, is sufficient. Oh? my friend, when I contemplate the character and life of Christ; when I reflect that He was sent to be an example for us, I feel to exclaim, would to God that Paul were here at this day, to preach to this people, as he did to the Galatians, surely they would hear him! But to my soul comes the solemn answer “They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them, if they hear not them, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” Truly in plainness is the gospel given, but men love not such simplicity: It may have been necessary for the pure and holy Jesus, but it is not for them. Jesus was buried in baptism, and expressly stated, it was to fulfill all righteousness; but they have discovered His mistake, they have found an open door, where no porter of God stands to admit them. True they did it by trampling under foot His commandments, but then so they get safely in, what will it matter? So doubtless thought one of old, who had not on the wedding garment. Did it or did it not matter to him.

Jesus says “I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away.” “He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned.” Here we plainly see that believing is not sufficient for salvation, though not to believe, is sufficient for condemnation. We may believe forever, that Jesus is the Son of God, yet it will avail us nothing, for the Savior expressly declares, “Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.” Turn to Acts 10 c. and you will there read, “there was a certain man in Cesarea, called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. He saw in vision evidently,

about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming into him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side: *he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do,*" Acts 10: 1-7.

Now bear in mind that the character of Cornelius—a devout man, one who feared God, and who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always: even attaining to the ministration of angels: whose prayers and alms came up to God for a memorial. Bear this in mind I say, and then listen to Peter, while he makes his defense, before the Jews, who thought salvation was for them only. After relating the vision of Cornelius to them, he gives the words of the angel thus, "Send men to Joppa and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter, who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." Acts 11: 12, 13. What, can it be possible, that one should walk so uprightly before God, as that the angels of God should be his ministers, and not be saved? Surely at this time, should we know of one so just, we might well desire, (as the young man who came to Christ) to know what was yet wanting! Let us see, what it is that Peter shall tell him, for bear distinctly in mind that Peter was sent to tell him words whereby he and his house should be saved. If you will turn to the chapter dear M—and read it in full you will see that Peter first preached Christ and Him crucified, then belief upon His name, and after the Holy Ghost had been poured out upon them, "Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Acts 10: 48. Now when you have reflected upon this my friend, and consider that one half of the christian world, hold it as being of no importance, whether a believer be baptized or not, answer me then, why did Peter command baptism, even after the Holy Ghost fell upon them?

Perhaps by this time you are ready to ask, in what respect do the Latter-Day Saints differ from the other churches? We all believe in Christ, and in repentance; many also believe in baptism by immersion, and hold baptism as a saving ordinance, I cannot see that you do any more, only claiming a prophet for a leader, which is to say the least, very unlikeliy. If you differ from the churches, in what does the difference consist?

My dear friend, if you will study the organization of the apostolic church—the church of Christ in the days of its purity, and tell me the difference between that

church and the churches of the present day, then will your question be answered. Let us then for a moment, refer to the organization of this church. Turn to 1 Cor. 12: 28, and you will read: "*God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing; helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*" Observe dear M—Who hath set these in the church, for here is the first great distinguishing feature, between the Church of Christ, and the churches of the day, which we hold are not of Christ, and as we shall presently show, by the word of God and by their own confession, have not within their pale, from the highest archbishop, to the humblest pastor of the village flock, a single legally authorized ambassador of Christ. Far would it be from me to say this, my friend, did I not know it to be true, and in accordance with God's words. Many of them I know are honest, conscientious men, men who exert, so far as morality is concerned, a vast influence for good, but as far as the power of God is concerned, if you ask them in regard to it, they would be either grieved or indignant, were you to doubt their authority; but they would be much more so, did you for a moment suppose, they had authority in the only way the Bible declares it can be obtained; namely, by direct revelation from God. Hear what Paul says in his letter to the Heb. 5: 4, "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron: so also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto Him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

Can any thing be plainer than this? No man taketh this honor unto himself. Even the Son of God, in this; as in all else, submitted to the will of His Father. The apostle says: "God hath set some in the church," and that he did not delegate to them His power in this respect, witness the confession of Paul in regard to the source from whence he derived his authority, and further, he expressly declares, they must be called as was Aaron. You will doubtless remember dear M—that at the time Constantine was seated upon the throne, the church had become so powerful, that he as the representative of the state, sought her hand in marriage. The ceremony was celebrated with great pomp and solemnity, and the name of Constantine, was crowned with honor. But alas! for the church; her beautiful garments were sullied, her purity departed, and though she still clung to the form; the form was all she had, for, from that day to this, the church and all her daughters, have denied the power of godliness. This truth the Bible

plainly reveals, and profane history corroborates it. The church lost the power on account of apostasy from the gospel Paul preached, and because forgetting the injunction of the blessed Savior, they became conformary to the world. Alas! for christianity, when it becomes popular, and for any one who thinks to inherit the kingdom of heaven, when their heart is set upon the kingdoms of this world. Since the apostasy, and since the darkness of the middle ages, history fails to show one, (Joseph Smith excepted) who even claim to have been called by direct revelation of God to establish again His church: one who claims to have received his authority as did Paul, and as Paul teaches, was the only way it could be obtained. Did Luther, Calvin, Wesley or any of the host of great and good men, who from time to time, shook themselves from the existing corruption, and came out as reformers, and established churches: did any of them claim to have direct revelation to guide them? If so I am not aware of it, for in our day, it is considered a fit subject for ridicule.

Search the Bible, and if you can find a single text in it, which will support the ministry of the present day, in the claims they advance, then will I be more than happy, to know where it is. In England it is a common practice among the nobility and wealthier class, if they have a son who is not very promising in intellect, he must study for the ministry, and in our own country, how often do we hear the remark, when a minister preaches an eloquent sermon, and displays an unusual amount of learning and eloquence, What a fine lawyer was spoiled, when that man became a preacher, or what a politician he would have made. Yes dear M—you have heard such remarks, more than once, and I have heard them too, and have often wondered, where the line of distinction was to be drawn, for truly in some cases it would be a nice distinction. Paul truly foresaw and wrote concerning this as you will see by reference to 2 Tim. 4: 3: For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears: and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Just mark this one distinction, and I close upon this point. In the apostolic church, "God hath set some," here "they have heaped to themselves teachers." Unto which are they like, the church of God or the churches of men?

Here then, as I before remarked, is the first broad distinction, and is the foundation of every error, and corruption.

Christ said unto His apostles: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel

to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues: They shall take up serpents: and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." Mark 16: 15-18.

Here are set forth the signs by which the believers of Jesus were to be distinguished from all others, and we hold that if the churches of the present day, have any authority from Him, they have also the power to do whatsoever Christ said His apostles should do, and if they have not this power, then is the conclusion inevitable that they are not sent by Him. Here Jesus is addressing His apostles, they are the ones spoken to, but those who should believe on His name, through their ministry, are the ones who it is here expressly stated, these signs shall follow. We are well aware that it is taught, that these, were for the establishment of the church, and were necessary for the church during its infancy. Here again dear M—is a doctrine, for which there is not a shadow of foundation. Christ gave to His church, signs by which they were to be known in the nineteenth as well as the first century, and if they have not these gifts and blessings, it is an evidence as clear as noonday, that they are not His, and are acting without authority: a very good reason for their not being acknowledged.

In 1 Cor. 12: 7-12, Paul says: "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to profit *withal*. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom: to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, To another, faith by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another, the working of miracles: to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

From this quotation, two very important facts may be learned. First, that these manifestations of the Spirit are given to profit *withal*, and secondly, that though these manifestations are various, it is *one and the self-same Spirit*. Now if the churches of the day, have this Spirit, as they profess to have, where are the fruits? "By their fruits (said the Savior) ye shall know them." Either the God we worship must be changeable, or they have not His Spirit. God is not changeable, therefore, they have not His Spirit, and not having His Spirit they are none

of His, therefore He does not acknowledge them. Hear what Paul says these gifts were for, in his letter to the Ephesians 4: 12-15. "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

Is there proof in any of this, that these things were given only to establish the church? Nay dear M.—and what is more, there is no proof of such a nature to be found between the two lids of the Bible. Let us then see if apart from what has already been said, we have any proof, that this Holy Spirit was to remain. Upon one occasion, when Jesus was seeking to comfort His disciples, whose hearts were heavy because He had told them He must leave them, He says: "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that *He may abide with you forever.*" John 14: 16. In the 12th verse of the same chapter, He says: Verily verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me the works that I do, shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do because I go to my Father." Here we see that Christ promised His Spirit to His disciples. Peter upon the day of Pentecost bears witness to its being the Spirit promised; and Paul after giving in detail the manifestations of the Spirit; bears testimony to its being one and the self-same Spirit. Now if the ministers of the present day, have this Spirit, they have authority to lay hands upon those who have been admitted into the church, for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and if they walk uprightly, they have a right to claim from God, the promise, for Peter says: "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Now my friend let us for a moment consider what is to be done upon our part that we may receive this gift, and be enabled to know that Jesus is the Son of God, for this the scriptures assures us, we can not know, but by the Holy Ghost. Paul in 1 Cor. 12: 3, says: "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Here then is an important distinction between those who believe and

have not obeyed the gospel, and those who have both believed and obeyed.

"There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." 1 John 5: 7-9.

Peter tells us, it is necessary to repent and be baptized, and then the promise is ours, but none can legally baptize us, unless they be sent of God, nor is baptism legal, unless administered in the form that Christ instituted. Perhaps you will say, did not Cornelius receive the Holy Ghost, before he was baptized? I answer that he did, but the mere fact of his having received it, is no warrant for you or any one else to hope or expect it. You must remember that Cornelius was a Gentile, and despite the vision that Peter had had, his mind was still clouded with prejudice, and he could not, as it were, comprehend how salvation could be sent to the Gentiles. But after God poured out His Spirit upon them, his last doubt was swept away, and he commanded them to be baptized. It was not until after the baptism of Jesus, that the Holy Spirit rested upon Him, nor can we find a case on record, save Cornelius and his house, and here the reason is so apparent, that no one who does not wish to, need misunderstand.

When Paul came up to Ephesus, you will remember, "he found there certain disciples, and said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost? They said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, unto what were ye then baptized? And they said unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is on Christ. When they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied." Take this in connection with the plain direction given by Peter, to the three thousand upon the day of Pentecost, and like Paul we may well enquire, unto what are the churches of this day baptized? Hear what he says when writing to Timothy, in regard to this class of persons, in the last days.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers,

false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God: having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. 4: 1-5.

Oh! the clearness of prophetic vision. Think you that Paul could have described the present state of society better had he lived in our day? To one feature of this description however, I wish to call your attention in particular. Those were professing christians, for Paul expressly states, *they have the form of godliness, but deny the power.* This dear M—is the vital principle of christianity, the Spirit which bears witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God. Without the Holy Ghost, neither you nor I, nor yet any one can say that Jesus is the Lord, and with the Holy Ghost, all the gifts and blessings of the apostolic church, will be restored.

It will be no difficult matter now, to determine wherein the churches of the day differ from the Latter-Day Saints. We hold that the gospel in its purity and power was restored by an angel, as John the Revelator, foretold it would be. In Rev. 14: 6, 7, John says: "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

By no authority less than the authority of God, and made known by direct revelation, dare any man preach His word, much less organize and establish a church. We hold that when on earth Christ gave to His apostles authority to preach His gospel, and to organize His church, and no church can be His which has not the same form and government which His church then had, the same officers, and the same gifts.

We worship a God unchangeably the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and we know that He does manifest Himself to His saints in this day, even as He did formerly, and here is the beauty of the pure religion of Jesus; you need not doubt you need not be uncertain, in regard to whether you are in the true way, for God is pledged to give you a knowledge, not by the gifts and blessings bestowed upon others, but by His Holy Spirit, bearing witness with your spirit, that you shall know for yourself and not for another. The world cry, *debauchion, fanatacism*, and smile upon us with scorn. But oh! my friend, what is that to the soul, that in the solitude of the midnight hour, or in

the closet upon the bended knee, can feel His Spirit almost as visible presence, bearing witness with theirs, that they are following in the footsteps of their Redeemer. Christ said to Nicodemus: The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell from whence it cometh or whither it goeth: *so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* Nay my friend, the humblest follower of God, if he lives near to Him, has a knowledge that all the sophistry and learning of the world combined, cannot take from them. This is why they are willing to suffer persecution, and why they count as naught all else, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

Take a Latter-Day Saint, (one who has lived to his privilege, and consequently been blest of God,) take such persons, and isolate them for years. Let them see no one who believes as they do, and let them all this time sit under the droppings of the most eloquent, uninspired sanctuary, and then let them hear that God has again remembered His people; that way off yonder, in an obscure place, He has a few humble followers, upon whom He is pouring out His Spirit, and not more quickly did the disciples of old, leave their nets and follow Jesus, then will they leave all and hasten to be numbered with His people.

The Savior said; "If any man will do His will, *he shall know of the doctrine*, whether it be of men or of God." Oh! how broad is the distinction between *believing* and *knowing*. Jesus has not left us comfortless, but has sent the Comforter, whereby we know when we are following Him. The apostle teaches in Eph. 4: 5, that there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and in 1 Cor. 12: 13, "By one Spirit are ye all baptized into one body." If this then is the gospel of Christ, unto what gospel are the churches of the present day removed? Many faiths, many bodies, many baptisms; but they say "so we are conscientious therein, it does not matter." Just think of this doctrine for a moment my friend. The *fallible conscience of man*, is placed *above* the plain rules of the pure gospel of God, which Christ sealed with His blood. Jesus says: "In vain do they worship me, *teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men.*" "Enter ye in at the straight gate." "He that cometh up any other way, the same is a thief and a robber." I do not ask you my friend, to believe as I believe one moment longer than my belief is conformed to the Bible. But I do ask you to study your Bible, and if you would be a member of the body of Christ, *obey the gospel*, and then the Son of God is pledged to give to you and to every one so doing, a knowledge for themselves, whether the doctrine be of Him.

And now a few words upon one other point, already alluded to, and for this time I will say adieu. I refer to the express declaration of Paul, in his letter to Timothy, "You and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." Perhaps you will say that in a land of liberty such as ours, no people would be persecuted for their religion. Even had as the Salt Lake Mormons have become, no one persecutes them: they are tolerated though their doctrines are infamous. Cheerfully will I admit the last statement, for I know the devil takes care of his own. But if you will go back in the history of this church, to the time when they were a pure people, and enjoyed the gifts and blessings of God, you will see them driven from their homes in mid-winter, delicate women and tender children exposed to the fierce blasts, without a roof to shelter them, or a crust to satisfy their hunger. You will see them imprisoned, and what is horrible to relate, the flesh of their own brethren, who had been massacred, offered them as food. These facts are too well established, to be successfully contradicted, and this was at a time when their worst enemies are compelled to admit, that it was *only done through prejudice* and jealousy of their rapidly increasing numbers.

Oh, Missouri! in the dark and terrible days of thy late conflict, when you have been made to suffer as no other State has, in this dreadful war, when neighbor has raised his hand against neighbor, and brother has sought his brother's life: have you once called to mind the wrongs and injuries, which your sons heaped upon innocent people; yea upon the people of God? If you have not, then know that God has not forgotten it, and into His ear has come the cry of His saints, and their blood has been, and shall still be answered upon your State.

And now dear M—if you have followed me thus far with kindly attention, and perchance desire to know more upon this subject, send to I. Sheen, Plano, Kendall Co., Ill., and purchase from him, a work on the priesthood, by B. Winchester, or the "The Voice of Warning." Send also for a tract by I. Sheen, "Evidences that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God," but above all things search your Bible, and pray to God for light to direct you; and just here let me say to you, that no one ignorant of the scriptures, can be a Latter-Day Saint, and what is more, there is not between the two lids of the Bible, from the first verse of Genesis to the last verse of Revelations, a text which does not support our doctrine. And why? Simply because it is the doctrine of the Bible, the gospel preached by Paul, and

the truth of the everlasting God, unchangeably the same, yesterday, to-day and forever. M. F.

A Continual Seed of Revelation.

"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness." *Isa. 59* : 1, 2, 3.

"For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."—*Isa. 60* : 2.

During the dark ages that succeeded the light of truth which emanated from the Church of Christ of Former-Day Saints, many doctrines were introduced into the world, which are certainly inimical to the God-given plan of salvation. As that church degenerated into a state of apostasy, false teachers, whom the people "heaped to themselves," gradually inculcated man-made systems of such a character that in a comparatively short time not a vestige of the primitive church was to be found. The faith of mankind diminished, the gifts and power of the gospel began to recede, and finally the church sank in a whirlpool of the most abominable apostasy. And as long as mankind suffer themselves to be bound down and circumscribed by the "precepts of men," just so long will they remain enveloped in that dark cloud that arose at the downfall of that church, and which remained like a dark pall over every department of the professedly religious world until the year 1830, [1827,] at which time truth sprang out of the earth, and spiritual light from the eternal world burst in upon the intelligence of men, and the universal darkness that prevailed for so many ages over the minds of *all* men, was interrupted by a flood of divine light.

There were those who beheld its glorious beauty, and appreciated its worth, and obeyed its requirements, and began to "increase their joy in the Lord." But to return to my subject.

The sound of the glad tidings of good things, went abroad in the earth, and the legitimate ordinances of the same were administered by divinely inspired men. And is it not mournful to contemplate the fact that this benign influence did not continue with men; that the kingdom of heaven was set up in power, with its proper characteristics, and yet in process of time was thrown down, and not a vestige of this beautiful structure to be found among men. Now Paul knew, by the spirit of prophecy, (for he could know in no other way,)

that a great falling away from the faith would transpire after his departure, for he said to Timothy, "the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." See 1. Tim. 4: 1.

We likewise discover that the great apostle to the Gentiles was very anxious about this matter, and the deep interest so felt for the continuation of the work of righteousness, prompted him to commit the following charge to Timothy:

"Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. 4: 2-4.

Now, the apostasy of which I have already spoken, stands as an eternal monument of the divine authority with which that apostle spoke. The prophet Isaiah also had a plain view of this deplorable condition of the world, as you will see from the quotations at the head of this article.

The good Lord must not be charged with taking his spiritual blessings from, among men without a just cause. Oh no. Therefore the real cause must rest with man.

Now, I want to take a brief view of the establishment of that system of things which demolished the primitive order of the church. Men of reprobate minds and corrupt hearts entered into the fold, wolves in the garb of sheep, and not sparing the flock, they brought in damnable heresies, and through feigned words made merchandise of the people. By this means the innocent and unsuspecting became tintured with the spirit of antichrist, and the germ of that abominable apostate, the Papal Church, began gradually to take root, and the fruits of the Spirit gradually disappeared from the earth. After the gifts of revelation and prophecy had almost entirely vanished from among men, there arose a great contention about those manuscripts which claimed to be the written word of the Lord. It will be remembered that no volume called the Bible was compiled at the period of which we write, but the manuscripts of which it is now composed, or which contained the writings of our Bible, had been scattered here and there through the church.

In order to settle the fermentation in regard to what manuscripts were of divine authenticity, a council was called to sit in judgment upon the word of the Lord. This took place A. D. 397, and was called the third Council of Carthage. And thus poor, weak, un-inspired men had the presumption to say, "this is the word of the Lord—that is not," and from the multitude

of inspired writings which had been given for our "learning and comfort," by a succession of prophets and apostles through ages past, a few were selected—bound into a volume, and called the Bible, and the proclamation went forth from the blasphemous lips of that mother of abominations, that the canon of scripture was full, that divine revelation had forever ceased, that the diminutive portion of the word of God which they had selected, was a *sufficient* rule of faith and practice.

Now, it is obvious that the people of God were not only governed from Adam to Moses, but from Moses to the time of the falling away of the apostolic church, by *new revelation*. The word of the Lord given in any past age, was never considered by the *true* church, a *sufficient* rule of faith and practice. This idea was not in harmony with the relationship which had always existed between the God of heaven and His people, therefore this idea did not originate among the true believers. It was those apostates of whom we have spoken that originated the idea, and by them this mistaken idea has been transmitted to posterity, and all those who left her communion walked in the footsteps of their mother, in denying the propriety of new revelation. Are you aware, ye Protestant churches, that your notion with regard to the canon of scripture being full, had its birth at the rise of that church which you so lustily condemn.

The reformers from the Catholic Church are entitled to much praise for the good influence they exercised in a moral point of view, but as far as the immaculate gospel is concerned have they not, as a body, denied the power thereof, and inherited from their parent, (the Papal Church), the fatal delusion that divine communications to men had terminated, because a sufficiency had already been given? They not only concurred with her that the canon of scripture was full, but they suffered themselves to sink deeper still into the mire of apostasy, and actually concluded that it was *too full*; and therefore they assumed the responsibility of forming a new canon, leaving out some half a score of books that were in the first.

In the course of time another daughter of the Papal Church, the Lutherans, fixed up another Bible, and rejected several books that the English daughter retained. She left out St. Paul's epistle to the Hebrews, the epistle of St. Jude, and other writings of the New Testament scripture. Here then we have three canons of scripture, proposed to man. Which of these books shall we receive? It must be remembered that none of the compilers of these three volumes of scripture claimed any divine directions in their respective selections. It seems that they overlooked the fact that the Lord had declared, by the mouth of Amos, that He

"will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." Surely He has not intimated through any of the prophets whose words we have, that it would be pleasing to Him for any set of uninspired men to compile their distinct canons of scripture, and then announce to the children of men that a sufficiency was contained in their respective volumes.

Dear reader, if you will take the matter into serious consideration, you will at once perceive that in consequence of "transgressing the law, changing the ordinance, and breaking the everlasting covenant," the children of men are excluded from receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, even "the Spirit of truth," which will lead the human mind into all truth, and Jesus said it would show things to come. This would be a prophetic view of things, the enjoyment of which is not claimed by any settarian fraternity of which we have any knowledge. Now, where this influence is not exercised over the minds of men, they can arrive at no definite conclusion as to whether the Lord accepts or rejects their operations in spiritual affairs. Our Savior told the people, in His day, that if they would obey the Divine will, they should know of the doctrine whether it was of God. But, says one, what is that will? "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." Jas. 1 : 5.

It is certainly deplorable to see mankind continue to divide and sub-divide into contending factions, with the word of the Lord so plain, and casting an insult upon the same, by claiming it as the man of their counsel. If the Bible contained such a medley of contradictions as the professedly religious world present, then we could heartily endorse the skeptical assertion that it is like an old fiddle. We do not believe that the schismatic condition of the religious world is the result of their being baptized by the Spirit of the Lord into different members, constituting the body of Christ. But we can safely affirm that by the spirit of contention, they are divided into a great number of man-made systems, and that each of these is striving to emulate all the rest in worldly aggrandizement, for "behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." "Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out and cry; they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered." Isa. 29 : 9, 10.

It is plain to be seen, that the prophet is here speaking of the spiritual condition of the nations of the earth. He says that "darkness shall cover the earth," etc.; that "they stagger but not with strong drink." Now, the reasons assigned for this

disordered state of affairs, is that they are deprived of certain spiritual leaders, such as prophets, seers, etc. For where there is no prophet or seer there can be no immediate revelation, and when revelation ceases, the kingdom of heaven must of necessity cease to exist among men.

The plan of salvation was devised by the God of heaven, and this plan is carried on upon a certain fixed principle, which must remain as immutable as God himself. There is a certain prerogative which the Lord always has, and always will reserve to Himself, in spite of every cunningly devised fable that man may institute. It is the calling of the ministry. Men may "heap to themselves teachers" in abundance, and pay them heavy salaries for preaching a set of doctrines, which, in all probability, will be "another gospel," for if they take this honor upon themselves, the Lord will not be likely to bestow the Spirit of truth upon a set of men who assume authority, without being selected and commissioned through that eternal means, viz., direct communication by the Spirit of prophecy, and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. See 1 Tim. 4 : 14.

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