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EVANGELISTIC SERMONS

By W. P. SKAGGS

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I sometimes fear that we are drifting from the teaching of the fundamentals of God's Word, and I fear that this drift may result in a serious setback in the knowledge of the truth, and hence in the loss of souls. I try to not become pessimistic, I try to look beyond the clouds of doubt and discouragements and to get a view of the silver linings in the providence of God. I pray to have the courage of Elijah to stand for the living God whom we serve. I have recently been looking over some of the old subjects and re-studying them, and among this number is one on the "Tabernacle and Its Services."

I have been deeply interested in the study of the TYPES of the Old Testament. That the Old Testament is largely made up of types is clearly shown by the apostle Paul in these passages, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and through comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). "These things were our examples to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted" (1 Cor. 11:6). "These things happened unto them by way of example, and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 15:11). "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a feast day, or a new moon, or a sabbath day; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is Christ's" (Col. 2:16). "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect them that draw nigh" (Heb. 10:1). And in Heb. 8:4, 5, we read, "Now if he were on earth he should not be a priest at all, seeing there are those
who offer gifts according to the law; which serve that which is a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, even as Moses is warned of God when he is about to make the tabernacle, for see saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed thee in the Mount.” Again, in Heb. 9:9, Paul says, “The way into the holy place has not yet been made manifest while the first tabernacle was yet standing; which is a figure for the time present.” Paul here clearly declares that the law and the tabernacle were but shadows or types of the real spiritual worship that should afterward be revealed. But again in Heb. 9:23 Paul says, “It was necessary therefore that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.” These passages, it seems to me, are enough to prove to the most captious that the things of the Old Testament are, in the main, types of the things of the New Testament. I shall not argue this point further, but shall call your attention to the truth that these types or figures were never intended to continue ever, but being typical they would pass with the coming of the substance, or the antitypes. In view of this Paul says, “Being only (with meats and drinks and divers washings) carnal ordinances imposed until a time of reformation” (Heb. 9:10). It is then certain that when the time of reformation did come their purpose was fulfilled. The shadow yielded to the sunlight, or substance, the figure to the real, the type to the antitype. In line with this we read, “What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions till the seed should come to whom the promise was made” (Gal. 3:19). Again in verse 24 Paul says, “So then the law is become our tutor to bring us to Christ—But now that faith is come we are no longer under a tutor.”
I now ask your attention to the examination of this beautiful type of the plan of salvation. I shall not have time, in a reasonable discourse, to notice every type that might be found connected with the tabernacle, but shall content myself with an examination of its main features. However the main types shown in the Tabernacle and its services are (1) The consecration of the priesthood. (2) The Church of Christ, and (3) of heaven itself. I might mention that the "outer court" evidently typifies the world as opposed to the church. In Heb. 9:1 Paul says, "Now even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service, and its sanctuary, a sanctuary of this world." From this I understand the "outer court" to refer to the unconverted world, the world of sin, or the world as separate and distinct from the church or holy place. Each of these apartments are entered through an opening that we may call a door. This "outer court" has its door, and since it typifies the world, this door must typify the place or method of entering this world, or the natural birth. By the natural birth we come into the world of nature, become natural men and women. Passing on our way toward the "holy place" we find just on our right the "brazen altar" where they offered their bloody sacrifices. Paul teaches us that these sacrifices typified the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Heb. 9:13, 14 he tells us that, "For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify unto the cleansing of the flesh. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" And again, in Heb. 9:23; 26 we read, "It was necessary therefore that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these; for Christ entered not into the
holy place made with hands; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us; nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place year by year with blood not his own; else he must often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Here then we come to the offering of Christ and here, on our way to the “holy place” we accept by faith the sacrifice of the Lord. Here by faith we turn from darkness and blindness and sinfulness to accept the Savior and by faith we shall press on to the goal of eternal glory.

Passing from the brazen altar and on our way to the “holy place” we come to the “lava” filled with water. This “lava” was placed between the brazen altar and the door of the holy place (Ex. 40:7). “And thou shalt set the lava between the tent of meeting and the altar and shalt put water therein.” Whatever this lava typifies it must be something that is found between the brazen altar and the holy place. Here Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet (Ex. 30:19-21, “And Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat”. “So they shall wash their hands and their feet that they die not.” Here they washed their hands and their feet but not their bodies. But what does this washing of the hands and feet mean? In Ps. 26:5, we read, “I will wash my hands in innocency.” And in Ps. 73:13 we read, “Surely in vain have I cleansed my heart and washed my hands in innocency.” When Pilate was about to yield to the wicked demands of the Jews and crucify the Savior he “took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man” (Matt. 27:34). Isaiah says, “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man
his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him, to our Lord and he will abundantly pardon” (Isa. 55:7). It seems to me then that this washing which took place at the “lava” on the way to the holy place must have reference to, or be a type of repentance. It is at the proper place for repentance, between the altar and the holy place. And as repentance would indicate the purifying of the life, so this seems to show purity, or innocence. With the Jews death would result from the neglect of this washing (Ex. 30:21), “So they shall wash their hands and their feet that they die not.” And so without repentance spiritual death must result as Jesus said, “Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3, 5).

This washing could not refer to baptism from these considerations: (1) Baptism is a birth, and as we are not born before we come to the door of natural life, neither are we baptized before we come to the door of the “holy place”, or the church. Hence this washing is at the wrong place for baptism. (2) Baptism is a burial (Rom. 6:4) or the washing of the body (Heb. 10:22) but this washing is only partial, very partial, only the hands and feet being washed. Hence it could not refer to baptism.

Passing from the “lava”, or having exercised faith and repentance, we next come to the door of the “holy place”. And as we found the “door” or pass way into the “outer court” to represent a birth, (the natural birth) so we will find this place of entrance to represent or typify a birth, the “new birth” or the BIRTH FROM ABOVE. We enter the natural world through the natural birth, or the birth of the flesh, so we enter the spiritual kingdom of God through the “new birth” or birth of the Spirit.” Jesus said, “Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he can
not enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). At this door, ready to enter into the “holy place”, what do we find? We here find a washing that does typify baptism, a washing that meets every requirement of God's word concerning this divine institution. Ex. 29:4 Moses says, or the rather God says, “Bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tabernacle and wash them with water.” This command is repeated in Ex. 40:12, “And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tent of the meeting and shalt wash them with water.” And this exactly fits the description of baptism as found in Heb. 10:22, where Pauls says, “Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” Again in Eph. 5:25 we read, “That he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of the water with the word.” This washing is at the door; at the place of entrance into the “holy place.” And as birth takes place at the dividing line between darkness and light; as the birth brings one into the new life, so this washing brings us into the “holy place”; the new life. Hence we may see the beauty of describing baptism as “the new birth”. By baptism we pass into the church or kingdom of God. In Romans 6:3 we read, “Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?” And yet again, in Gal. 3:27 we are told, “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.” Baptism passes us from the outside to the inside, and now we have crossed the dividing line and are in the “holy place”, or in the land of liberty, having been made free from sin, we are now the servants of righteousness and are in God’s house.

We are now in the “holy place” where none but a priest had a right to be (Num. 18:22) “And henceforth the children of Israel shall not come nigh the
tent of meeting, lest they bear sin, and die." And again in 2 Chron. 23:6 we read, "Let none come into the house of Jehovah save the priests, and they that minister of the Levites." In 2 Chron. 26:16 we read of Uzziah who unlawfully went into the house of God to burn incense upon the altar of incense. "But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up, so that he did corruptly and trespassed against Jehovah his God; for he went into the temple of Jehovah to offer incense upon the altar of incense." Today all Christians are priests unto God; they are priests without a big I or a little u. All are priests; and all may offer their sacrifices unto Jehovah.

There may be those in the church who have no right there, but that does not militate against the thought that none but Christians have right there. In 1 Peter 2:4, 5 we read, "Unto whom coming a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect precious, ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." In Luke 6:4 we are told of David unlawfully entering the "holy place" and eating the shewbread. "And Jesus answering said unto them, have ye not read even this what David did, when he was hungry, he and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God and took and ate the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat save for the priests alone?" In the house of God, enjoying its light, beholding its beauty, taking part in its worship, and labording to extend its borders, we rejoice in the great blessings that God has prepared for those that love him. All this for the priests alone; alone for the redeemed children of God.

Just on the inside of the "tent of meeting", and just to the left hand side we find the "candlestick of
pure gold.” And again, (Ex. 25:37) “And thou shalt make the lamps thereof seven; and shall light the lamps thereof to give light over against it.” In Num. 3:38 we learn that the tabernacle faced the east, “And those that encamped toward the sunrising shall be Moses and Aaron and his sons” and in Ex. 40:24 we read, “And he put the candlestick in the tent of meeting, over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle southward.” This candlestick gave all the light that was had in the tabernacle. No one could introduce any other light; and this light was to be a constant light it was not to be fluctuating; it was not to burn “off and on” as some speak of their membership in the church of the living God but it was to burn continually. In Leviticus 24:2, we read, “Command the children of Israel that they bring you pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause a lamp to burn continually.” That this light typifies the Word of God is evident from these scriptures (Ps. 119:130), “The opening of thy word giveth light it giveth understanding to the simple.” Again Ps. 119:105 says, “Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light unto my path.” God’s word sheds its light through His people. Hence Jesus says, “Ye are the light of the world” (Matt. 5:14). And again, “Let your light so shine that others may see your good works.” O if Christians only realized their responsibility in letting the word of God shine through their lives; the world is seeing the Bible through the lives of its friends. Let not the light that is in you become darkness to those for whom Jesus died.

But this candlestick light was divided into seven lights, but these seven lights made the one light. There was one candlestick but seven rays of light. Just so in the Christian life there are seven rays of light. Seven lights all produced by the same oil, all burning
from the same candlestick. You ask what are these rays of divine light? I answer, they are the Christian graces, enumerated by the apostle Peter as, “virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love” ((2 Peter 1:5-7). No other light ever to be in the church of the Lord but the word of God. Where the Bible speaks the church of the Lord shall speak and where the word of God is silent it behooves the church of God to maintain silence. We dare not add to this light, (Rev. 22:18, 19) and we dare not introduce another light (Gal. 1:8, 9). This great light is shining from heaven as a guide to the glory land, and when we walk facing that light there will be no shadows in our pathway. Let us walk in the light as he is in the light and have fellowship with one another, and have the blood of Jesus to cleanse us from all our sins (1 John 1:7). No human creeds; no human confessions of faith; no human rules; but the Bible, the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible, and in this light we are determined to live and to die.

Turning now to the right we have before us the “table of shewbread.” This table was laden with twelve loaves of bread. One loaf for each tribe of Israel (Lev. 24:6). This bread was to be eaten by priests alone (Luke 6:5) “Which is not lawful to eat save for priests alone.” But as the priesthood typified the church or Christians, then none but Christians have a right at the Lord’s table. All the regenerated children of God have the rights of children in approaching the table of their Father, and no one has they right to say them nay. But again. The bread on this table must be renewed every Sabbath day. It was not a quarterly, or yearly business but must be renewed every Sabbath day (See Lev. 24:8). “Every sabbath day shall he set it in order before Jehovah continually.” As to how long this was to continue, it
certainly would continue as long as the law stood. The only way to fail in this was to disobey the Lord. So we read in Ex. 25:30, "And thou shalt set upon the table shewbread before me always." So just as long as they were faithful to Jehovah this shewbread was renewed weekly, but as they went into sin and fell short of duty to God this work was neglected. So in the antitype, the Lord's Supper, it must be attended to weekly. The Lord's Supper is the only thing in the church of Christ that will in any way fit this type. The Lord's table is in the Church (See 1 Cor. 10:20, 21). And in Luke 22:30 the blessed Lord says, "Ye shall eat and drink at my table in my kingdom." So then the table is in the church or Kingdom. And as in the type the shewbread was renewed weekly, so is the Lord's Supper a weekly institution. "And upon the first day of the week when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them." As the Jews were admonished to attend to this every sabbath, so we are admonished "Not forsaking the assembling ourselves together as the manner of some is" (Heb. 10:22). And as in the type the bread was called the "shewbread" so in the antitype we are told by the Savior, "This do in remembrance of me." And again, "For as oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26). How sad it is to see Christians refusing to announce their faith in the risen Lord. But we are told that we should not judge, neither am I judging, I am simply telling the truth about the Lord's will and of our treatment of his will and I am leaving the decision as to their conduct between each one and the Lord. But then again I am told that there is no command to observe the communion. But my brother it is a command as we may read in the scriptures, turn to 1 Cor. 11:24 where the Lord says, "This do in
remembrance of me” and in Heb. 10:25 where the Holy Spirit says, “Not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.”

James says, “Shew me thy faith apart from thy works and I by my works will show thee my faith” (Jas. 2:10). O then let us show to the world our faith in the once dead, crucified Redeemer, but now the living Lord.

As we pass on from the “candlestick” and the “table of shewbread” toward the Holy of Holies, we come to the “Altar of Incense” which was placed near the veil and before the Ark of the covenant. In Ex. 30:6 we read, “And thou shalt put it before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.” Or again “And he put the golden altar in the tent of meeting before the veil” (Ex. 40:26). We are not left to guess at the meaning of this type for John tells us plainly that incense is the prayers of the saints. Rev. 5:8; 8:3 says: “And when he had taken the book the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”—“And another angel came and stood over the altar, having a golden censor; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should add it unto the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.” Here then we have the altar of Christian prayer; here amid all the storms and trials and conflicts of life we find the sweet refuge; here we may pour out the heart sores and tears and needs and feel the sweet assurance that our God can and does hear and answer prayer. When the Christian is at prayer
he is just as near to heaven as he can get in this life, he is then talking to his heavenly Father and telling him the trials, sorrows and cares for this life. The burning of incense was a daily duty, "And Aaron shall burn thereon incense of sweet spices every morning when he dressed the lamp he shall burnt it." And day by day or every day should find us at the throne of grace thanking and praising the God of our salvation.

Next we come to the veil that separates between the "Holy Place" and the "Most Holy Place". This vail typifies or represents the flesh, or natural life. To say "natural life", "flesh" or "mortality" would mean about the same thing. It seems to mean that which separates between us, in this life, and heaven. Paul tells us in Heb. 10:20, "By the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." Laying aside this robe of flesh and donning the robes of immortal glory we pass this veil. The passage of this veil is not the resurrection as the Materialist would have us believe for these reasons (1) All will be raised from the dead, and so if this veil is the resurrection all will enter the Holy of Holies; (2) The meanest man that ever lived will be raised from the dead, but he will not enter glory; (3) The Christian alive at the coming of Christ will not die and hence will not be raised from the dead. But all Christians will pass from mortality to immortality. That the "Holy of Holies" typifies heaven itself is proven by the apostle Paul when he says of Christ, "For Christ entered not into a holy place made by hands, but into heaven itself there to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24). Mark says, "So when the Lord after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19). We do not
know much that is in heaven; its glories far surpass the understanding of man. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the glorious things that God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9). But God has here showed us a beautiful type, for as we enter the Holy of Holies, just to our right is the "Ark of Testimonies". This Ark contained the "tables of the Law", the "pot of manna" and "Aaron's rod that budded." The lid to this Ark was the mercy seat and it was overshadowed by the cherubims of gold; thus so beautifully typifying the divine presence of God. "The eye of God is over us from on high." Here on this earth the High Priest entered into the Holy of Holies once per year (Heb. 9:7; Lev. 16:12) but in the great antitype Christ has entered into heaven itself there appearing before God for us. I know that Jesus has prepared that home for us; I know that he is there now making intercessions for us, and I know he cares for his people, and I want to go there too. Earthly friends may prove false, and the heart may be heavy laden by the cares of life, but there were have a friend who will always care and who will share all our sorrow and trouble.

"We speak of the realms of the blest,
That country so bright and so fair,
And oft are its glories confessed,
But what must it be to be there?"
THE KINGDOM ANALOGY

Text, Luke 13:18: "He said therefore, unto what is the kingdom of God like? And whereunto shall I liken it?"

There is wonderful beauty and harmony in all the works of God. The works of God all work together in perfecting harmony at least until disturbed by some outside and evil influence. This beautiful harmony, or analogy, enabled the Savior to illustrate the things of the spiritual kingdom of God. This is seen in the parables of Jesus, e.g., the sower, the tares, etc. The only reason that I can give for this beautiful harmony is that the author of the one is the author of the other. Both are from the fountain of all true wisdom. God is the author of all creation, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). "All things were made through him and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3). "For in him were all things created in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him" (Col. 1:16). When things work according to the will of the Creator all is perfect harmony, but when His will is disregarded; when the destroyer gets in his work; then troubles come and the harmony is marred. Tears come instead of smiles; sorrows instead of joy, and groans instead of the songs of joy and gladness.

The kingdom of nature is the kingdom of God in nature, and the spiritual realm is the kingdom of God in the spirit. In creating the kingdom of nature God began at the lowest and advanced toward the higher until man was created as the climax of creation. And
so we have the lower first. We have first the natural kingdom, and secondly the spiritual kingdom, as Paul says, "So also it is written the first man Adam became a living soul, the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual" (1 Cor. 15:45, 46). In the creation of the material universe we may see clearly a reason for the use of miraculous powers. It took a miracle to create the first vegetable, fish, bird, animal or man. But God is not creating more worlds, just to show his power in creating worlds. He is not creating more animals to show his power, neither is He creating more men. But when he had finished creation he then "rested from all his labors." Now all things are reproduced according to the laws of natural generation.

When we disobey the laws of God in nature we are sure to pay the penalty. When we were young we thought we could just stand anything, we could wear wet clothing, wade the mud, keep all kinds of irregular hours, and it did not seem to hurt, and we thought we were tough as raw hide. Nothing seemed to hurt us. But after the paymaster came around, we began to find that we were being hurt all this time, but did not know it. Our ignorance of the laws of nature and of the penalties attached to their infraction did not keep us from paying the penalty. "The wages of sin is death." Afterwhile we found ourselves having rheumatism and fever; our strength was being undermined, and soon friends will whisper "he is no more." They soon may point to our gravestone end enumerate our virtues—"The wages of sin is death."

All things in the material universe were created by the word of God. Peter tells us that "mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts,
and saying, Where is the promise of His coming for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. But this they willingly forget, there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of the water and amidst water by the word of God. By which means the world that then was being overflowed with water perisheth; but the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up against day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men” (2 Peter 3:5-7). We dare not set aside the word of God. We can not change it; we should not disregard it. Its penalties are sure. The continued disregard for the word of God in nature results in sickness and death, and the continued disregard for the word of God in spirit, or the law of the Spirit will surely end in the “second death” (Rev. 20:14; 21:8).

Everything must be controlled by the word of God. The spiritual realm is God’s realm for the souls of men; God prepared it in accord with his word. And when the time came for the great work of human redemption to be accomplished God sent His word (or Son), to fulfil his promise, so we read, “In the beginning was the Word and the word was with God and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness apprehended it not” (John 1:1-5). “For God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him” (John 3:17). God has always demanded that His word be respected. In olden time He said, “Whatsoever things I command you, that shall ye observe and do. Thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it” (Deut.
12:32). And now in the noon day light of the gospel age he says: “If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which ye have received let him be anathema” (Gal. 1:8, 9; Rev. 22:18, 19). Remember, we can not with impunity lay ruthless hands upon the word of God. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and brought sin and death into the world. The antediluvians rejected the word of God and were lost. The Israelites went into rebellion and their carcasses fell in the wilderness.

Ezekiel says, “But when the righteous turn away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? None of his righteous deeds that he hath done shall be Remembered; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them he shall die” (Ezek. 18:24). And Paul says, “For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die. But if by the spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body ye shall live” (Rom. 8:13). And Jesus said: “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered and men gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned” (John 15:6). Think of the awful death awaiting those who disregard the word of God and I am sure you will say, “As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah.”

This awful death is more fully described in 2 Thess. 1:7-9 and Rev. 20:14, 15; 21:8.

Although the world is no larger now than when first created; and all forms of life living from the bosom of the earth; increasing, multiplying, and replenishing the earth; new forms of life have been discovered and propagated yet the world is not filled. Year after year comes and goes and sees all the forms of life increasing and yet there is room. The world is never filled.
So also is the kingdom of God. As an institution it is no larger now than when established. Its laws and its boundaries are just the same today that they were when endowed by the Holy Spirit. And although new members have been added by the million, its seed has been sown in every land and clime, “All nations are flowing into it” and yet it is not full. There is yet room for more. I am persuaded that if every son and daughter of Adam should turn to the Lord, there would yet be room. God has room for all who will come unto him by His Son.

As in natural death all that we have received from mother earth is returned to her. This is true in everything that lives. It buds, it blooms, it bears fruit, dies and returns unto the fountain from whence it came. This is also true in the natural death of man; his body is created from the dust of the ground and in death it returns to the dust from whence it came. Solomon said, “The dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it” (Eccl. 12:7). This does not mean that all who go to God will remain there for some shall be cast off into outer darkness and be lost. Jesus said, “Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 22:13. See also Matt. 7:23; 8:12; 25:30). Those who will not prepare to spend eternity with God will surely be cast off.

So also in the spiritual realm, or the kingdom of God. When those who are obedient to the King die here, they are to return to the home of their God. Though this flesh shall moulder and return to dust, the soul or spirit shall go to God. Paul says, “I am in a strait betwixt two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for you” (Phil. 1:
The soul, or spirit, came from God and returns to him. Paul declares in Acts 17:28 that “we are His offspring” and in Heb. 12:9 Paul declares God to be the Father of our spirits, and so in death our spirit will return to its Father to spend eternity with the Master we have loved and served here.

God classified all the works of his creation. All the forms of life in the natural world are classified and God has ordered that everything shall bring forth after its own kind (Gen. 1:12, 21, 25). The things of nature will continue in obedience to the law of God; there will be no infractions of this law unless some outside power interferes. Horses will not bring forth cattle, and cows do not bring forth lions. Apples do not grow on pumpkin vines nor pumpkins on fig trees. Elephants do not become sheep, nor hogs bring forth lambs but everything is after its own kind even as God said Cotton does not grow on corn stalks, nor wheat on cockle burrs.

We see this order and classification even in the days of creation. God created one class one day and another class another day, and they are continued side by side. It is true that man has made much progress in improving both vegetables and animals. Many vegetables have been improved in quality until they are fit food for man, but they still belong to their class. It is of its own kind. Many animals have been much improved, and in their stead we have the fine cattle of today. The old scrub pony as been improved and now we have the blooded draft horse or the racer, but they are still horses. Another thing, withdraw the guiding hand of man and these improvements are soon lost, they drift back to the original stock.

So in the spiritual realm of God we are classified, classified according to our nature and abilities. We are “the saved” and “the lost.” We are “gold, silver,
precious stones” or we are “wood, hay and stubble.” As the body of Christ we may be hands, feet, eyes, or etc. We are “babes”, “young men”, “old men”, etc. As in the natural realm many improvements have been made, so in the spiritual realm we may and should improve. We may improve or gain in the number of talents we possess. We may pass from the “babes” in Christ to become full grown men and women. But when we neglect God’s means of spiritual development we just as naturally begin to drift backward. When we neglect to “feed upon the sincere milk of the word” we begin to grow ignorant of the truth and just as surely as in nature the improvement is lost, just that sure will all that we have gained in Christian growth be lost.

5. In the natural world everything that grows is produced from seed; every plant is just like the life in the seed that produced it. The growing plant is but the unfolding of the life in the seed. God said, “Let the earth put forth grass, herbs yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, wherein is the seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit wherein is the seed thereof, after their kind” (Gen. 1:11, 12). Even sin is produced by seed, in Matt. 13:25 we are told in the parable of the tares, that an enemy sowed the tares in the good man’s field. The devil sowed the seed of sin when he sowed the first lie in the heart of mother Eve.

The kingdom of God is produced from seed, Jesus said, “the seed is the word of God” (Luke 8:11). Even all false doctrines are produced from seed of like nature. Mormonism is produced from Mormon seed, and Mohammedanism is produced from Mohammedan seed. It takes Methodist doctrine to make Methodists; Baptist doctrine to make Baptists; and it takes “The Word of God” to make Christians. The word of God sown in the heart produces thoughts of things that
are right and leads us to God.

In the natural world we have wild weeds that just grow anywhere. They do not need cultivation. They grow without attention and it is a task to keep them from choking out the things that are useful and needful to man. It seems that the less of value a thing is the more readily it grows. The nature of the tare is to choke out the wheat. But among all the useless things in the world we find some too that are susceptible of high cultivation. Many vegetables have been developed into great food values for man and beast. The apple, cabbage, Indian corn, and wheat are beautiful specimens of what cultivation will do in developing food values.

So in the spiritual realm there are growths that are a real menace to the advancement of man. These false theories seem to flourish without cultivation, they seem to grow spontaneously, and they have a tendency to choke out the teachings of real value. Man has developed from savagery to civilization. The more civilized he has become, the more sacred has he held the marriage vows. The savage will go absolutely nude without any sense of shame, but the civilized man will realize the need of raiment. The less civilization you have the less sacred are the things that have lifted man from savagery.

The good seed must be sown (2 Tim. 4:1) and cultivated that the human family may be saved (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 9:16) hence we meet and read and study and feed upon the word of God that we may improve ourselves and prove true to the Lord who saves us.

The life of all nature is supported by the “rain and the snow and dew that comes down from heaven.” Isaiah said, “For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven and watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and bread to the eater” (Isaiah 55:10, 11).
Without this moisture from heaven all life on this earth would cease, indeed without it life would never have begun. God would not have created life without making provisions for its support.

So also in the realm of the spirit. God said, “So shall be my word that goeth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing wherewith I have sent it” (Isa. 55:11). Like the moisture which comes from heaven and supports the life of nature, so also the word of God. The spiritual life cannot live without it. Without the Bible, the word of God, all spiritual life would fail. There would be no seed for the sower, and no bread for the eater. The knowledge of God would fail; the eye could not see beyond the grave. The soul would wither and die for the want of heaven’s support. The word of God is “seed” to the sower (Luke 8:11). It is bread to the “eater”. “Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4). And it is “drink” to the thirsty. “As babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2).

This world is peopled by babes being born into it. There is no other way. All come into this world in exactly the same way. God created the first man and woman by miraculous power and then instituted the law of procreation by which the human race is perpetuated. Human life is continued in this world by the operation of God’s law of natural birth. Man can not set this law aside. It will stand as long as time lasts.

So also in the kingdom of God. All are born into it. Jesus said, “Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:5). Jesus Christ gave this law. Man can not set it aside. You might as well look for men and women
in natural life who had not been born as to look for people in the kingdom of God who had not been “born again.” Peter said of those who had become Christians in his day, “being born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever” (1 Peter 1:23). We were born of nature into the natural world, and we are born of “water and spirit” into the kingdom of God.

I am well aware of the fact that the very existence of the kingdom of God is denied by some. But as I am not discussing that question I shall not take time to discuss it at length. But I will ask you to read with me a few passages of scripture bearing on the kingdom question. Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzr that “In the days of those kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom?” (Dan. 2:44.) All the kingdoms of this prophecy have risen and fallen, they are no more. And God either did or did not redeem the prophecy of Daniel. I am sure he did, for Jesus said, “The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mk. 1:15). Jesus here declares that the very kingdom that Daniel spoke of is “at hand.” And then as though to clinch the matter he said, “There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power” (Mark 9:1). Again, “I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me” (Luke 22:29). And yet again, “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). And Paul says that God redeemed that promise, saying, “We received a kingdom which can not be moved” (Heb. 12:28). Paul again says we have been called into it, saying “Ye should walk worthy of God who called you into His kingdom” (1 Thess. 2:12) and to the Colossians, “Who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love” (Col. 1:13). And John says we are
in it, saying, "I, John, who am your brother and partaker with you in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus" (Rev. 1:9).

In the realm of nature we may die and pass out of this life, and in the realm of the spirit we may die and pass out. Ezekiel said, "The soul that sins it shall die" and "when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to the abominations which the wicked man doeth, shall he live? None of his righteous deeds that he hath done shall be remembered; in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them he shall die" (Ezek. 18:24). And Paul said, "For if ye live after the flesh ye must die; and if by the spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8:13). As Adam was cast out of the garden of Eden when he went into sin, so those who go into sin in the kingdom of God will be cast out for Jesus said, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:41-41).

All the blessings of nature belong to the children of nature, the rain will fall on the just and on the unjust. In the kingdom of God all the spiritual blessings belong to the regenerated, Paul says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 1:3). To enjoy these blessings we must be in Christ, and the more we study, and the more we grasp the beauty and glory of the religion of Jesus the more we enjoy the blessing of Jehovah—the more we appreciate being called the children of God. Then come to Jesus now.
THE CHURCH A NEW MAN

"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man so making peace" (Eph. 2:15).

The church of the living God is presented to us under several different figures. We may thus view it from different angles in all its beauty and usefulness. At one time it is a "vineyard" (Matt. 20:1-). It is the working place for the children of God. They may here find plenty of work to keep them busy, busy leading people to the Savior for salvation. Again it is compared to a "nobleman going into a far away country and giving his goods into the hands of his servants and commands them to use his good till he returns (Luke 19:12-). Jesus has gone into the far country, has received his kingdom and now we are looking for his return. He is coming for us and we are going to meet him and ever be with him (1 Thes. 4:16, 17). He has left to each one a work to do, has given to each one one or more talents and expects them to use them. Again there is room in the church for us to use all the talent we have to the glory of God. The talent to sing is a God-given talent, and we should use it to His glory. But we may debase its use and sing impure songs. The talent to preach is a God-given talent and should be used to preach Christ to the world, but it can be debased to deliver infidel lectures. They are all God-given and should all be used faithfully in his service.

Again the "church" is compared to an "army", and its members are soldiers (? Tim. 2:3). Not soldiers to fight the people but soldiers fighting for the people. He is fighting Satan with all of his influences; fight-
ing to prevent him from ruining the whole human family. He is fighting to prevent men and women from going to heaven, and under the grace of God the army of the Lord is fighting to save men and women from his awful grasp. Again it is called a “church”, the “church of Christ.” My very soul thrills as I think of that glorious title, “The Church of Christ”. I a member of the church of Christ; I, one of those called from sin by the Savior of mankind. The word “church” simply means “called out.” The mob that would kill Paul was “ekklesia” (Acts 19:13-31) or called out. But called out to a bad business. The Israelites in the wilderness was called the “church in the wilderness.” They had been called out from Egypt, and hence were a “church”. The call of Christ is not to be a mob, neither is it a call from Egypt, but by the grace of God it is a call from the darkness, and degradation of sin, to be a child of God. Jesus calls from sin, he calls from the things that degrade and ruin. Jesus calls, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest”. Have you heard that call? Have you given heed to it? Then you too rejoice in the title, “Church of Christ”.

The “church” is also called “The Body of Christ”. It is composed of those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, His blood flows in its veins, being the body of Christ it is certainly “The Church of Christ”. As my arm is a Skaggs arm and as my foot is a Skaggs foot, and every member of my body is a Skaggs member, so every member of the church of Christ is a Christ member or a “Christian.” The spirit of this body is the spirit of Christ, and the blood of this body is the blood of Christ, and this body feeds upon the flesh and blood of Christ. Its members have all been “called out from sin” by Christ, and hence it is the body, or church of Christ, and the members are Christians.
This “kingdom”, “vineyard”, laborers”, “army” or “body” is also called “a new man”. This new man has the blood of Christ coursing its veins. It is quickened by the Holy Spirit. It is composed of members called out from sin by the “calling of Christ.” It has Christ for its head, and is of course the church of Christ. This new man is entirely new. Its members are new, “being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, even the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.” Some of them had been worshipping God as commanded by Moses. They offered daily the animal sacrifices demanded of them, but now they have heard the “call of Christ” and have accepted him, and some had been bowing down to stocks of wood and stone, but now they too have heard the glorious invitation and have come to Christ. And of the twain there has been made “one new man” so making peace.” It has entirely new blood, the blood of Christ before this they offered the blood of dumb animals, but now they are redeemed by the blood of Christ. Instead of offering dumb animals they offer their own bodies as living sacrifices. This church has been endowed by the Holy Spirit, a Spirit that before this had not been given to men (John 7:39). At least it had not been given in the sense that it was given to the apostles. Now the body is blessed by the presence of the Spirit of God (John 14:26; 15:16; 13; Acts 5:32, etc.). It is composed of “new members”, members who have been “born of water and the spirit” (John 3:5). Indeed it is in truth a new man. God has not taken old bottles and filled them with new wine nor has he taken new cloth and patched an old garment (Matt. 7:16, 17). It is altogether a new man with a new mission in life. This new man must have all the parts of a perfect man. It must not be deficient. Under the old covenant the sacrifices which
pointed to the Lord were required to be perfect specimens of their kind (Ex. 12:5). "Your lamb shall be without blemish" (Lev. 1:3). "If his oblation be a burnt offering of the herd, he shall offer it a male without blemish." Not only is this perfection required in the sacrifices, but the Lord demands this perfection in the church (Eph. 5:27). "That he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing but that it should be holy and without blemish." Hence the church as a divine institution is perfect and this perfection is required of its members. But some one will say, "Does not that teach sinless perfection in the flesh?" It teaches perfection in the model, but God knows that it is impossible for us to attain absolute perfection in the flesh and so he makes provision for our weaknesses (John 1:8, 10; Jas. 5:16; 1 John 5, 16, 17).

To have all the parts of a perfect man, this new man must have members, blood, head, spirit and these must all be united in one body. The members of the body of this new man are all those who have been called unto him. It is said of John the Baptist that he "came preparing a people made ready for the Lord" (Luke 1:17). The people were glad when John told them of the coming Redeemer and they gladly obeyed him in being baptized, but when Christ came he did not come as they expected. He did not meet their expectations of what the Redeemer should do and so the great majority refused to do as they covenanted with John that they would do. Acts 19:4 says: "And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is on Jesus." But when Jesus "came into his own, and they that were his own received him not" (John 1:11). But those
that did receive him were among those of whom it is said “He took of the twain”; and these, with all others who have come to Christ; of whom Paul said, “We are members of his body” (Eph. 5:30) constitute the “New Man.” “His body” is the body of the “New Man” that he has made or created, as he said, “On this Rock I will build my church” and this church is his body, the body for the “New Man”. For “He is head over all things to the church which is his body, the fulness of him that filled all in all” (Eph. 1:23). These members are new. David prays, “Create in me a new heart O God.” Their souls are purified, Peter said, “seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth” (1 Peter 2:22). Some have come from the broken covenant of Sinai, and some have come from the bosom of idolatry, but all have purified their souls in obeying the truth and have been added to, or made members of the “body of Christ.”

Have we the blood for this “new man”? There has been animal blood on earth ever since the sixth day of creation. There has been animal blood offered as sacrifice to God ever since Abel made his sacrifice. But this blood would not do for the blood of a “New Man”. Animal blood could never wash sin stains from the soul. Animal blood is not of the same value as the soul hence could be no recompense for it. Paul says, “For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin” (Heb. 10:4). How then can the guilt of sin be washed away? Paul says, (Heb. 9:12) “Nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.” Again, (Heb. 9:14) : “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” In 1 John
1:7, we read “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” In Rev. 7:9-15 we read about a vast multitude of people, who have come from all nations and tribes and tongues, they are clothed in white robes and they have palms in their hands, and the heavenly angel tells John who they are. He says, “These are they that have come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (verse 14). We have the blood of Christ to cleanse our sins. His blood is the price given for our souls. It is a price commensurate with the value of the soul, and hence it is worthy to cleanse the soul from its guilty stains. The physical blood of Christ was in his veins from his birth, but it was not efficacious, so we read in Matt. 26:28, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.” His blood must be “poured out” before it can accomplish the will of God in cleansing from sin. Not only must it be poured out, but it must “Through his own blood, hence we read in Heb. 9:12, “Through his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place.” As to where this holy place is we read, “For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us.” Christ has offered his blood before the face of Jehovah. It has been accepted and God has given to him his salutatory address saying, “Thy throne O God is forever and ever, the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity. Therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Heb. 1:8, 9).

Any church that existed before the ascension of
Christ would be without the blood of Christ, and hence be without the cleansing power; without salvation. In the Old Testament we are taught that the life is in the blood. There could be no physical life without the physical blood (Lev. 3:11, etc.). So we could not have the spiritual life without the spiritual blood of the Lord. Jesus one time said, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood ye have no life in yourselves” (John 6:53). There is life and cleansing power in this divine blood which lives in the new man. Peter says (1 Peter 1:18, 19): “Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ.”

This “new man” must have a head worthy of the great work to be accomplished by the “man.” Indeed every institution must have a head; there must be some ruling, controlling power or else you have naught but confusion. The king is the head of the kingdom. The president is head of the democracy. The head of representative governments is an elective one, one elected at stated times. But in imperial governments the king is head from coronation to death.

This new institution called a “new man” must have a head before it can be a really live man. There must be some one with the authority and ability to guide its efforts to accomplish the will of the Lord. The world is to be evangelized; sinners are to be converted. The human race is to be aided to a higher plane of living. It must be some one who can see the end from the beginning; some one who can safely guide through all the struggles and trials of this world; someone wise enough to give the laws that will save the world; someone wise enough to give laws that will never need re-
vision; someone who can reveal the future glory of the saints; someone who knows the destiny of both the righteous and the wicked. We know that no mortal man can fill these demands. No mortal man has authority and power within himself so we must look for the divine head, the one of whom it was said, “And the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6). Where shall we find this head? Paul says of Christ, “And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence” (Col. 1:18). Of course, Christ is the head of his own body. It would be monstrous to think of Christ as the head of another’s body. Again in Eph. 1:22 we read, “And he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” Then Christ is the head. But when did he become head? In Eph. 1:19-23 we read, “And what the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world but in that which is to come; and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” This being true Christ was made “head” when he ascended to the right hand of God. And any church established before the ascension of Christ could not have Christ for its head. Hence such an institution would be either an institution with a hu-
man head or else it would be a headless body, a dead body. But Christ fills every requirement of a divine head.

(1) He is all powerful (Matt. 28:18). He lives forever (Heb. 7:24). “He abideth forever” (Rom. 6:9). “Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more.” He then is the head with greater building skill than Noah, greater faith than Abraham; greater humility than Moses, more patience than Job; more courage than Elijah; more energy than Paul; more loyalty than Daniel; more wisdom than Solomon. One worthy to be at the head of the people entrusted with the greatest commission ever devised. He will share with them in their victories and will be with them in all the trials and temptations of this life, and it will be he to welcome us to that home eternal where deaths never come, but where with all the redeemed of God we live on and on while the ages of eternity shall continue.

But what is yet lacking to make this body a living body? Well it can not be a living being without the spirit of life that God must give to it. “The body without the spirit is dead” (James 2:26).

Every living thing has a spirit; there is a spirit of masonry, a spirit of odd fellowship. There is a spirit of democracy, and a spirit of imperialism. There is a spirit of loyalty to the principles of truth and right, and there is the lawless spirit that sweeps the length and breadth of the land today. Yes every living thing has a spirit. So we read, “If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9). And so you see this “new man”, the church of Christ must have the spirit of Christ. In John 7:39 we read, “But this spake he of the spirit which they that believe on him were to receive; for the spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.” In Acts 5:32,
we read, “And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.” But when was this spirit given? In John 14:17 Jesus promises to send them another comforter, “even the spirit of truth whom the world can not receive.” This was spoken on the eve of his betrayal, and in John 16:7-13 Jesus teaches that this comforter was to come after he had gone away from them, “For if I go not away the comforter will not come unto you; but if I go away the comforter will come unto you” (verse 13). “When he the spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth.” The spirit had not yet come. Jesus was crucified, buried, and raised from the dead. He is standing on Mt. Olivet, just ready for that memorable journey back to the Father’s house, and he tells them, “But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be clothed with power from on high.” “They worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy and were continually in the temple blessing God” (Luke 24:49-53). “And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:1-4). Now we have a living man, with the authority to go to work for Jesus. God has set these in the church (1 Cor. 12:28). The blood of Jesus has been offered and accepted in heaven before God; Christ has been coronated as Lord of lords and King of kings; He has been made head over all things to the church, and now the holy Spirit has come to quicken it into new life, to give it strength, and to
guide it into all truth; so now with these united we may realize the new man as a living man. But these must be united before it will be a living body. Separated into factions it could not live. These were united when the Spirit came on the day of Pentecost. But this union must be preserved in order to preserve life. It is like crucifying the body of Christ anew to cause divisions. Solomon says that God hates those who sow discord among brethren (Prov. 6:19). Jesus prayed that the unity of his people should be preserved. He prayed “That they may be one” (John 17:20), and Paul teaches that division is carnality in 1 Cor. 1:11; 4:1. Paul says, “The carnal mind is enmity against God” (Rom. 8:9). Then realizing the sinfulness of division, and how sweet it is for “brethren to dwell together in unity” let us not forget self and work together that the body of Christ may be one that souls may be saved.

Jesus invites you to become a member of his body. He pleads “come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and ye shall find rest to your souls” (Matt. 11:28). The road to this body, or the way to become a member of it is so plain that he who runs may read. Jesus says, “Except ye believe that I am he ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). And when the eunuch wanted to know about being baptized he was told to believe with all his heart (Acts 8:37). But not one divine writer ever said “Faith alone” would connect you with this new man. No, but Jesus said, “Except you repent ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3,5). And when the Pentecostans asked to know how to be saved they were told to, “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 Spirit” (Acts 2:38). Not only does the Bible teach that you must repent of your sins (Acts 2:38, etc.) but we are told that we must confess Christ. Jesus said, Every one therefore who shall confess me before men him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 10:32). And (Rom. 10:10) Paul teaches that the confession is unto salvation. And in Rom. 6:3 we are told that “All we who were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death.” In Gal. 3:27 we are told that “as many as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.” We are therefore baptized into Christ and become members of his body, and thus we have a right to all the blessings that God has prepared for them that love him. Will we not then make him our choice? Will we not come to him and be made heirs of salvation?
THE CHURCH IN COMPARISON


The favorite method of Jesus in teaching was by comparison. He would illustrate the things of the kingdom by the things of the natural world, and thus make the spiritual thing simple and plain. I do not mean to say that Jesus illustrated his teachings by telling anecdotes. You may sometimes drive home a truth by anecdote, but this use seems rare to me. An anecdote or an illustration that is at all questionable should be avoided. Indeed we should keep our hearts clean from such things. Jesus used parables as his illustrations. In the thirteenth chapter of Matthew there are several parables, viz., The sower, tares, mustard seed, leaven, hidden treasure, goodly pearl, and the fish net. Each of these parables beautifully illustrated some peculiar truth as connected with the kingdom of Christ. The parable of the sower shows how the kingdom was to be extended, i.e., by sowing truth in the hearts of men. The mustard seed shows how it would grow from a very small beginning and become a very great institution in the world.

By studying this divine institution called “the church” from different angles we may obtain a better view of both its nature and its mission in the world. (1) This body of people who have come out from the world, and are a separate and distinct people, peculiar from all others, is known in the Bible as “the church of Christ.” I do not know of any word or phrase that would so well describe this great institution as the one applied to it in the Bible “church of Christ.” “Church” is a translation of the Greek word “ekklesia” and is defined by Mr. Thayer to mean, “A gathering of citi-
zens called from their homes into some public place" or under section (bb) "The whole body of Christians scattered throughout the earth." Mr. Bagster defines "ekklo"; "to summon forth." These people have been called out from the practices of sin; called out from the world, and have entered upon a life of service to Jehovah and hence are The Church. There is nothing in the word "church" to indicate the nature of the call. In Acts 19:32 the mob assembled for the purpose of murdering the apostle Paul was called "ekklesia" (church). They had been called from their homes for the evil purpose of murder. The children of Israel in the wilderness were called "the church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38) because they had been called out from Egyptian bondage. But the people who are called "The Church of Christ" are a church from a far different sense. They are called out from sin. They have left the bondage of sin and following the voice of the Christ have turned from sin to righteousness and so are indeed and in truth "The Church of the Christ." They are called from spiritual slavery to enjoy the soul freedom promised by the Lord when he said, "Come unto me and I will give you rest", for "if therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Or again, "and being made free from sin ye became the servants of righteousness." "For freedom did Christ set us free; stand fast therefore, and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage." Indeed it is "Church of Christ." This "called out" people is called the "Church of Christ because it was called out for his name (Acts 15:14) and in the 17th verse it is said "that the residue of men may seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called." The church is not called from the honorable avocations of life, but from the things that degrade, debase, and ruin. You may be a farmer, mer-
chant, business many of any kind, and still be one of the Lord’s called. But you may not engage in the things that are sinful, for you have been called away from them. To say that you can be saved out of the church is to say you can be saved without being one of the called of Christ, because the church is the called of Christ. You may be saved without being in any of the human denominations, but not without being one of God’s called ones.

(2) Those called of God are also called the kingdom of God. Hence we come to consider the church as a kingdom, or as compared to a kingdom. Evidently when we were called out of sin we were called into something else. We left Satan’s rule or government and entered into some other rule or government. This other rule or government is called God’s kingdom, or the “kingdom of the Son of His love” (Col. 1:13). Jesus told Peter in Matt. 16:18: “On this rock I will build my church and I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom and whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.” Those called out from sin are built on the rock and are constituted the kingdom of God’s Son. They are not left as flocks without a shepherd, to wander aimlessly about, but are constituted the kingdom of Christ. Paul substantiates this in Col. 1:13 when he said, “By the which he hath delivered (called) us out of the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love.” “Christ is head over all things to the church which is his body”. He has “all the authority of heaven and in earth” and we are subject to “the law of Christ” (1 Cor. 9:21). We are therefore the kingdom of Christ, made up of those who have been called out of sin and darkness into the kingdom of the Son of his love.”

(3) This church or kingdom of the Lord is also compared to an army. Any number of soldiers com-
bined would be called an army. Mr. Webster would define an army to be: "A collection or body of men armed for war; a body of persons organized for the advancement of a cause." The church of Christ is an army organized for war on the forces of sin; war on everything that will mar the happiness of men and prevent their salvation. We are organized for the advancement of the cause of the Christ. The very idea of an army implies the idea of a conflict of some kind. The Christian conflict is not carnal, it is not an effort to destroy. But they are mighty to the casting down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." No; the Christian warfare is not “against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (2 Cor. 10:4; Eph. 6:12). Paul admonishes his son, Timothy, to “endure hardness as a good soldier of the cross” (2 Tim. 2:3) and John in Rev. 19:14 sees the armies of heaven following the Lord Jesus Christ. Who would not be a soldier in such an army and following such a captain and fighting in such a cause?

An army to be of any strength to a cause must be a fighting army. The army without the fighting spirit is defeated before the battle begins. There are entirely too many today who are like a man in the war between the states, who said he was never in a battle; that every time his command went into a battle he hid out. But such soldiers are not worth anything in winning victories, but they would be only too glad to be on the pension list after the conflict ends. Many battles for truth have been lost just because the band of soldiers did not have the fighting spirit. During
the war of 1812 General Hull surrendered Detroit without firing a gun. There are too many Hulls on the firing line. Too many surrenders for the sake of policy. The legitimate results of this hiding out style of soldiership is the loss of that for which we contend. the great cause of human salvation. Souls are lost that might have been saved. The cause of Christ prospered; churches were established, the world was evangelized and heaven rejoiced when the church was a great militant body of real Christian soldiers. The militancy of the early church carried the gospel to all the world; it swept across the mountains and valleys; it drove paganism from the throne; tore away the barriers, and broke the chains of slavery to sin from hungering souls and bade them go free from sin’s damning powers. But now in many places we hear the cry of peace, peace, peace, when there is no peace.

This great army whose purpose is the salvation of souls, has the world’s Redeemer as its head (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:23) and each congregation is officered with officers of heaven’s appointment. It is armored with the principles of heaven’s righteousness and armed with the sword of the Spirit, and is thus prepared for the conflicts of life. In Eph. 6:13-17, Paul mentions the items of the Christian armor as follows: (1) the helmet, the hope of salvation; (2) the breastplate of love and righteousness; (3) the girdle of truth; (4) The feet shod with the gospel of peace; (5) the shield of faith. This shield is not made of human opinions but the rather it is faith, faith in God, faith in Christ, faith in all that God has said. A faith that does not falter at the battles of life, but is willing to lay all on the altar of service, and from the heart obey the gospel of the blessed Christ. Its sword is the word of God. With this it must meet the foe; with this it must win the battle. With this weapon Jesus met Satan and de-
feated him in the great temptation. Jesus answered every temptation with the Spirit, "It is written." With this weapon we may tear down strongholds; quench the fiery darts of the wicked; put to flight the armies of the aliens, and take the world for Christ. The warfare shall cease after while, and then we shall have the greatest reunion the world has ever seen. All the redeemed of all the ages shall gather for this great reunion, and be united throughout eternity's happy day.

(4) The church of the living God is a great school. While the word "school" is not used in the Bible as applied to the church yet the idea is prominently connected. Mr. Webster defines the word "school" as follows, "A place for acquiring knowledge and mental training; an assemblage of scholars; those who attend upon instruction in a school of any kind; a body of pupils; the disciples or followers of a teacher." From this definition it will be readily seen that the church is a school, and every disciple is a scholar learning from the great Teacher, Jesus. "School is not the title of the church, its title is "the church of Christ" but in its very nature it is a school. In this life we are connected with many and various schools, some are great and some are small. Some teach one thing and some another. But the church of the living God is the greatest school of them all. None other deals with themes of such great importance; none other ever dares to attempt to unfold the life beyond the grave; none other ever attempted to unfold the perfect life, or to reveal the destiny of those who refuse heaven's light. None other may instill into the hearts of its devotees the joy that fills the hearts of those who bow to the scepter of Prince Immanuel.

In all schools there are various works to be done, varied positions to be filled and hence the work is clas-
sified. There are teachers, assistants, and pupils. In no school would more than one teacher be teaching the same class at the same time. In all state schools, or private schools or religious schools where religious people have established schools to educate and train their young people to meet the exigences of life, their students will be classified according to the advancement of the pupils, and that system of teaching is used that has been demonstrated to be the best.

Now does the church as a school meet these demands? Has it the teachers and pupils who assemble to acquire a greater degree of knowledge? And since the disciples of Christ are students of the Bible the question would be are they assembling to study the Bible as the word of God? Are they striving to know more about the worship or religion of the blessed Lord? We have the teacher. The greatest teacher in the universe, Jesus Christ, is the head over all things to this school or church (Eph. 1:23; Col. 1:18). Jesus is often called “rabbi” in the New Testament but the word “rabbi” means “teacher” (John 1:38). “And they said unto him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Teacher) where abidest thou?” Again in John 3:2 Nicodemus calls Jesus a teacher. When Jesus had finished his personal work, he promised the apostles another teacher who would “teach them all things” (John 14:26). This teacher was the Holy Spirit (John 14:26) who should guide them into all truth (John 16:13). He would even guide them to the right words to say (Matt. 10:19, 20) “But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father than speaketh in you” (1 Cor. 2:13): “Which things also we speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the spirit teach-
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eth.” And this teacher ordained that there should be others in the church whose special duty it would be to teach, and so we read, “And God hath set some in the church, first, apostles, secondly, prophets, thirdly, teachers, then miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues” (1 Cor. 12:28). Again. Eph. 4:11 says, “And he gave some to be apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers.” We also have the students of this school, for every Christian is a “disciple” and the word disciple means “a student or learner.” The miracle workers may cease in the church, failing because no more needed, but teachers will never cease to be needed. The great commission; the magna charter, of the church says: “Go, teach all nations or preach the gospel to every creature.” Hence as long as there are nations without God, and as long as there are human beings who are not saved the Christian teachers will be needed in this world. They will remain in the Lord’s school as long as the necessity continues. Also God placed prophets in the church. The word “prophet” means, according to Webster, “To give instruction in religious matters, to interpret or explain scripture or religious subjects.” And Mr. Thayer says “To teach, refute, admonish, to comfort others.” Mr. Bagster says “Prophet; In the Christian church, a person gifted for the exposition of divine truth.” These prophets may be either “sons or daughters,” for Peter tells us in Acts 2:17 “Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy” and in Acts 21:9 we are told that Philip’s four daughters did prophesy, but since “prophets” are those who “teach, refute, admonish or comfort” then these daughters did these things. Paul says in 1 Cor. 14:4, “He that prophesieth edifieth the church.” They did this by “teaching, refuting, admonishing, or comforting oth-
ers” hence these daughters taught in the church. Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 14:31 that all may do this, “All may prophesy one by one.” I am sure that each one may and should do their duty in this great work, and it should be so done that it maintains the harmony of the word of God. Each should do their work in their own realm. There is a place for teaching for every Christian and in that place each may teach or prophesy.

It is hardly necessary to discuss the idea of students in this great school, for all see clearly that each Christian is a disciple of the Lord. Indeed in the New Testament the word is applied to the Christians some two hundred fifty times. The word disciple means “a learner, a pupil, a disciple.”—Thayer. All are learners and Jesus said, “He therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to me.” Paul says, “Study to show thyself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.” Also in this school we use the greatest text book in the world—The Bible, God’s text book.

In studying this great text book we learn of the origin of man; of his divine relationship with Jehovah, the offspring of God. Of his duties to himself; to his neighbor; and of his duty to God. In this divine text book we learn “The way of life and salvation”; we get into our hearts “The power of God unto salvation.” And being made free from sin we become earnest in trying to teach it to as many others as possible that they too may become the heirs of God.

(5) The church is compared to a family. In Eph. 3:15 it is said, “From whom every family in heaven and in earth is named.” The family in heaven and on earth. Families are made up of parents and children and perhaps servants. “Family—The collective body of persons who live in one house and under one head or manager, including parents, children, ser-
vants."—Webster. In this family, God is the Father. I do not at all agree with the thought that children are born into this world with Satan as their father. I am sure that those who teach the doctrine of total depravity, or that all were born children of the wicked one are as far from the truth as those who teach that mankind has descended from the monkey tribe. It would be hard to tell which would be the worst idea, the descendant of Satan or the descendant of the monkey. God says, "Behold all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine" (Ezek. 18:4). I thank God for that statement that we may know that we are the children of God. God alone has a right to claim us as belonging to him. The only ones that Satan may claim are those whom he has deceived and led astray from God. Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not; for to such belongeth the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). And again in Matt. 18:3 Jesus said, "Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Satan is not a creator. He is a destroyer. We belong to God, Paul says in Acts 17:28, "As your own poets have said, For we are His offspring". "Seeing then that we are the offspring of God _________" and again this great apostle said, "We have had fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not rather then be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live?" (Heb. 12:9.) Man left his state of purity when he fell in sin, but he did not change his parentage, he is still a child of God, though a fallen one, and God still loves him, and desires only his good, and so he sent Jesus to die as a ransom for him and now in the church we are the redeemed children of God. Webster's definition fits here again, "All who dwell in one house." All the redeemed children of
God dwell in one house, the church of God (1 Tim. 3:15). I do not use the word church in the sense of denominations, but in the sense of those who have heeded the call of Christ.

In well regulated families there is something endearing and attractive about the love that exists between the brothers and sisters. They love each other and are willing to sacrifice for each other's good. They will yield their own pleasures that the other may be pleased. And this principle of brotherly love should characterize the feelings of Christians for each other. Paul says, "In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one toward another" (Rom. 12:10). And again in Heb. 13:1 Paul says, "Let brotherly love continue." Where this principle is lacking all kinds of evils come, envy, strife, division with all of its attendant evils follow where brotherly love has failed. But with this in our hearts we are willing to yield something to the wishes of the others and thus peace and happiness are assured. We should strive to maintain this principle for Paul says, "Without love we are nothing" (1 Cor. 13:1).

In this life families are broken up, one by one they are called hence and we are left mourning their departure. So in the congregation, we see those with whom we have labored and borne the burdens and heat of the day, either moving to other fields, or obeying the call to cease their labors and pass on into another realm. One by one they are called from us and we are left to mourn their departure and our loss. But think of the happy meeting around our Father's throne, where in his immediate presence we may meet and live throughout eternity. The glorious, happy reunion of all the redeemed of all the ages of this world.
THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

It is said that the coming of great events cast their shadows before them. This may be true, at least it seems that at the first coming of Christ the world was expecting the coming of some great personage, who would become the king of the Jews. This is shown by the journey of the wise men to visit the new born Christ, as also in the jealous anxiety of Herod when he learned of their mission. The Jews, of course, would understand that the time was ripe for his coming. They knew the prophecy of Dan. 2:44, and of course, knew that the fourth kingdom had come, and so the time was ripe for the fulfillment, but, of course, they did not know the exact date of the fulfillment. But when Herod inquired where the Christ should be born, they unhesitatingly answered, "In Bethlehem of Judea."

At this time the apostasy of the Jews was very great indeed. They had almost lost sight of the worship of Jehovah; their spiritual condition is well described in the fourteenth psalm, as also in the third chapter of Romans. Paul said, "There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth. There is none that seeketh after God; they have all turned aside, they are altogether become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not so much as one; their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Rom. 3:10-18). Darkness had engulfed the world, and sin reigned supreme when Jesus came a
poor suffering babe to endure all the indignities that might be heaped upon him. He came to live and to die as the ransom for sinful man. He emptied himself of the glory that he had with the Father before the world was and became the Son of Man, taking upon himself our nature (Phil. 2:6, 7; Heb. 2:16). “He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief”; yet “He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, and was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed” (Isa. 53:3). He “went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil” (Acts 10:38). But he was rejected of men; who having made lies their refuge and entered into covenant with death, took him by wicked hands and nailed him to the tree (Acts 10:38). Jesus closed his sojourn on earth by dying a ransom for man (Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6). Thus “being made perfect by the things which he suffered he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him” (Heb. 5:9).

Jesus died for our sins, and was raised for our justification, and has gone back to the Father’s throne, there to be seated at the Father’s right hand; there to reign till all enemies have been placed under his feet, then he is coming back again.

The second coming of Christ. This is so fully established in the scriptures that no believer in the God of heaven and earth can doubt it. I shall ask you to read a few of the many quotations of scripture that bear upon this promise (Luke 21:27). “And then shall they see the Son of Man coming with power and great glory.”

At the last meeting between Christ and the disciples, while standing upon Mt. Olivet and speaking of
the things concerning the kingdom of heaven; and "When he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they were looking steadfastly into heaven as he went, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; who also said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? This same Jesus who were received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven" (Acts 1:9-11). There are probably fifty passages of scripture which speak of some phase of the second coming of the Redeemer. I shall not quote them all but only a sufficiency to make each point clear and plain.

The second coming of Christ has been an anchor to the soul and has brought joy and gladness to the Christian's heart during all the Christian era. The day may be dreary; the clouds dark; and the soul may feel the crushing weight of many sorrows, but the thought that the Redeemer is coming; that he knows and will comfort, and strengthen us has driven the shadows away and has made the day seem more bright. He himself has said, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). Thank God, He is coming again.

We know that he is coming again, but we do not know the time of his coming. We may know events that will be transpiring at the time of his coming, but we do not know the day nor year when that great event shall be. It tests the faith. The unbeliever will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For since
the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation” (2 Peter 3:4). Jesus says, “Watch therefore for ye know not on what hour your Lord cometh.” And again, “Therefore be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of day nor the hour” (Matt. 24:42, 44; 25:13), and Man cometh” or again, “Watch for ye know not the again, “Take ye heed, and watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is” (Mark 13:33). And yet again, “Be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh” (Luke 12:40). Jesus here brings before us some of the great duties of men. “Watch”—“Pray”—“Be Ready”. Live each day as if you knew that it was the last day of time; that the Lord is coming tonight and I want to be ready. We will not have time to set our house in order after the Lord comes. So in all faithfulness we should always be found where duty demands.

When Christ shall leave his throne,
Coming from on high,
Come calling for his own
Will I answer, here am I?

We may not know the day nor the year of his coming, but we do know by the word of God, that he will come at the end of time. (1) He will not come in secret, as is contended by Mr. Russell’s devotees. Mr. Russell taught that he came in secret in 1874 and was in secret till 1914 when he should be openly manifested. (Vol. 2; pages 170-196, etc.). But this false theory, as have the theories of all “time seters”, has burst like a bubble. The Millerites set the time in 1844, but it failed, time has been set for 1881, 89, 96, and on and on, but all have been proven to be false prophets. The Lord will not come to gratify the vanity of men.

The circumstances surrounding the second coming
of Christ are such as to forbid the thought that he has returned at any time in the past. The angels said as he went away, "He shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven" (Acts 1:11). He shall come bodily, visibly, in the clouds. He has not come bodily, visible and in the clouds and so we know he has not come at all, the promise confirmed by the angels has not been fulfilled. The same kind of cloud that took him from their view as he returned to the Father will bring him to our view as he returns again. In Matt. 24:30 we are told that the Lord shall "come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" and in Rev. 1:7 we read, "Behold, he cometh with the clouds."

In 1 Thes. 4:16 Paul says, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." The "shout" has not been heard, the "voice of the archangel" has not been heard; the "dead in Christ" have not been raised" and so we are positive that the second coming of Christ has not transpired. We are still expecting him. The fires of hope still burn in our hearts supported by faith in him who said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." With this faith we "endure as seeing him who is invisible" and in joyful anticipation we look forward to the day when our eyes shall behold him who conquered death bringing life and immortality to light.

The second coming of Christ will be at the resurrection of the dead. This being true we know he has not come, and that he will not come until the time for the resurrection.

In John 11:24 when the weeping Martha met the Savior coming to comfort her over the loss of her only brother, Jesus, as the tears coursed down his sympa-
thetic cheeks said to her, “Your brother shall live again”. Martha answered him saying, “I know he shall live again in the resurrection at the last day.” Martha looked to the last day as the day of resurrection; the day when time shall be no more. Just before this world is wrapped in the flames of final destruction its graves shall deliver up their dead; and Martha knew that her brother would live again at that time. But Jesus is to come at the resurrection (1 Thes. 4:16). But if Jesus is to come at the resurrection and the resurrection is at the last day it follows that the coming of Christ will be at the last day.

I do not find the proof in the scriptures that Christ is coming back to this earth to live and reign on the earth for a thousand years before the end of time. I shall not fall out with those who so believe, but if they are right in this contention then I have sorely misunderstood the teachings of the Bible on this subject. There are so many scriptures which to my mind contradict this theory that I am puzzled to know where the idea came from. There may be a “millennium”, whatever that is and whenever it may be, I am not sure that I understand it. John says Satan will be bound a thousand years and I surely believe John told the truth about it, but Satan being bound and cast into the abyss does not say that Christ will be on earth in person and reigning for a thousand years. If Christ is not now reigning in the hearts of his people then I have misunderstood the teaching of God’s Bible. We have every element of this kingdom now, not one thing is missing. We have king, laws, subjects, and territory.

a. Our King is Christ. Jesus declared himself to be a king (John 18:37). Paul preached that he is a king (Acts 17:17). Jesus declares that he has “all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18). And
Paul declares that he is reigning (1 Cor. 15:25). "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet". In Rev. 19:16 he is declared to be "Lord of lords and King of kings." So we have the king.

b. Have we the laws? It seems to me that to deny this is to deny the inspiration of the Bible. If the Bible is the word of God then we have the King's word or laws. But in Rom. 8:2, Paul mentions "The law of the spirit of life" and in Jas. 1:25 we have the perfect law of liberty" and in 1 Cor. 9:21 Paul declares that we are "under law to Christ". Thus you see we have the laws of heaven's kingdom.

c. Have we the subjects for this kingdom? The church is subject to Christ (Eph. 5:24). Jesus is head of the church (Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18). The body is surely subject to the head; the head then is the ruling power over the body. But the church is the body, and therefore the church is subject to Christ. Again we are members of his body (Eph. 5:30). It follows therefore that as he is head of the body and rules the body he therefore rules the members of the body. We are therefore his subjects.

d. Have we the territory for this kingdom? It matters not what you may claim as the territory of this kingdom. We have it now. If the territory is the "inner man" and the "kingdom is within you" then surely we have the territory. The "inner man" being the soul or spirit and the kingdom being in the soul or spirit it then follows that we have the territory; then we have it. But we are sagely told that this earth belongs to Satan. Well that is one place where you and the Lord differ, for the Lord says, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (1 Cor. 10:26; Ps. 24:1; 50:12).

If you say the territory is the universe, then surely we have that now, and it does not belong to Satan eith-
er. The only things that Satan can claim are those that he has ruined. He is not a creator, but a destroyer.

Christ is now reigning over all those who have submitted to him; who have made him their choice, and have obeyed from the heart "that form of doctrine delivered them". Thus Christ must reign till "the last enemy has been destroyed" and this last enemy is death (1 Cor. 15:26) and death must be destroyed before Christ ceases to reign.

If Christ comes before the millennium then he will come at least a thousand years before the last enemy is destroyed. Since Christ is coming at the resurrection at the last day it is therefore impossible for a thousand years to transpire between his coming and the last day or resurrection of the dead.

Christ is to come in flaming fire (2 Thes. 1:7-9). "And to you that are afflicted, rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire." When Jesus comes it will be in flaming fire and so every one may know of the great event, but his coming will not be to give you a chance to get ready for if you are not ready when he comes, then he will say to you, "depart from me."

John says in Rev. 1:7: "Behold he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him and they that pierced him, and all the tribes of earth shall mourn over him." For every eye to see him at his coming those who have died must be raised from the dead and this shows that his coming will be at the resurrection from the dead at the last day. Then every eye can see him, even they that pierced him.

Jesus is coming to judge the world in righteousness, not coming to reign, but the rather to judge. In Acts 17:31 Paul declares that God "hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteous-
ness by that man whom he hath ordained.” God has appointed a day of judgment and this day is after death, for Paul says, “It is appointed unto man once to die and after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27). Again it is said that the coming of Christ will be to “take vengeance on all them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus” (2 Thes. 1:8). And in Matt. 16:27 it is said “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of the Father with his angels and then shall he render to every man according to his deeds”. In Matt. 25:31-46 is described the scenes of the judgment; when the Son of Man shall separate the wheat from the chaff, and shall garner his wheat in heaven’s garner. And at this time he shall banish the wicked from the presence of Jehovah. In 2 Thes. 1:9 it is said, “Who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he shall come to be glorified in all his saints.” In Rev. 22:12, the Lord tells John, “Behold I come quickly and behold my reward is with me to give to each one according as his work is.” Jesus is coming to give to each one according as his work. Jesus is not coming to give the wicked another chance of salvation, but to judge. You have the opportunity of life, if you will not accept it now you would not in that age. Paul says “today is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2). Again not one of the “foolish virgins” entered after the coming of the bridegroom. And then Jesus says that between the good and the bad a mighty gulf is fixed so that no one may pass the one way or the other (Luke 16:19). Life is the time to serve the Lord.

When Jesus comes it will be to gather up all his jewels. In Mal. 3:17 we are told, “And they shall be mine, saith Jehovah of hosts, even mine own possession, in the day that I make.” In John 14:1-2 Jesus
saying: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am there ye may be also." He is coming to gather up the jewels of earth; to gather up all those who have purified their hearts in believing in him, and have purified their souls in obeying the gospel; and who have shown themselves worthy of being children of God by the merciful lives that they have lived. They have walked in the light as he is in the light; they have served or worshipped "God in spirit and in truth" and now since they have borne the burden and heat of the day they are ready to hear his blessed message of "come ye, blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world." Paul says, as he neared the end of mortal life, "Henceforward there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord has prepared for them that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:7, 8).

I can not tell you the day of his coming, but I do believe with all my heart that he is coming and I want to live ready for that glad day. Are you ready friends? Should Jesus come today, are you ready? Shall he bid you welcome to his Father's home? Or shall you suffer eternal banishment? I pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. Come today.
WHY WEAR THE NAME OF CHRIST

Names are the most common things with which we have to deal. The name is the shortest and easiest way by which to identify anything. Everything known to man is known by some name. The vegetables have been classified and named. The fowls and animals have been classified and named, so also the races of men have been accorded names. So also have the various schools of thought and study been named. The various forms of religion have been named. We only call the name and the hearer knows the religion mentioned. If you call Mohammedan we know you speak of those who accept Mohammed as the prophet of God. You call “Mormon” and we know that you speak of those who receive the revelations of Joe Smith as inspirations of God. So if you call the word “Christian”, we know you refer to those, who, believing Christ to be the Son of God, have obeyed him and are following him.

In these days of confusion and doubt we are often told that “there is nothing in a name”, that one name is just as good as another. We might agree that one human title is just as good as another, but we may never agree that any human name is as good as the name of the Christ. The names Methodist, Baptist, Campbellite, etc., may be equal in their merits as human titles, but which one of them would we say is worth to the soul what the holy name of Jesus is? But is it true that, “there is nothing in a name?” Names given by man may be empty, they may be meaningless, but names in the Bible mean something, viz., “Adam” means red earth. “Eve” means mother. But if one name is just as good as another, then why
did God change some names? Abram is a good name but God changed this name to "Abraham." Why? Abram means "high father" but Abraham means "father of multitudes." Jacob means "supplanter." Jacob supplanted Esau in obtaining the blessing. But God changed the name to "Israel". Why? Because "Israel" means "a soldier of God"—Smith. God changed the name of Abraham's wife from Sarai, (contentious) to Sarah (princess). The Egyptian princess called the little babe which she rescued from the waters of the Nile, "Moses" because she had saved him from the water. And Jesus changed the names of several of his disciples. Simon he surnamed Peter (John 1:42). Joses was called "Barnabas", the son of consolation (Acts 4:36). Thus we have abundant proof that names do mean something. When we say Eve, we think of the first mother, or the mother of all human beings. I am aware that this will be disputed by those who regard themselves as descendants of the Simian tribe. I do not believe one word of such tommyrot, but I shall not take time here to discuss it. But if one of them should tell me that he descended from the monkey I would not dispute with him; but I should kindly tell him that we are not even distantly related. Nowadays they tell us that they do not teach that man has descended from the monkey, and I say 'Amen. I am glad they are coming to their senses, but let me ask if they do not believe that man descended from the monkey, why are they so assiduously hunting for the "missing link?"

The name of Christ, or Christian, will not identify any one as a member of any denomination. It will not show you to be a Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Campbellite, etc. It takes something beside the God-given name to identify you as a member of any denomination. But this holy name if rightly worn will
identify them as of those who believe the Bible; believing Christ to be the divine Son of God; the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey him; and have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered and are living in humble obedience to Him as Lord and King. Why not all of us just take this name and lay all others aside?

"Take the name of Jesus with you,
Child of sorrow and of woe,
It will joy and comfort give you,
Take it then where e'er you go."

Indeed God's people have always worn His name. This has been true in all ages of the world. God wants His people to wear His name. In Deut. 28:10 we read, "And all the people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of Jehovah, and they shall be afraid of thee." In Numbers 6:27 we read, "But so shall they put my name upon the children of Israel, and I shall bless them" And in Jer. 14:9 we read, "Yet thou, 0 Jehovah art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name." For further reference, you may read 2 Chron. 7:14; Dan. 9:16; Isa. 63:19. In Rev. 2:13 the church at Pergamus is commended for "not denying his name", and in Rev. 3:8 the church in Philadelphia is also commended for holding fast his name. Then is it not proper that we should take the name of Jesus, who redeemed us from sin and death? Especially since this is the name that God has given to His family. In Rev. 7:2 we read, "And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God; and He cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom was given the power to hurt the earth, and the sea, saying Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their fore-
heads.” In Rev. 14:1 we are told that the 144,000 with Jesus had his name and the name of the Father on their foreheads, and in Rev. 22:4 it is said, “And they shall see his face and his name shall be in their foreheads.”

I wish to read for you a few of the prophecies pertaining to the name that God has given to His people. Micah 4:5 says, “All people will walk, every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of Jehovah our God forever and ever.” That this refers to the Christian age is shown by reading the first four verses. In Zech. 10:12 we read, “And I will strengthen them in Jehovah; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith Jehovah”. Zech. 14:9 says, “And Jehovah shall be king over all the earth; in that day Jehovah shall be one, and his name one.” That this refers to Christ read Eph. 4:1-4. Paul says there is one lord, etc.

We are sagely told sometimes that “Satan gave the name Christian and so to learn the truth of this we read in Isa. 65:15: “And you shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen; and the Lord Jehovah will slay thee; and he will call his servants by another name.” You see God is to give his servants this new name. Satan has nothing to do with it.

Again we read in Isa. 62:2: “And the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name.” So this new name should be given after the righteousness of God has been extended to the nations. When the Gentiles are turning to the Lord, then God is to give this new name. Satan will not be honored with the privilege of naming the children of God. The Jewish age ended at the cross of Christ. See Eph. 2:15, 16, “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity; even the law of commandments
contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man so making peace; and that he might reconcile both in one body. unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.” And again, “Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth” (Rom. 10:4). Again we read in Col 2:14: “Having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.” This surely is enough. The law has ended. Christ has extended the righteousness of God to the nations, as he said, “Go ye therefore and teach all nations” (Matt. 28:18). So the time has come for the giving of the “new name.” God is so plain in revealing these things to us that it seems no one could misunderstand. He even tells us where he will give the new name. Isa. 56:5 says: “Unto them will I give my house and within my walls a memorial and a name better than of sons and of daughters, I will give them an everlasting name, that shall never be cut off.” We now turn to the fulfillment of these promises. The Jewish age has ended; the Gentiles are receiving the gospel; a Gentile church has been established, so the time is ripe. Read Acts 11:26: This is the first Gentile church; it is God’s house; it is God’s walls, and here we read, “And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.” Here we have the “memorial” (the Lord’s Supper), and here we have the new name given to those who follow the Redeemer. Barnabas, the son of consolation, established this church and labored with it till the labors became too great for one man, he then went to Tarsus to seek Saul and bring him to the field of labor. Paul came and these two great workers labored in this field for “a whole year and taught much people”. They did not think it a sin to preach the gospel in one city
for a long time, but realized that as long as there were sinners there needing the gospel it was the right thing to do. "And the disciples were called Christians". Who called them Christians? This word "called" is a translation of the word "Chreematizo" which Thayer defines to mean "to give a divine command or admonish; to be divinely commanded, or admonished; to promulgate the commands of God."

Hence we here have the positive statement that this glorious name was given by the authority of God. Jesus commands the church in Ephesus for suffering for his namesake (Rev. 2:3). Jesus praises the church in Pergamus for holding fast this name (Rev. 2:13). He also praises the church in Philadelphia because they would not "deny his name" (Rev. 3:8). When we lay down this holy, God-given name and presume to wear some human title in preference, it seems to me that we are near to denying the name of Christ. There is something peculiar about the name "Christian." People may wear a human title, but they will never be offended by some one calling them Christian. No indeed they will be proud of the distinction. People may be offended by being called some human title; but the name "Christian" no, no, a thousand times no. For this name represents all that Jesus would have us be in this life. The pure in heart; the pure in soul; the obedient, who have taken the yoke of Christ upon them; those who have enlisted as soldiers of the cross are proud to be known as Christians.

But the name "Christian" is an individual name and it therefore behooves us to pay some attention to the name of the body of Christ. In Matt. 16:18, Jesus says, "I will build my church." It is therefore Christ's church. Christ gives the call that calls them out of sin (Matt. 11:28) and so he truthfully says it is his church. Who am I that I should call it by the name
of some other man? In Rom. 16:16 Paul says, “The churches of Christ salute you.” Hence, each congre-
gation made up of those who have been called out of
sin by the calling of Christ is a church of Christ. But
the church is the body of Christ. Paul says, “And he
put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave
him to be head over all things to the church, which is
his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all”
(See also Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:12; 1 Cor. 1:12, 20; Rom.
12:4). Now surely if the head is Christ then the body
is Christ, and the body is the church and therefore
the church is the church of Christ. In Heb. 12:23, it
is called “the church of the first born.” But Jesus
Christ is the “first born of the dead” (Col. 1:18; Rev.
1:5). Jesus Christ being the “first born of the dead”
and the church being the church of the first born, it
is therefore the church of Christ.

There are so many reasons for wearing the name of
Christ that it would seem almost impossible to enum-
erate them all, but I shall claim your attention to these
few reasons for thus honoring his exalted name.

(1) The name of Christ represents all the power
and authority possessed by him. When Jesus said
that “repentance and remission of sins should be
preached in his name” (Luke 24:45-47) he meant it
should be preached by his authority; that it was he
who should grant and who commanded these things.
Again it is said, “Every knee shall bow and every
tongue confess that Jesus is Christ to the glory of
God the Father” (Rom. 14:11). Every tongue and
every knee shall thus acknowledge the authority of
Christ. “All authority in heaven and in earth is given
to him” (Matt. 28:18). And by wearing this name we
honor his authority, and confess that he has all au-
thority over us.

(2) We are baptized into this name (Matt. 28:18,
R. V.) and hence should wear it. In 1 Cor. 1:12 Paul argues that unless you have been baptized into a name you should not wear it. In baptism we enter the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12). “By one spirit are we all baptized into the one body”. But the body is the body of Christ. We therefore become a member of Christ’s body and should wear his name.

(3) Salvation is in the name of Christ and when we come to His name we come to salvation (Acts 4:12). “He is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which was made the head of the corner. And in none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, given among men, wherein we must be saved.” So in coming to this name as the tower of strength to save; and in thus honoring this name, we declare to the world the power of Christ to save the world.

(4) The name of Christ is ours by inheritance. We are born into the kingdom of God. We are regenerated children of God, and hence should honor the name given us by the Father. My children inherit my name, and the children of God inherit his name (John 3:5).

In 1 Peter 1:23 we read, “Having been born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God.” In Eph. 3:15 we read, “From whom every family in heaven and in earth is named.” Now since every child has a birthright to the family name it follows that all who have been born again who have entered the family of God have a right to wear that name. But we are told that we do not wear the Father’s name, and as children of God we ought to wear His name, then why do we wear the name of Christ? I answer in Bible language—we wear the name of Christ.

(5) Because we have been given to Christ. In Heb.
2:13 we read, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." We are God's children, but God has given us to Christ and has given us the name of Christ to wear. The name Christian shows that we belong to Christ. In John 17:6, we read, "I manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world. Thine they were and thou gavest them to me; and they have kept thy word." The name "Christian" shows to whom we belong. It distinguishes us as belonging to Christ.

(6) Christ bought us and therefore we belong to him. In Acts 20:28 we read, "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood." In 1 Cor. 6:20 we read, "For we were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body" and in 1 Cor. 7:23 we read, "We were bought with a price; become not bondservants of men." The name "Christian" or "church of Christ" shows to whom we belong.

Not only do we belong to Christ by purchase, but we also belong to him by adoption. In Rom. 8:15 we read, "For ye received not the spirit of bondage unto fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

Again in Gal 4:5 we read, "That ye might receive the adoption of sons." I understand that when a child is legally adopted into a family it takes the family name; is under the family rules, and so an heir in the family estate. Thus as adopted children we have a right to the family name and should honor the God who adopted us and gave us this name.

(7) We are married to Christ and hence should honor his name. It is God's way that the bride should wear the husband's name. In Gen. 5:2 we read, "Male and female created he them, and blessed them, and
called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." It surely would be out of order for a bride to wear any name other than that of her husband. Since their name was Adam, does it not follow that Eve's name was as much Adam as that of her husband? Paul in Rom. 7:4 teaches us that we are married, or united with Christ and it seems to me that his statement should settle the matter. He says, "We should be joined to another even to him who is raised from the dead." In Matt. 19:6 Jesus in teaching the sacredness of the marriage vows says, "So they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Married to Christ, with his spirit in our hearts, his blood to cleanse us, and being member of his body, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, we glory in wearing and thus honoring his holy name.

(8) We are members of his body and should honor the name of the head. Eph. 5:30 says, "Because we are members of his body". It would certainly be awkward to speak of the head as Christ; an arm as Jones, a leg as Smith, an eye as Campbell, and the mouth as Wesley or some other. But rather the name of the head is the name of every member of the body.

(9) We are sealed in this name. In Eph. 1:13 we read, "In whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." You will say "yes, but that seal is the Holy Spirit." Oh, no, the spirit places that seal upon the children of God. The spirit is one thing and the seal is quite another. In 2 Cor. 1:21, 22 we read, "Now he that established us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the spirit in our hearts." In Rev. 7:3 we read, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." But the seal on their
foreheads is the divine name as we may read in Rev. 14:1: “And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads.” In Rev. 22:4 we read, “And they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads.” Sealed in the holy name of Christ, with his name written on our foreheads is it any wonder we sing, “Take the name of Jesus with you, child of sorrow and of woe.”

(10) God has called us by this name now (Jas. 2:7): “Do they not blaspheme the honorable name by which ye are called.” But this will be the name called when God is calling us home. When the time comes that Jesus shall come to gather up his jewels this holy name will be called and all having this name rightly upon them shall come from their graves to ascend the skies with him. In Isa. 43:6 we read, “I will say to the north, give up; and to the south, keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth every one that is called by my name.”

“When all the saved comes from the grave,
In that land so bright and fair,
At God’s right hand I’ll take my stand,
I’ll be no stranger there.”

Here is a great people called from every land and country, from every kindred, race and people. They have been called by the voice of the living Christ; they have been redeemed in his blood, and cleansed in this cleansing fountain; they have been made members of his body, of his flesh and of his bone. They are a conquering army going forth to battle for the truth that souls may be redeemed from sin and ruin and made to be heirs of God. They wear in their hearts and have inscribed on their banners the holy name of
the Son of God. They call you to rally to the cross; to flee to the name of the Lord for it is a strong tower of salvation. Is it any wonder then that we sing, "All hail the power of Jesus’ name"? or that we sing, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer’s ear?"

The church of Christ, the redeemed, blood-bought institution pleads for you to come and abide within her walls.
THE THIEF ON THE CROSS

The subject selected for this talk is a very popular one with a great many preachers. I suppose this thief has attracted more attention than any other thief that has ever lived or died in this old world. There have probably been thieves in this world since early in its history, but no one has cared enough about them to glorify them in sermon or in song. But this one dying with the Savior has been quite attractive to some preachers. These thieves both derided the Savior. See Matt. 27:44; Mark 15:32. But one of them seems to have changed his mind. He evidently became convinced that Jesus was in truth what he claimed to be, and so reproached his fellow thief and then appealed to Jesus saying “Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom, remember me.” Jesus answered him, saying, “verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise.” It is claimed that this is a promise of salvation. Perhaps it is. If this thief is saved or if he is not saved, it can make no difference in your or my responsibilities. There were three men dying that day on three crosses, one of the three was Jesus, and for my part I had rather preach him than to preach either of the thieves. I had far rather plead with people to do as Jesus did than to advise people to do as the thief did. I am sure that it is more befitting for you and me to obey the Son of God than for us to emulate a thief. I confess that I am not deeply interested in this thief. He has lived his life; finished his course; closed his career, and now has gone on to face the judgment and nothing that I can say will in any way affect him. But there is a cause for all this agitation about the thief. O, you say, “he repented.” Well perhaps he did, but there have been thousands of
equally as worthy sinners as he who have died as peni­tent as he. Why not preach about them? Why hold up this thief as a model of salvation? "Because he was saved without being baptized." Well, isn't this, then the truth? If you follow the Savior you will be baptized, but if you follow the thief you won't. Which shall we prefer to follow? But how do you know this thief was not baptized? "The Bible doesn't say he was". No, but the same Bible that doesn't say he was, doesn't say he was not so what are we to do about it? The Bible does say that "Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judea and all the regions round about the Jordan and were baptized of him in the river Jordan confessing their sins" (Matt. 3:6). This does not say the thief was baptized; he might not have been in that country at that time, but it comes nearer saying he was baptized than it does to saying he was not. The Bible also says, "The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves not being baptized of him" (Luke 7:30).

I am sure the great trouble has been in not studying the Bible in its proper divisions. If we will study the Bible in its proper divisions we will readily see that the thief not being baptized will not affect our duties at all. The thief could have been baptized with John's baptism, but he lived and died before the Great Commission of Jesus was given and hence could not obey it. But you and I are living under the reign of the Lord Jesus and hence should comply with His Great Commission.

The religious history of this world naturally divides itself into three epochs or ages. (1) The Patriarchal. (2) The Jewish, and (3) The Christian. Every one must obey the laws under which he lives. No one may be held responsible for violating a law that was not in force when he lived. Paul says, "If a man con-
tend in the games, he is not crowned except he have contended lawfully" (2 Tim. 2:5). The Patriarchal age closed at Mt. Sinai when the law was given to Moses. This age lasted about twenty-three hundred years. People entered this age by the natural birth; this was the only birth then known. God had no established or written laws and hence every one did that which was right in his own eyes (Judge 17:6; 21:25). They made animal sacrifices following the example of Abel. We do not know much about their fellowship, but God speaks to a few men individually, namely, Noah, Abraham and Jacob. Then when the time was ripe to give a written law God spake to Moses. The thief could not be judged by the conditions in this, the patriarchal age for he did not live then.

(2) The Mosaic epoch or age began with the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai and continued to the giving of the gospel of Christ (about fifteen hundred years) God spake to Moses and caused him to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, across the Red Sea and down to Mt. Sinai. Thus preparation is made for the passing from the one age to the other—from the patriarchal age to the age of law. On the smoking summit of Sinai God gave to Moses the written law, the first written law that God had ever given to man. Man had passed the awful experiences of the flood; and now he has come to receive the law that shall guide him, and preserve him till the coming of the seed promised to Abraham. Under this covenant, its legatees must be born into the natural family of the Jew, and hence this is a racial religion, you must be a Jew born, or a Jew bought with Abraham's money (Gen. 17:13) that you may have a right to the land of Canaan. Under this covenant they made many animal sacrifices. A bloody sacrifice must be made
for every sin. These sacrifices were typical, pointing to the blood of the cross. These typical sacrifices could not really take away sin; but being typical they in type did that which was really done when the blood of Christ was offered upon the golden altar. Paul said, "without the shedding of blood there is no remission. And again, "For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin" (Heb. 10:4). And again, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. 9:14). Then, again, they must go to Jerusalem to worship, "But the place which Jehovah your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither shall ye come" (Deut. 12:5). And again, "That David, my servant may have a lamp always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me, to put my name there" (1 Kings 11:36). Thus you see God's name was put in Jerusalem and all Jews were required to go there to worship. Under this law or during this age, the high priest was required to make atonement for the people once every year. "Howbeit on the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement and ye shall do no manner of work on that day, for it is a day of atonement, to make atonement for you before Jehovah your God" (Lev. 23:27, 38; 16:11). On this line Paul tells us, "But into the second went the high priest alone once in the year, not without blood which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people" (Heb. 9:7; 24:26). This atonement sacrifice had been made for the thief (if he was a Jew) on the tenth day of their seventh month (about our October) preceding his death, and the old sins
had been rolled forward, and so in so far as his sins done before the atonement were concerned, he was justified.

This age was never intended to be eternal. This covenant or these laws were never intended to continue. Paul states their age limit when he said, “But the law was added because of transgression till the seed should come to whom the promises were made” (Gal. 3:19). Then this age, covenant, or law, only continued to the coming of Christ. I shall consider this from the standpoint of both the covenant and the law. (a) The covenant has been changed. “These women are two covenants; one from Mt. Sinai bearing children unto bondage, which is Hagar. Howbeit, what saith the scriptures? Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the free woman” (Gal. 4:21-31). Here the two covenants are brought into contrast and we are plainly told that the old covenant was from Mt. Sinai, and that this covenant was cast out, and that the children of the old covenant could not inherit with the children of the new. But again in Heb. 8:8-13 we are told that God would make a “new covenant” not like the old, and that the old one would vanish away. “In that he saith a new covenant he hath made the first old, but that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away.” And in the tenth chapter of Hebrews Paul tells us, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he might establish the second; by which will we have been sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:9, 10). You say when was this done? I answer it was done when the body of Jesus was offered as the sacrifice. And that was when he died on calvary. That this covenant referred to in the above scriptures is the
“ten commandments” is proven by Moses. Exodus 34: 27, 38 says: “And Jehovah said unto Moses, write thou these words; for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel; and he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.”

(b) The law has ended. Jesus said, “Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I came not to destroy but to fulfill” (Matt. 5:17). Now it is sure that if Christ fulfilled the law, and it has ended, its mission being fulfilled, that when its mission has been fulfilled or accomplished then the law will cease by the statute of limitation. To this agree the words of the apostle Paul when he says, “What then is the law? It was added because of transgression till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made” (Gal. 3:19). “He saith not and to seeds as of many, but as of one and to thy seed which is Christ” (Gal. 3:16). Again as though arguing this very point he says, “The law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come we are no longer under a tutor” (Gal. 3:24). And yet once more he saith, “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness unto all them that believe” (Rom. 10:4). Again Paul says, “For the priesthood being changed there is made also of necessity a change of the law” (Heb. 7:12). This change of law was made “through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10). This statement is verified by Paul when he says to the Colossians (Col. 2:14): “Having blotted out the bond written in ordinances, that was against us, which was contrary to us; and he hath taken it out of the way nailing it to the cross.” Eph. 2:16 says, “And might reconcile both them in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.” So you see
that we now “are not under the law but under grace.” But the thief lived and died before the law came to an end and was therefore subject to the law. He, dying on the cross with Jesus, died before Christ gave the great commission.” Then as he died before the great commission was given he could not be held accountable for not having obeyed it for we have just shown that no one could be held responsible for disobeying a law that was not applicable to them.

There is another thought connected with this theme that I now wish to call to your attention. The gospel is in the nature of a will. Paul said, “For where a testament is there must of necessity be the death of him that made it” (Heb. 9:16). Then the “will” of Christ was not in force till after he died and therefore the thief was not accountable for not having obeyed it. The “will” of Christ was not offered to the world until the day of Pentecost or fifty days after the death of Christ and therefore the thief had been dead fifty days before the world was commanded to “repent and be baptized in his name for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). Again, before an individual dies he has the right to dispose of his property or blessings with or without conditions as it may please him. Jesus before his “will” was sealed in his own death could bless any one upon any condition or without a condition as it pleased him, but after his will has been sealed in his death, then it may not be broken with impunity. The sick woman was blessed when her faith led her to press through the throng and touch the garment of the Savior (Matt. 9:20). The blind man must go to the pool of Siloam and bathe (John 9:7-11). The paralytic must take up his bed and walk (Matt. 9:6). This command was based upon the faith of the paralytic’s friends (Luke 5:20). Seeing that all these things are true, Jesus did violence to no principle when
he blessed this thief in his dying hour. But now he has given the great commission. He has made it binding in heaven (Matt. 16:19) and you and I must obey it. Man can not change this great law. Angels dare not lay ruthless hands upon it, for if any man, or even an angel from heaven, shall preach any other gospel he shall be anathema (Gal. 1:8, 9; Rev. 22:18, 19).

This glorious Christian age began to dawn with the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and was ushered in as a living institution when endowed with the Holy Spirit. The Patriarchal age passed with the coming of "the law"; the Mosaic age passed with the coming of the gospel of Christ, but this, the Christian age is an everlasting age, God declared, in his welcome address to his Son. "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever" (Heb. 1:8) an everlasting reign, and in the 12th verse Paul says, "Thy years shall not fail." Every principle is as everlasting as the years of God are everlasting. His priesthood is everlasting, and so as long as man needs a high priest to officiate between him and God, Christ will be his priest. Hb. 7:17 says, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek".

Under the patriarchal age the first born was the patriarch, but now we have the "first begotten of the Father" to be our high priest. Under the Jewish age you must be born a Jew or bought with a Jew's money (Gen. 17:13). But now under the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ every human being enjoys the right to all the blessings of Jehovah. Jesus said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest". Under the Jewish age the members of that covenant looked to earthly Canaan as their home, but under the Christian age, "We seek a country yet to come." We are looking for and pressing on to the heavenly Canaan; to the house not made
with hands as our eternal inheritance. Under the old covenant their sacrifices were animal and were only temporary. They pointed to the coming Christ. Under the Christian age we have the blessed blood of the Redeemer which cleanses from all sins, purifying the soul and making it clean in the sight of God.

Under the Jewish age its members must be “born of water and the spirit”. No one can enter the kingdom of the Lord without being born into it. It is this birth that brings them from darkness to light; from death to life. We were dead in trespasses and in sins, but by the “new birth” we are made alive in Christ Jesus. We are bought with the precious blood of Christ (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:20). We are his. He is ours, and we will obey him. He will lead us into the heavenly Canaan where all is well. Whatever the thief may or may not have done, we will follow Christ even in obeying the command to be baptized.

“Through floods and flames if Jesus leads,
I’ll follow where he goes,
Hinder me not shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose.”