

STUDY V

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE NEW CREATION

The "Living Stones" for the Spiritual Temple--The Nominal vs. the Real New Creation--The "Mystery of God" and the "Mystery of Iniquity"--Great Antichrist's Organization--The Scriptures Trustworthy--Freedom Permitted to the World and to Churchianity--Order out of Confusion--"In Due Time"--"The Ends of the Ages"--The Vine of the Father's Planting--"The Twelve Apostles of the Lamb"--Paul the Successor of Judas--Number of Apostles Limited to Twelve--The Apostolic Commission--The Apostles' Strong Characters--The Apostle Paul "Not one Whit Behind" the other Apostles--The Inspiration of the Twelve--Divine Supervision of the Apostles' Writings--"Upon this Rock Will I Build My Church"--Harmony of the Gospels--Keys of Authority--Apostolic Infallibility--Objections Considered--"One is Your Master"--The True Church is "The Flock of God"--Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Teachers--The Lord's Organization of The New Creation Absolutely Complete--He is Also Its Superintendent--Gifts of the Spirit Ceased with Their Necessity--Unity of the "Faith Once Delivered to the Saints"--Unity of Force, Antichristian--Bishops, Elders, Deacons--True Significance of "Prophet"--Humility Essential to Eldership--Other Necessary Qualifications--Deacons, Ministers, Servants--Teachers in the Church--Many Should Be Able to Teach--"Be not Many of You Teachers, Brethren"--"Ye Need not That Any Man Teach You"--"Him That Is Taught" and "Him That Teacheth"--Woman's Province in the Church--Women as Fellow-Workers--"Let Her be Covered."

AS THE New Creation will not reach its perfection or completion until the First Resurrection, so its organization will be completed only then. The temple figure illustrates this: as living stones we are now called, or invited to places in the glorious temple, and, as the Apostle explains (*1 Pet. 2:5*), we come to Jesus, who, as the Father's representative, shapes, chisels, fits and polishes us for places in the glorious Temple of the future--the meeting-place between God and the world. As in the typical temple built by Solomon every

stone was thoroughly fitted in the quarry for its place in the building, so with us--all the fitting preparation is done in the present life. As in the type every shaped stone went into its place without the sound of a hammer, so in the antitype --the living stones, which now submit joyfully to the Lord's preparation, will be completely organized under himself as the capstone when united to him beyond the veil--without confusion, without need of further arrangement or preparation.

However, the Scriptures recognize a oneness or relationship of these living stones during the period of their preparation. Indeed, they go a step further, and recognize a *temporary organization* which permits each member of the prospective Kingdom to be a sharer with the great Teacher and Master Builder in the preparatory work of "building up one another in the most holy faith"--assisting one another in the shaping of characters in accord with the lines of the pattern--our Lord Jesus. As we proceed to a minute examination of the divine arrangements for the present time, it may surprise many to discover how much liberty the Lord has left to each individual member of the New Creation: but when we recognize the fact that he is seeking willing worshipers, willing sacrificers, who are prompted by love for the Lord and for the principles of righteousness to lay down their lives for the brethren's sake, and for the sake of being colaborers with him, then it is clear that the Lord's plan of granting great liberty is the best plan--the one which most surely tests the heart-loyalty, most fully develops character, and proves the willingness of each to follow with the other the Law of Love, doing to the other as he would the other should do to him.

Such a liberty, or, comparative freedom, is well adapted to the Lord's object in the present time--namely, the selection of the little flock and the perfecting of them in character and instructing them for the Royal Priesthood of the future--but would be wholly out of line with and insufficient for the work of converting the world, which he is generally supposed to be doing. It is because of this wrong

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doctrine--this supposition that God has commissioned the Church to conquer the world and to subdue all things unto himself during the present age--that so many persons of good judgment have marveled at the simplicity of the organization of the Church by the Lord and the apostles. And seeing how inadequate such an arrangement would be for

the *conversion of the world*, men have undertaken to elaborate the organization, as seen in the various ecclesiastical institutions of Christendom. Of these is the Papacy, one of the most subtle and powerful organizations imaginable. The Methodist Episcopal system is also masterful, but on a higher plane; it controls a different class. It is the thorough organization of these two great systems that has given them their success and their power in "the Christian world." We shall see as we proceed that these and all *human "churches"* are in their organization quite different from the Church which the Lord instituted--that their ways are not his ways, even as their plans are not his plans; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are the Lord's ways and plans higher than those of man. (*Isa. 55:8,9*) Ere long the true-hearted will see that they greatly erred in leaving the simplicity of Christ and attempting to be wiser than God in the conduct of his work. Results will show his wisdom and man's folly.

The Nominal vs. the Real New Creation

As with the typical people all were Israelites in a nominal sense, but comparatively few "Israelites indeed," so in the antitype we are not to be surprised that we find a nominal Church, as well as a real Church, a nominal New Creation as well as a real New Creation. Ever since Christianity became to some extent popular, "tares," "imitation wheat," have infested the wheat-field, affecting to be genuine wheat. However difficult it may be for man, who cannot read the heart, to determine the true from the false, the wheat from the tares the Lord assures us that he knoweth the heart, that--"The Lord knoweth them that are his." He does indeed expect us to discriminate between the true

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sheep and wolves in sheep's clothing, and between the true grapevine bearing the true fruits and the thorns and thistles which might seek to pass themselves off for members of the true Vine, and tells us so to do. But beyond this general judgment--a liberal examination of the general outward character, the Lord does not permit his people to go--saying, "Judge nothing before the time." Amongst those whom you recognize as legitimate branches in the Vine, do not attempt to decide how long a time should be granted them to bring forth the ripe fruits. We must leave that to the

Father, the Husbandman, who prunes every branch, and who will ultimately take away every branch or member that "beareth not fruit." We, therefore, leave to the Husbandman the pruning of the "Vine"--the correction of every truly consecrated member of the Church of Christ--letting him do the excommunicating, recognizing that he did the planting and the watering also, and brought forward the sprouting of every branch in the true Vine. The spirit of the Vine is to be recognized to some extent in each branch or member, and each is to be encouraged and assisted in its growth. Love is to be the law amongst all these branches; and only as the divine Word is heard--not a whit beyond its authorization--has any branch the right to criticize, rebuke or otherwise prune, or do aught against another branch. The spirit of love is, on the contrary, to prompt to mercy, kindness, long-suffering and patience up to the very limits allowed by the great Husbandman; which, as we have already suggested, are broad and liberal and designed to develop character in every branch.

All this is different in human organizations in proportion as they have ignored or abandoned the simplicity of the divine arrangement. They have made arbitrary rules respecting who may be acknowledged as members or branches of the Vine, and who may not be admitted to the full fellowship; they have made financial exactions and various rules and regulations which the Scriptures have not made, and laid down numerous creeds and confessions which the Scriptures have not laid down, and have prescribed penalties

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for violations of these which the Scriptures have not imposed, and have made regulations for disfellowshipping, excommunicating, etc., contrary to any authorization given to the True Church, the Body of Christ, the True Vine, the New Creation.

We have already called attention to the fact that the Church of Christ is called in the Scriptures the "Mystery of God,"* because, contrary to expectation, the Church was to be the Messianic *Body* which, under its Anointed Head, Jesus, shall rule and bless the world. This mystery, or secret, now revealed to the saints, was kept hidden from past ages and dispensations (*Eph. 3:3-6*), and is the mystery of God which shall be finished now shortly, in the consummation of the New Creation, in the close of this Gospel age. We have also drawn attention to the fact that the Scriptures refer to Babylon as a counterfeit system (mother and daughters

--some more and some less corrupt, some better and some poorer counterfeits), and there designated the "Mystery of Iniquity." We are not to be understood as meaning that the founders of these counterfeit systems purposely and intentionally organized them for the purpose of misleading the people of God. Rather we are to remember that it is Satan who in the Scriptures is credited with having "deceived the whole world" on this subject; putting evil for good and good for evil; light for darkness and darkness for light. Satan "now worketh in the children of disobedience" (*Isa. 5:20; Eph. 2:2*), even as he proffered his cooperation to our Lord Jesus. He delights to cooperate with all of Christ's followers whom he can seduce from walking in the footsteps of the Master. As he tried to persuade our Lord that there were better ways--ways that involved less personal sacrifice and self-denial than the Father's ways--by which he might bless all the families of the earth, so he, during this Gospel age, has been intent upon persuading the Lord's truly consecrated brethren to adopt his plans--not to give careful heed to the Father's plans and rules. He would have them

*Vol. I, Chap. v.

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otherwise--to feel that they can serve the Lord better by other methods than those the Scriptures point out. He would puff them up with feelings of zeal for and pride in their human systems, the work they are doing, and the organizations which they have effected. With the Master the Adversary had no success, his answer being invariably, "It is written." But not so with his followers. Many, many neglect what is written; neglect the Master's example and words; neglect the words and example of the apostles, and are intent upon carrying out for God a plan which they hope and believe he approves and which they trust will redound to his praise.

How wonderfully mistaken such will find themselves when, by and by, they shall see the Kingdom as God originally planned it and has since worked the matter out along his own lines! They will then discover how much better it is to be careful to be taught of the Lord, than to attempt to teach the Lord--to do his work in his way, rather than work for him in a way which he will not acknowledge. The success of these human plans--as in Papacy, Methodism, and, proportionately, in other denominations--helps to make these systems "strong delusions."

The Lord has not interfered with, or hindered, the growth of the "tares" in the wheat-field during this Gospel Age. On the contrary, he instructed his people to expect that both would grow together until the "harvest" time, when he himself would be present, superintending the separation, gathering the wheat into his barn (the glorified condition), and seeing to the bundling of the tares for the great time of trouble with which the age shall end, and which shall destroy them as "tares" or *imitation New Creatures* without destroying them as human beings. Indeed, many of the "tares" are respectable, moral, and, as the world uses the term, "good people." So amongst all the heathen religions there are elements of goodness, too, though far less than amongst the "tares," who have been greatly blessed and advantaged every way by reason of their close contact with

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the true "wheat," and their partial discernment of the spirit of the Lord in the latter.

This Mystery of Iniquity ("Babylon," Confusion, Christendom) the Apostle Paul declares was already beginning to work amongst the Lord's people in his day; but the working was evidently but slight until after the death of Paul and the other apostles. While the apostles remained with the Church they were able to point out some of the false teachers through whom the Adversary was seeking privily, privately, secretly, to bring in damnable heresies to undermine the faith and to turn the faithful aside from the hopes and promises and simplicities of the Gospel. (**2 Pet. 2:1**) The Apostle Paul speaks also of some of these in general terms, as beginning the workings of iniquity; but he names some of them personally, Hymenaeus and Philetus, et al., "who concerning the truth have erred," etc.--"overthrowing the faith of some." (**2 Tim. 2:17**) Respecting these false teachers and their errors, he again warned the Church through the elders at Ephesus, especially pointing out that these would flourish after his death--grievous wolves, they would not spare the flock. (**Acts 20:29**) This last is remarkably in accord with our Lord's prediction in the parable. (**Matt. 13:25,39**) Our Lord clearly shows that these false teachers and their false doctrines were the agencies of the Adversary who sowed the tares amongst the wheat that he and the apostles had planted. He says, "While men [the special servants, the apostles] *slept*, an enemy came and sowed tares."

It was not long after the apostles fell asleep, we may be

sure, until the spirit of rivalry under the guidance of the Adversary led step by step to the ultimate organization of the great Antichrist system--Papacy. Its organization, as we have already seen,* was not effected instantly, but gradually --beginning to assume its power about the fourth century. The great Antichrist flourished so successfully for a

*Vol. II, Chap. ix.

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time that all the histories written from that period onward to the "Reformation" practically ignored the right of every person and class to the name Christian or to be considered orthodox and faithful who did not belong to or in some manner support this Antichrist system. Others were not permitted to exist except privately and under ban, and if there were histories of them, apparently they were destroyed; but, possibly, like those walking in the light of present truth today, the faithful of that time were so insignificant in proportion of numbers and influence that none would have thought them worthy of mention in comparison with the great and successful system which they essayed to oppose, and which so rapidly climbed to the influential place of power in both temporal and spiritual matters.

Since the "Reformation" the Adversary has again showed his cunning in organizing every new departure (every fresh effort to reach the truth) into another Antichrist; so that today we have not only the original "mother of harlots" but her many "daughters."* In view of these facts we will not seek for histories of the True Church except such as we find in the New Testament, which evidently have been preserved to us with great sacredness and purity, notwithstanding an occasional interpolation, illustrated in *John 21:25* and *1 John 5:7*.

We will, however, briefly call attention to certain facts, which not only prove to us that the Scriptures have been preserved in comparative purity, but which attest also at the same time that the many systems claiming to have been organized by the Lord and the apostles are wholly different from the one which they did organize, the account of which is given us in the New Testament.

(1) If the primitive Church had been organized after the manner of Papacy or other denominations of today, the records would have been quite different from what they are. We would have had some reference to our Lord's installation of the apostleship with great ceremony, himself

*See Vol. III, pp. 42,154,155.

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sitting somewhere in state as a Pope, receiving the apostles in scarlet robes as cardinals, etc., etc.; we would have had strict laws and regulations respecting Friday, abstaining from meat, etc.--something respecting "holy water" sprinkled upon the apostles or upon the multitude, and something about making the sign of the cross. Mary, our Lord's mother, would not have been forgotten. An account would have been given of her claimed miraculous conception and she would have been announced as "the mother of God," and Jesus himself would have been represented as doing her some special homage, and as instructing the apostles to approach him through her. Some injunction would have been given respecting "holy candles," when and how and where they should be used; some instruction respecting the invocation of saints; some instruction about the "mass," and how Peter, meeting with the other disciples, was recognized as the Pope; how they prostrated themselves before him, and how he performed mass for them all, declaring that he had power to re-create Christ in the bread and to sacrifice him afresh for personal transgressions. We would have some account of Stephen's burial; how Peter or the others "consecrated" a grave for him, so that he might lie in "consecrated ground," and that they put in his hand a "holy candle" while they said certain prayers over him. We would have had rules and regulations respecting various orders of clergy, and how the laity are not at all "brethren" with them, but subservient to them. We would in turn have orders amongst the clergy, higher and lower, Reverend, Right Reverend, Most Reverend; Bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals and Popes; and particular directions how each and all were to attain their positions, seeking honor one from another, and who should be greatest.

The fact that these matters are in no sense of the word even hinted at by the apostles is *prima facie* evidence that the systems which claim either in whole or in part such divisions of the Church, such authorities, such offices, etc., were not organized by the apostles or under their guidance, nor

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by the Lord who appointed them and recognized their work. *John 15:16; Acts 1:2; Rev. 21:14*

(2) It proves, additionally, that the Bible was not concocted by these wise organizers; for had they forged it we may be sure they would have supplied it abundantly with references such as we have suggested.

(3) Having this authority and evidence that the "mother" and numerous "daughter" systems of the present day were not instituted by the Lord and the apostles, but resulted from corruptions of their simple teachings, and are, hence, mere human institutions--attempts to be wiser than God in the doing of the divine work--let us have the greater confidence in the Word of God, and let us give the more earnest heed even to the smallest particulars it sets before us, upon this and all subjects.

During the six thousand years of the world's history up to the present time, God has permitted mankind in general to do their best in solving the problems of life. The natural man was created with qualities of mind which inclined him to honor and worship his Creator; and these qualities of mind have not been totally obliterated by the fall--"total depravity" is certainly not true of the race in general. As God has allowed men to exercise the other qualities of their minds as they chose, so he has permitted them to exercise their moral and religious traits according to their inclinations. We may see that aside from natural Israel and spiritual Israel, and the influences which have gone out from these to the world, God has let the world alone--let it do the best it could do in the way of self-development, etc. Man in his ignorance and blindness has largely fallen a prey to the devices of Satan and the fallen angels, who, through various forms of superstition, false religions, magic, etc., have turned the masses far from the truth. The Apostle explains the situation, saying that this is so because when men knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, and God gave them over--allowed them to take the way they preferred, to learn certain

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lessons in connection with their own depravity, and to manifest by the degradation into which they would fall the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the un wisdom of listening to any counsel except that of their Creator.

As we have already seen, the Lord does not purpose to leave mankind in this weak and fallen condition; but

through the New Creation, in his own due time, the knowledge of the Lord will reach every member of the human family, with full opportunity to come to a knowledge of the truth, and to all the blessings secured through the redemption. But the point which we wish specially to enunciate here is that, as God has thus left the heathen nations to themselves, so also he is leaving so-called "Christendom" to itself. He is permitting men who have received some of the light of divine revelation to use it as they please--to try their hand at improvements upon the divine plan, to organize human systems, etc. All this does not mean that he has not the power to interfere, nor that he approves of these various conflicting and, more or less, injurious devices and institutions of humanity and Churchianity. These experiences will constitute another lesson, which by and by will reprove many, when they shall recognize the grand outcome of the divine plan and see how God kept steadily on, working out the accomplishment of his original purposes, practically ignoring the schemes and devices of man, and accomplishing his results sometimes partly through them and sometimes in absolute opposition to them. Just so he did in the end of the Jewish age, when he permitted some of that nation to accomplish his plan in persecuting and crucifying the Lord and his apostles. And as some of them were "Israelites indeed," afterward blessed and uplifted and made partakers of the sufferings of Christ that by and by they might also be partakers of his glories, so now there are probably spiritual "Israelites indeed" who, Paul-like, will be recovered from the snares of the Adversary.

Another point is worthy of notice: the Lord has a special time for the beginning of his Kingdom, a special time, therefore, in which his elect New Creation shall be developed

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and prepared for his service; and apparently it was a part of his plan that special light should shine upon the beginning and upon the close of this period. The Apostle intimates this when he refers to us "upon whom the ends of the ages have come." (*1 Cor. 10:11*) It was in the *lapping* of the Jewish and Gospel ages that the Way, the Truth and the Life first were manifested; "Dark Ages" intervened, and now in the lapping time of the Gospel and Millennial ages the light shines as never before--on "things new and old." While we are to suppose that those in accord with the Lord in the beginning of the age were given special light, and that such now, in the close of the age, will be favored with

the light of Present Truth that they may thereby be sanctified, we are not to think that the same measure of light was necessary to sanctification during centuries intervening, some of which are known as the "Dark Ages." We are not to suppose that the Lord ever left himself without witnesses, however they may have been ignored on the pages of history; but are to regard this ignoring as due to their comparative obscurity and to their being out of touch and out of sympathy with the great anti-Christian systems--even though some of them may have been in those systems. So the Lord's call, applicable now, clearly indicates that we should expect to find many of the Lord's people *in*, and confused and bewildered by, sectarianism, in Babylon: "Babylon the great is fallen." "Come *out of her*, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." **Rev. 18:2,4**

Having thus taken a cursory view of the Church and her limited history, let us come more particularly to an examination of the Church as it was originally instituted by our Lord. As there is but one *Spirit* of the Lord, which all who are his must possess, so there is but one Head and *center* of the Church, our Lord Jesus. We are to remember, however, that in all of his work the Father was freely acknowledged, and that according to his own account his work was done in the Father's name, by the Father's authority--"Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be

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rooted up." (**Matt. 15:13**) The true Church, the New Creation, is of the Father's planting. Our Lord says, I am the true Vine, ye are the branches and my Father is the Husbandman. Later on he points out that there is a "Vine of the Earth," a nominal church, a false church, that was not of the Father's planting, and which shall be rooted up. The fruitage of the True Vine is Love, and is precious to the Father; but the fruitage of the Vine of the Earth is selfishness in various forms, and will be ultimately gathered into the great winepress of the wrath of God in the great time of trouble with which this age will close. **John 15:1-6; Rev. 14:19**

Every Bible student has surely observed that our Lord and the apostles recognized no division in the Church and ignored everything like schism, both in fact and in name. With them the Church was one and indivisible, like its one faith, one Lord and one baptism. It was spoken of from this standpoint as the Church, the Church of God, the Church of

the Living God, the Church of Christ, the Church of Firstborns; and the individuals of it were called "Brethren," "Disciples," "Christians." All these names are used indiscriminately of the whole Church and of the smallest gatherings--even the twos and threes--and of the individuals, at Jerusalem or Antioch or elsewhere. The variety of these names and their general use clearly implies that none of them were intended to be proper names. All were merely illustrative of the great fact which our Lord and his apostles continually set forth, viz., that the Church (*Ecclesia*, body, company) of the Lord's followers are his "elect"--to share his cross and learn needed lessons now, and by and by to be associated with him in his glory.

This custom should have continued, but was changed during the Dark Ages. When error had developed, the sectarian spirit came with it and peculiar designations followed--Church of Rome, Baptist Church, Lutheran Church, Church of England, Holy Catholic Church, Wesleyan Church, Christian Church, Presbyterian Church, etc. These are marks of *carnality*, as the Apostle points out (*1 Cor. 3:3,4*);

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and as the New Creation emerges out of the gross darkness which has so long covered the world it becomes enlightened upon this point also; and observing the error and appearance of evil, not only comes out of sectarianism, but refuses to be known by these unscriptural names--though willingly answering to any or all that are Biblical.

Let us now examine the foundations of the one Church which the Lord established:

The Twelve Apostles of the Lamb

The Apostle declares that other foundation can no man lay than that is laid--Jesus Christ. (*1 Cor. 3:11*) Upon this foundation our Lord, as the Father's representative, began to rear his Church, and in so doing he called twelve apostles--not by accident, but by design, just as the twelve tribes of Israel were not twelve by accident, but in conformity to the divine plan. Not only did the Lord not choose more than those twelve apostles for that position, but he has never given authority since for any more--barring the fact that Judas, having proved himself unworthy of a position amongst the twelve, fell from his place and was

succeeded by the Apostle Paul.

We notice with what care the Lord watched over the apostles--his carefulness for Peter, his praying for him in the hour of his trial, and his special appeals to him afterward to feed his sheep and his lambs. We note also his care for doubting Thomas and his willingness to demonstrate to him thoroughly the fact of his resurrection. Of the twelve, he lost none save the son of perdition--and his deflection was already foreknown to the Lord and foretold in the Scriptures. We cannot recognize the choice of Matthias recorded in Acts as in any sense of the word the Lord's selection. He was, doubtless, a good man, but was chosen by the eleven without authority. They had been instructed to tarry at Jerusalem and wait for endowment from on high by the holy Spirit at Pentecost, and it was during this waiting period, and before they were endued with power, that

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they mistakenly cast lots and chose Matthias to take the place of Judas. The Lord did not reprove them for this undesigned meddling with his arrangement, but simply ignored their choice, and in his own time brought forward the Apostle Paul, declaring, "He is a chosen vessel unto me"; and, again, we have the Apostle's statement that he was chosen from his mother's womb to be a special servant; and, further, that he was not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles. *Gal. 1:15; 2 Cor. 11:5*

From this it will be seen that we are entirely out of accord with the views of Papacy and of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and of the Catholic-Apostolic Church, and of the Mormons, all of whom claim that the number of the apostles was not limited to twelve, and that there have been successors since their day who spoke and wrote with equal authority with the original twelve. We deny this, and in evidence note how the Lord particularly chose those twelve, calling to mind the prominence of the number twelve in sacred things pertaining to this election; and we cap the climax by pointing to the symbolical picture of the glorified Church furnished in *Revelation 21*. There the New Jerusalem --the symbol of the new Millennial government, the Church, the Bride united to her Lord--is very clearly delineated; and in the picture the statement is most distinctly made that the twelve foundations of the City are precious, and that in the twelve foundations were the names written of the "twelve apostles of the Lamb"--no more, no less. What better proof could we have that there were never

more than twelve of these apostles of the Lamb, and that any others were, as the Apostle Paul suggests, "false apostles." **2 Cor. 11:13**

Nor can we imagine any need of more apostles; for we still have those twelve with us--their testimony and the fruit of their labors--in a much more convenient form than had those who were personally with them during their ministry. The records of their ministries are with us; their records of the Lord's words, miracles, etc. Their discourses on the various topics of Christian doctrine in their epistles are in our

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hands today in a most satisfactory manner. These things are "*sufficient*," as the Apostle explains "that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished." Explaining the matter further the Apostle declared, "I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God." What more is necessary? **2 Tim. 3:17; Acts 20:27**

Immediately succeeding his forty days of meditation and testing by the Adversary in the wilderness, and having determined upon the proper course, our Lord began to preach the Gospel of the coming Kingdom and to invite followers, who were called disciples. It was from amongst these disciples that he eventually chose the twelve. (**Luke 6:13-16**) They were all from what might be termed the humbler walks of life, several of them fishermen, and of them it is declared without disapproval that the rulers "perceived that they were unlearned men." (**Acts 4:13**) Apparently the twelve were called from amongst the "disciples" or general followers who espoused the Lord's cause and confessed him without leaving their daily avocations. The twelve were invited to become associates in the ministry of the Gospel and the record is that they forsook all to follow him. (**Matt. 4:17-22; Mark 1:16-20; 3:13-19; Luke 5:9-11**) The "seventy" commissioned later on never were recognized as apostles. Luke gives us a particular account of the selection of the twelve, informing us that just prior to this event our Lord withdrew to a mountain for prayer--evidently to take counsel with the Father in respect to his work and his colaborers in it. He continued all night in prayer--and when it was day he called unto him his disciples (Greek, *mathetes*--learners or pupils); and of them he chose twelve, whom he also named *apostles* (Greek, *apostolos*--sent forth ones). Thus the twelve were marked as separate and distinct amongst the disciples. **Luke 6:12,13,17**

The other disciples not thus chosen to apostleship were

also beloved of the Lord, and no doubt they were in full sympathy with his appointment of the twelve, recognizing it as in the interest of the work in general. Upon what bases

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the Lord made his choice is not stated; but we have the record of his own prayer to the effect that, "Thine they were and thou gavest them me"; and again, "Of those whom thou hast given me, I have lost none save the son of perdition" --Judas. In what sense or to what degree the Father made choice of the twelve matters nothing to us. No doubt one qualification which they possessed was humility; and, undoubtedly, their lowly vocations and previous experiences in life had been such as tended to make them not only humble men, but to lead additionally to strength of character, determination, perseverance, etc., to a degree which other pursuits might not have done to the same extent. We are informed that the selection of the twelve at the time it took place, instead of waiting until Pentecost (the date of the begetting of the Church), was, in large measure, for the purpose of permitting these twelve to be specially with the Lord, to behold his works, to hear his message, that thus they might in due time be witnesses to declare to us and to all of God's people at first hand the wonderful works of God, and the wonderful words of life manifested through Jesus. *Luke 24:44-48; Acts 10:39-42*

The Apostolic Commission

There is not the slightest suggestion anywhere, to the apostles or concerning them, that they were to be lords over God's heritage; that they were to consider themselves as different from other believers, exempt from the operations of divine law, or specially favored or secure as respects their everlasting inheritance. They were continually to remember that "all ye are brethren," and that "one is your Master, even Christ." They were always to remember that it was necessary for them to make their calling and election *sure*; and that unless they obeyed the Law of Love and were humble, as little children, they should in no wise "enter into the Kingdom." They were given no official titles nor any instruction respecting special garb or peculiar demeanor, but merely that they should in all these things be ensamples

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to the flock; that others seeing their good works should glorify the Father; that others walking in their footsteps should thus be following in the footsteps of the leader also, and ultimately attain to the same glory, honor, immortality--partakers of the same divine nature, members of the same New Creation.

Their commission was one of *service*--they were to serve one another, to serve the Lord and to lay down their lives for the brethren. These services were to be rendered specially in connection with the promulgation of the Gospel.

They were partakers of the pre-anointing that had already come upon their Master--the same anointing which pertains to all of the New Creation, all of the Royal Priesthood, and is described by the prophet, saying: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath *anointed me to preach good tidings* unto the meek,...to bind up the broken-hearted," etc. *Isa. 61:1,2; Luke 4:17-21; Matt. 10:5-8;*

Mark 3:14,15; Luke 10:1-17

Although this anointing did not come directly upon them until Pentecost, they had previously had a foretaste of it in that the Lord conferred upon them a share of his holy Spirit power, etc., when he sent them out to preach. But even in this, special opportunity for pride was taken away when later on our Lord sent seventy others forth to do a similar work, and similarly empowered them to perform miracles in his name. The real work of the apostles did not, therefore, begin in the proper sense of the word until they had received the holy Spirit at Pentecost. There, a special manifestation of divine power was conferred upon them--not only the holy Spirit and gifts of the Spirit, but also, and specially, power to bestow these gifts upon others. Thenceforth they were by this last-mentioned power distinguished from all others of the Church. Other believers were counted in as members of the anointed body of Christ, made partakers of his Spirit and begotten of that Spirit to newness of life, etc.; but none could have a gift, or special manifestation except as conferred through these apostles. These gifts

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of miracles, tongues, interpretations of tongues, etc., we are, however, to bear in mind, in no sense hindered or took the place of the fruits of the holy Spirit, which were to be grown or developed by each of the faithful through obedience to the divine instructions--as each grew in grace, knowledge and love. The conferring of these gifts, which a man might

receive and yet be sounding brass, a tinkling cymbal, marked the apostles, nevertheless, as the special servants or representatives of the Lord in the work of founding the Church. *1 Cor. 12:7-10; 13:1-3*

Our Lord in selecting these apostles, and in instructing them, had in view the blessing and instruction of all of his followers to the end of the age. This is evident from his prayer at the close of his ministry, in which, referring to the disciples, he said, "I have manifested thy name unto the men [apostles] which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy Word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words [doctrines] which thou gavest me and they have received them,...I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. ...Neither pray I for these [apostles] alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word [the entire Gospel Church]: that they all may be one [in purpose, in love], as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; [then showing the ultimate purpose of this election, both of the apostles and of the entire New Creation, he added]--that the world [loved of God while sinners and redeemed by the precious blood] may believe that thou hast sent me"--to redeem and restore them.

John 17:6-9,20,21

The apostles, although unlearned men, were evidently strong characters, and under the Lord's teaching their lack of worldly wisdom and education was more than compensated for in "the spirit of a sound mind." It is not strange, therefore, that these men were uniformly recognized

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by the early Church as guides in the way of the Lord--specially appointed instructors--"pillars in the Church," next in authority to the Lord himself. In various ways the Lord prepared them for this position:

They were with him continually and could, therefore, be witnesses respecting all the affairs of his ministry, his teachings, his miracles, his prayers, his sympathy, his holiness, his self-sacrifice even unto death, and, finally, witnesses of his resurrection. Not only did the early Church need all these testimonies, but all who have since been called of the Lord and have accepted his call to the New Creation--all who have fled for refuge and are trusting in the glorious hopes centered in his character, in his sacrificial death, in his high

exaltation and in the plan of God he is to fulfil--needed just such personal testimony in respect to all these matters, to the intent that they might have strong faith, strong consolation.

Seventy other disciples were sent forth later, by the Lord, to proclaim his presence and the harvest of the Jewish age, but their work was different in many respects from that of the twelve. Indeed in every manner the Lord seemed so specially to set the apostles apart, that we, with the entire Church, may have fullest confidence in them. These alone were participants with him in the last Passover and in the institution of the new memorial of his own death; these alone were with him in Gethsemane; it was also to these that he manifested himself specially after his resurrection; and it was these only who were specially used as mouthpieces of the holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The eleven were "men of Galilee"; as some who heard them remarked, "Are not all these Galileans?" *Acts 2:7; Luke 24:48-51; Matt. 28:16-19*

Although--as the record shows--our Lord revealed himself after his resurrection to about five hundred brethren, nevertheless the apostles were specially dealt with and were intended to be the specific "witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up on the

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third day...*And he commanded us to preach unto the people,*" etc. *Acts 10:39-45; 13:31; 1 Cor. 15:3-8*

The Apostle Paul, although not directly a witness to the same extent as the eleven, was, nevertheless, made a witness of our Lord's resurrection in that he was given a subsequent glimpse of his glorious presence, as he himself states the matter--"Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time [before the time]." (*1 Cor. 15:8,9*) The Apostle Paul was not really entitled to see the Lord in glory before the remainder of the Church at his Second Advent, when all of his faithful shall be changed and be made like him and see him as is; but in order that the Apostle might be a *witness* he was granted this glimpse and was additionally granted visions and revelations more than they all. He was thus, perhaps, well compensated for his previous lack of personal contact with the Master. Nor were his special experiences merely for his own advantage; but chiefly, we may presume, for the advantage of the entire Church. Certain it is that the peculiar experiences, visions, revelations,

etc., granted to the Apostle who took the place of Judas, have been more helpful than those of any other of the apostles.

His experiences permitted him to know and appreciate not only "the deep things of God"--even some things not lawful to be uttered (**2 Cor. 12:4**), but the illumination which they gave to the Apostle's mind has through *his writings* been reflected upon the Church from his day to the present time.

It was because the Apostle Paul had those visions and revelations that he was enabled to grasp the situation and to appreciate the new dispensation and recognize the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine character and plan so clearly, and it was because he appreciated these things clearly himself that he was qualified to state them in his teachings and epistles in such a manner as to confer blessings upon the household of faith all down throughout the age. Indeed, even today, the Church could better afford to lose the testimonies of any or all of the other

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apostles than to lose the testimony of this one. Nevertheless, we are glad to have the full testimony--glad to appreciate it all, as well as the noble characters of the entire twelve. Mark the testimony which indicates his apostleship: first of all, the Lord's words, "He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel." (**Acts 9:15**) The Apostle's own declaration is, "I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached by me is not of man; for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (**Gal. 1:11,12**); and again he declares, "He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision [the Jews], the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles." (**Gal. 2:8**) Not only did his zeal for the Lord and the brethren, and his willingness in laying down his life for the brethren --in spending time and energy for their blessing--testify to his worthiness to rank as an equal of any apostle, but when his apostolic relationship to the Church was called in question by some, he frankly pointed to this, and to the Lord's blessing in connection with his revelations and ministries, etc., as proving that he was "not a whit behind" the others. **1 Cor. 9:1; 2 Cor. 11:5,23; 12:1-7,12; Gal. 2:8; 3:5**

It was not the Lord's intention that the apostles should do a work merely amongst the Jews--quite to the contrary is the record. He instructed the eleven that his work and

their message was for all the people, ultimately; though they were to tarry at Jerusalem until endued with power, and were there to begin their testimony. Our Lord's words were, "Ye shall receive power after that the holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (*Acts 1:8*) This witnessing continued not only during the lifetime of the apostles, but still continues. They are still preaching to us, still instructing the faithful, still encouraging, still admonishing, still reproving. Their death did not stop their ministry. They still speak, still witness, are still mouthpieces of the Lord to his faithful.

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The Inspiration of the Apostles

It is well that we have confidence in the apostles as faithful witnesses, or historians, and that we notice that their testimonies bear the stamp of honesty, in that they sought not wealth nor glory amongst men, but sacrificed all earthly interests in their zeal for the risen and glorified Master. Their testimony would be invaluable if it had no further weight than this; but we find the Scriptures teaching that they were used of the Lord as his inspired agents, and that they were specially guided of him in respect to the testimony, doctrines, customs, etc., which they would establish in the Church. They bore witness not only to the things they heard and saw, but, additionally, to the instruction which they received through the holy Spirit; thus they were faithful stewards. "Let a man so account of us as...stewards of the mysteries of God," said Paul (*1 Cor. 4:1*). The same thought was expressed by our Lord when he said respecting the twelve, "I will make you fishers of men," and again, "Feed my sheep," "Feed my lambs." The Apostle also says--The mystery [the deep truths of the Gospel concerning the high calling of the New Creation--the Christ] hidden in other ages, is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. The object of this revelation is explained to be: "To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery [upon what terms participation in this New Creation may be obtained] which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God." (*Eph. 3:3-11*) Again in describing how the Church is to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, the Apostle declares "For this cause

[for the building up of the Church, the temple of God], I, Paul [am] the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles."

Eph. 2:20,22; 3:1

The Comforter was promised to "teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you"; "and he shall show you things to come." (***John 14:26; 16:13***) To a certain extent, undoubtedly, this is applicable to the entire Church, but it was specially

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applicable to the apostles; and, indeed, it still operates toward the remainder of the Church through the apostles--their words still being the channels through which the holy Spirit teaches us things both new and old. In harmony with this promise we may understand the apostolic inspiration to have been of a threefold character. (1) Refreshment of memory enabling them to recall and reproduce the Lord's personal teachings. (2) Guidance into an appreciation of the truth pertaining to the divine plan of the ages. (3) Special revelations of things to come--the things of which our Lord declared, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." ***John 16:12***

We are not to suppose that the refreshment of the memory of the apostles implied a dictation of the exact phraseology or of the exact order of our Lord's words. Nor do the apostolic writings give evidence of such a dictation. The Lord's promise, however, is itself a guarantee of the correctness of their statements. In each of the four Gospels we have a history of the Lord's early life and ministry; yet in each the individuality of the writer is manifested. Each in his own style records those items which seem to him most important; and under the Lord's supervision these various accounts furnish altogether as complete a history as is necessary for the establishment of the faith of the Church, of the identity of Jesus as the Messiah of the prophets, of the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning him, of the facts of his life and of his teachings. Had the inspiration been verbal (a word-for-word dictation), it would not have been necessary for several men to rephrase the narrative; but it is noteworthy that while each writer exercised his individual freedom of expression and made his own choice of the events most important and worthy of record, the Lord by his holy Spirit so supervised the matter that nothing of importance was omitted--all that is needed is faithfully recorded--"that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly

furnished." It is interesting to note that the Apostle John's record supplements the other three--Matthew,

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Mark and Luke--and that he chiefly discourses of circumstances and incidents of importance omitted by the others.

The Lord's proposition that he would through the holy Spirit guide the apostles, and through them the New Creation, "into all truth," implies that the guidance would be a general one rather than a personal and individual guidance into all truth--the fulfilment after this manner is evidenced by the records. Although the apostles, with the exception of Paul, were plain and unlearned men, nevertheless their scriptural expositions are very remarkable. They were able to "confound the wisdom of the wise" theologians of their day--and ever since. However eloquent the error, it cannot stand before the logic of their deductions from the Law and the Prophets and the teachings of the Lord. The Jewish Doctors of the Law remarked this, and, as we read, "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus"--that they had learned his doctrine and copied his spirit.

Acts 4:5,6,13

The apostolic epistles consist of such logical arguments based upon the inspired writings of the Old Testament and upon the words of the Lord; and all who, throughout this Gospel age, have partaken of the same spirit by following the lines of argument which the Lord through his mouthpieces has set before us, are guided to the same truthful conclusions; so that our faith does not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. (*1 Cor. 2:4,5*) Nevertheless, in these teachings, as well as in their historical presentations, we have no evidence of a word-for-word dictation--no evidence that they were merely amanuenses of the Lord, speaking and writing in a mechanical manner as did the prophets of olden times. (*2 Pet. 1:21*) Rather, the apostles' clear-sighted view was an illumination of the mind which enabled them to see and appreciate the divine purposes and thus to state them clearly; just as all of the Lord's people since, following their leading, have been enabled to grow in grace and in knowledge and in love, and so have been enabled to "comprehend with all saints what is the breadth,

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and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth [all human] knowledge." *Eph 3:18,19*

Nevertheless, we are fully justified in the belief that their other teachings, as well as their historical accounts, were so supervised by the Lord that improper words were avoided, and that the truth was set forth in such a form as to constitute "meat in due season" for the household of faith from their day to the present. This divine supervision of the apostles was indicated in advance by our Lord's words, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (*Matt. 18:18*) We would understand this to signify, not that the Lord would yield his prerogative and become obedient to the dictates of the apostles, but that they should be so kept, so guided by the holy Spirit, that their decisions in the Church, respecting what things should be considered obligatory and what things should be considered optional, would be proper decisions; and that the Church in general, therefore, might know that the matters were fixed, settled--the conclusions arrived at being the Lord's decision as well as that of the apostles.

Upon This Rock Will I Build My Church

It was in full accord with this that, after the Apostle Peter had borne witness that our Lord was the Messiah, "Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter [*petros*--a stone, a rock], and upon this rock [*petra*--a mass of rock--the great fundamental rock of truth, which you have just expressed] I will build my Church." The Lord himself is the builder, as he himself also is declared to be the foundation, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid--Jesus Christ." (*1 Cor. 3:11*) He is the great Rock, and Peter's confession of him as such was, therefore, a rock testimonial--a declaration of the foundation principles underlying the divine plan. The

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Apostle Peter so understood this matter and so expressed his understanding. (*1 Pet. 2:5,6*) He declared all truly consecrated believers to be "living stones" who come to the great Rock of the divine plan, Christ Jesus--to be built up as a holy temple of God through union with him--the foundation. Peter, therefore, disowned any pretension to being the foundation-stone himself and properly classed himself in with all the other "living stones" (Gr. *lithos*) of the Church--

though *petros*, rock, signifies a larger stone than *lithos*, and all the apostles as "foundation" stones would in the divine plan and order have a larger importance than their brethren.

Rev. 21:14

Keys of Authority

In the same connection the Lord said to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," etc. Thus the same authority given to the apostles as a whole was specifically expressed to Peter, with the additional privilege or honor of the keys--the opening power or authority. We remember how the Apostle Peter used the keys of the Kingdom and did the *opening* work of the new dispensation, first, to the Jews at Pentecost, and, later, to the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius. On the Day of Pentecost, when the holy Spirit was poured out, we read that "Peter stood up with the eleven"--he took the initiative; he *opened*, the others followed, and the gospel invitation was thus thrown open to the Jews. In the case of Cornelius the Lord sent messengers to Peter, and specially directed him by a vision to follow their invitation, and thus particularly used him in opening the door of mercy, liberty and privilege to the Gentiles--that they also might come into and share the privilege of the high calling of the New Creation. These matters are in full accord with what we have seen respecting the Lord's purposes in connection with the choice of the twelve apostles. And the more clearly the Lord's people discern the fact that these twelve men were made the peculiar representatives of the new dispensation and their

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words the special channels of truth in respect to the New Creation, the more thoroughly they will be prepared to accept their words, and the more disinclined they will be to indorse the teachings of others in conflict with their testimony. "If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them." **Isa. 8:20**

The last proposition of our Lord's promise reads, "He [the Father's holy Spirit] shall show you things to come." This implies a special inspiration of the apostles, and indirectly it implies the blessing and enlightenment of the Lord's people down to the very close of this age, through their teachings. They were thus not only to be holy apostles, but also prophets, or seers making known future events to

the Church. It is not necessary to suppose that all of the apostles were used to the same extent in any or all of these ways of service. The fact is that some were honored more not only in privileges of service as apostles, but also more in showing the things to come. The Apostle Paul points out various things to come: the great falling away in the Church; the revealing of the "Man of Sin"; the mystery respecting the second coming of the Lord, and that we shall not all sleep, though we must all be changed; the mystery, hidden from past ages and dispensations, that the Church, including the Gentiles, should be fellow-heirs of the promise made to Abraham--that his seed should bless all the families of the earth, etc., etc. He points out, also, that in the end of the age evil conditions will prevail in the Church; that men will be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having the form of godliness but denying the power thereof; covenant breakers, etc., and that "grievous wolves" (destructive higher critics) would not spare the Lord's flock. Indeed, all of the writings of the Apostle Paul are brilliantly illuminated by the visions and revelations which he enjoyed as a seer of things that in his day were still future and not proper to be fully explained, but which now are manifest to the saints through the types and prophecies of the Old Testament--understandable now in the light of the

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apostles' words because the "due time" has come for them to be understood.

The Apostle Peter, also, as a seer points out the coming of false teachers into the Church who privily, secretly, will bring in damnable heresies, even denying that the Lord bought them. Looking down to our day he prophesies saying, "There shall come in the last days scoffers... saying, Where is the promise of his [Christ's] *presence*?" etc. He prophesied also that "The day of the Lord shall so come as a thief in the night," etc.

The Apostle James likewise prophesies respecting the end of this age, saying, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you...Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days," etc.

The Apostle John, however, was the most remarkable seer, or prophet of all the apostles: his visions, constituting the Book of Revelation, delineating in the most remarkable manner the things to come.

The Apostolic Infallibility

From the foregoing we are fully justified in believing that the apostles were so guided by the Lord, through his holy Spirit, that all of their public utterances were of divine inspiration for the admonition of the Church, and no less infallible than the utterances of the prophets of the preceding dispensation. But while feeling thus assured in respect to the truthfulness of their testimony and that all of their utterances to the Church have the divine approval, it is well that we examine carefully five different circumstances, mentioned in the New Testament, which are usually considered as opposed to the thought that the apostles did not err in their teachings. We will scrutinize these separately.

(1) Peter's denial of our Lord just prior to his crucifixion. It cannot be disputed that Peter here was overtaken in a serious wrong, for which afterward he was sincerely penitent; but we should not forget that this transgression though committed after his choice as an apostle, was prior

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to his being anointed by the holy Spirit at Pentecost, and his divine endowment as an apostle in the fullest sense. Furthermore, the infallibility we have claimed for the apostles is that which applies to their *public* teachings and writings, and not to all the incidents and minutiae of their lives, which, unquestionably, were affected by the blemishes of their earthen vessels, marred by the fall in which all of Adam's children have suffered. The Apostle's words that "we have this treasure in an earthen vessel," evidently applied to himself and the other apostles, as well as to all of the Church--recipients of the holy Spirit. Our share, as individuals, in the great atoning work of our Master, covers these blemishes of the flesh which are contrary to our desires as New Creatures.

The apostolic office for the service of the Lord and the Church was entirely apart from the mere weaknesses of the flesh, and was conferred upon them not because of human perfection, but while they were admittedly "men of like passions" with ourselves. (*Acts 14:15*) The office did not bring restitution--perfection to their mortal bodies--but merely the new mind and the holy Spirit to guide these. It did not make their thoughts and actions perfect, but merely overruled those thoughts and actions so that the public teachings of the twelve are infallible--the Word of the Lord. This is the kind of infallibility claimed for the popes--that

when the pope speaks *ex cathedra*, or officially, he is overruled of God and not permitted to err. This inerrancy of the popes is claimed for them on the basis that they are also apostles--overlooking and ignoring the fact that the Scriptures teach that there are but "*twelve* apostles of the Lamb."

(2) Peter on one occasion "dissembled"--was guilty of double-dealing. (*Gal. 2:11-14*) This is pointed to as a proof that the apostles were not infallible in conduct. We concede this as we perceive the apostles also avowed it (*Acts 14:15*); but we repeat that these human weaknesses were not permitted to mar their work or usefulness as apostles--who "preached the gospel with the holy Spirit sent down from heaven" (*1 Pet. 1:12; Gal. 1:11,12*)--not with man's wisdom,

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but with the wisdom from above. (*1 Cor. 2:5-16*) This error on Peter's part God promptly corrected through the Apostle Paul, who kindly, but firmly, "withstood him to the face because he was to be blamed"; and that it was properly received by the Apostle Peter, and that he quite overcame this weakness in respect to preference for the Jews, is abundantly witnessed by his two epistles, in which no trace of wavering on the subject can be found, nor any lack of faithfulness in acknowledgment to the Lord.

(3) It is claimed that the apostles expected the Lord's second advent to take place very quickly, possibly in their own lifetime, and that in this they erred doctrinally and showed that their teachings are untrustworthy. We answer that the Lord declared that he left the apostles in uncertainty respecting the time of the second coming and the establishment of the Kingdom--simply telling them and all to watch, in order that when the event should be due they might know and not be in darkness on the subject as the world in general will be. Their inquiry about this matter after the Lord's resurrection brought from him the answer, "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." Shall we then find fault with the apostles for a matter which the Lord declared to be, for a time, a divine secret? Surely not. We do find, however, that under the guidance of the Spirit in respect to "things to come," the apostles were very guarded in their expressions in respect to the time of the second advent; and so far from expecting the matter in their own lifetime their words indicate the contrary.

For instance, the Apostle Peter distinctly says that he wrote his epistles to the intent that his testimony might be

with the Church after his decease--a clear evidence that he did not expect to live until the establishment of the Kingdom. (*2 Pet. 1:15*) The Apostle Paul, while declaring that "the time is short," did not pretend to say how short. Indeed, viewed from the standpoint of a week of seven one-thousand-year days--the seventh of which would bring the Kingdom--more than four-sixths of the waiting time had

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already passed, and the time was far spent. In exactly the same way we speak of such matters now respecting earthly affairs, when on Thursday we say that the week will soon be gone. Paul also spoke of the time of his departure, of his readiness to lay down his life, of his preference so to do. He points out that the day of the Lord would so come as a thief in the night. Some false impressions on the subject he corrected, saying, "Be not soon shaken in mind nor yet be troubled: neither by spirit nor by word nor by epistle as from us, as that the day of Christ is now present. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition," etc...."Remember ye not that when I was with you I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his own season."

(4) It is objected that Paul, who wrote, "I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing" (*Gal. 5:2*), caused Timothy to be circumcised. (*Acts 16:3*) And we are asked, Did he not thereby teach falsely, and in contradiction to his own testimony? We answer, No: Timothy was a Jew, because his mother was a Jewess (*Acts 16:1*); and circumcision was a national custom amongst the Jews, which began *before* the Law of Moses and which was continued after Christ had "made an end of the Law [Covenant], nailing it to his cross." Circumcision was given to Abraham and his seed four hundred and thirty years before the Law was given to Israel as a nation at Mount Sinai. Peter was designated the Apostle to the circumcision (i.e., to the Jews), and Paul, the Apostle to the uncircumcision (i.e., to the Gentiles). *Gal. 2:7,8*

His argument of *Gal. 5:2* was not addressed to Jews. He was addressing Gentiles, whose only reason for desiring or even thinking about circumcision was that certain false teachers were confusing them, by telling them that they must keep the Law Covenant, *as well* as accept Christ, thus leading them to ignore the Grace Covenant. The Apostle

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here shows that for them to be circumcised (*for any such reason*) would be a repudiation of the Grace Covenant, and, hence, a repudiation of the entire work of Christ. He found no objection to Jews continuing their national custom of circumcision: this is evident from his words in **1 Cor. 7:18,19**, as well as in his course with Timothy. Not that it was *necessary* for Timothy or any other Jew to be circumcised; but that it was not improper; and that, as he would be going amongst Jews to a considerable extent, it would be to his advantage--giving him the confidence of the Jews. But we see Paul's steadfast resistance, on this subject, when some who misconceived the matter sought to have Titus--a full-blooded Greek--circumcised. **Gal. 2:3-5**

(5) The account of Paul's course, recorded in **Acts 21:20-26**, is reflected upon as being contrary to his own teachings of the truth; and as indicating his errancy as respects doctrines and practices. It is claimed that it was because of wrongdoing in this instance that Paul was permitted to suffer so much as a prisoner, and was finally sent to Rome. But such a view is not borne out by Scripture-stated facts. The record shows that throughout this entire experience Paul had the sympathy and approval of all the other apostles, and, above all, the Lord's continued favor. His course was at the instance of the other apostles. It was testified to him by prophecy, before he went to Jerusalem (**Acts 21:10-14**), that bonds and imprisonment awaited him; and it was in obedience to his convictions of duty that he braved all those predicted adversities. And when in the very midst of his trouble, we read: "The Lord stood by him and said, 'Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou *hast testified of me in Jerusalem*, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.'" Later we find the Lord again showing him favor, as we read: "There stood by me the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."

Acts 23:11; 27:23,24

In view of these facts, we must seek an understanding of

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Paul's course in correspondence with his uniformly bold and noble course--esteeming very highly the work and testimony which God not only did not reprove, but did approve. Coming then to the examination of **Acts 21:21-27**,

we notice (verse 21) that Paul had not taught that *Jewish* converts should not circumcise their children; nor did he repudiate the Mosaic law--rather, he honored it, by pointing out the greater and grander realities which Moses' law so forcibly typified. So far, therefore, from repudiating Moses, he honored Moses and the Law, saying: "The Law is just and holy and good," and pointed out that by it the *knowledge* of the heinousness of sin had been increased; that the Law was so grand that no imperfect man could obey it fully, and that Christ, by keeping it, had won its rewards, and now under the Grace Covenant was offering everlasting life and blessings as a gift to those *unable to keep the law*, but by faith, accepted as the covering of their imperfections his perfect obedience and sacrifice, and who became his followers in the path of righteousness.

Certain ceremonies of the Jewish dispensation--such as the fasts, the celebration of new moons and Sabbath days and feasts--were typical of spiritual truths belonging to the Gospel age. The Apostle clearly shows that the Gospel of the Grace Covenant neither enjoins nor forbids these (the Lord's Supper and Baptism being the only injunctions of a symbolic character commanded us, and they new ones).

Col. 2:16,17; Luke 22:19; Matt. 28:19

One of these Jewish symbolic rites, termed "purifying," was that observed by Paul and the four Jews, in the case which we are now examining. Being Jews, they had a right, if they chose, not only to consecrate themselves to God, in Christ, but also to perform the symbol of this *purification*. And this is what they did--the men who were with Paul having made, additionally, a vow to humiliate themselves, before the Lord and the people, by having their heads shaven. These symbolic ceremonies cost something; and the charges presumably made up the "*offering*" of money--so much for each, to defray the expenses of the Temple.

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The Apostle Paul never taught the Jews that they were *free* from the Law--but, on the contrary, that the Law had dominion over each of them so long as he lived. He showed, however, that if a Jew accepted Christ, and became "*dead with him*," it settled the claims of the Law Covenant upon such Jew, and made him God's *freeman* in Christ. (***Rom. 7:1-4***) But he did teach the Gentile converts that they had never been under the Jewish Law Covenant, and that for them to attempt the practice of Jewish Law ceremonies and rites would imply that they were trusting in those symbols for

their salvation, and not relying wholly upon the merit of Christ's sacrifice. And to this all of the apostles assented. See **Acts 21:25; 15:20,23-29**.

Our conclusion is that God did most wonderfully use the twelve apostles, making them very able ministers of his truth, and guiding them supernaturally in the subjects upon which they wrote--so that nothing profitable to the man of God has been omitted--and, in the very words of their original writings, manifested a care and wisdom beyond what even the apostles themselves comprehended. Praise God for this sure foundation for our faith!

The Apostles Not Lord Of God's Heritage

Are the apostles to be regarded as in any sense *lords* in the Church? or, in other words, When the Lord and Head of the Church departed, did any of them take the place of the Head? or did they together constitute a composite head, to take his place and assume the reins of government? Or were they, or any of them, what the popes of Rome claim to be, as their successors--the vicars or substitutes of Christ to the Church, which is his body?

Against such hypothesis we have the plain statement of Paul (**Eph. 4:4,5**) "There is one body" and "*one Lord*"; and, therefore, among the various members of that body, no matter what may be the relative importance of some, only the *one Lord* and Head is to be recognized. This the Lord also clearly taught when, addressing the multitudes and his disciples, he said, "The Scribes and Pharisees...love...to

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be called Rabbi; but be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, and all ye are brethren." (**Matt. 23:1,2,6-8**) And again, addressing the apostles, Jesus said, "Ye know that those presuming to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them, *but it shall not be so among you*; but whosoever will be great among you shall be your servant, and whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all; for even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister [serve] and to give his life a ransom for many."

Mark 10:42-45

Nor have we any evidence that the early Church ever regarded the apostles as lords in the Church, or that the apostles ever assumed such authority or dignity. Their course was very far indeed from the papal idea of lordship,

and from that of the prominent ministers in all Christian sects. For instance, Peter never styled himself "the prince of the apostles," as papists style him; nor did he and the others ever title each other, or receive such homage from the Church. They addressed or referred to one another simply as Peter, John, Paul, etc., or else as Brother Peter, Brother John, etc.; and all of the Church were similarly greeted--as brothers and sisters in Christ. (See *Acts 9:17; 21:20; Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 7:15; 8:11; 2 Cor. 8:18; 2 Thess. 3:6,15; Philemon 7,16.*) And it is written that even the Lord himself was not ashamed to call them all "brethren" (*Heb. 2:11*), so far is he from any domineering attitude in the exercise of his true and acknowledged lordship or authority.

Nor did any of these leading servants in the early Church go about in priestly robes, or with cross and rosary, etc., courting the reverence and homage of the people; for, as the Lord had taught them, the chiefest among them were those who served most. Thus, for instance, when persecution scattered the Church and drove them out of Jerusalem, "the eleven" bravely stood their ground, willing to do whatever might come; because in this trying time the Church abroad would look to them at Jerusalem for encouragement and

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help. Had they fled, the whole Church would have felt dismayed and panic-stricken. And we find James perishing by the sword of Herod; Peter, with a similar fate in view, thrust into prison and chained to two soldiers (*Acts 12:1-6*); and Paul and Silas in their ministry beaten with many stripes, and then cast into prison and their feet made fast in the stocks; and Paul enduring "a great fight of afflictions." (*Acts 16:23,24; 2 Cor. 11:23-33*) Did they look like lords or act like lords? Surely not.

Peter was very explicit in this matter, when counseling the elders to "feed *the flock of God*." He did not say *your* flock, *your* people, *your* church, as many ministers today speak, but *the flock of God, not as lords* of the heritage, but being patterns to the flock--patterns of humility, faithfulness, zeal and godliness. (*1 Pet. 5:1-3*) And Paul says, "I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake,...we are despised;...we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and labor working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we intreat; we are

made as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things." (*1 Cor. 4:9-13*) Not much like Lords in all this, were they? And in opposing the idea of some of the brethren who seemed to be aspiring to lordship over God's heritage, Paul ironically says, "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings *without us*"; but further along he counsels the only right way, which is that of humility, saying, "Be ye followers of me" in this respect. And again, "Let a man so account of us as of the *ministers* [servants] of Christ, and *stewards* of the mysteries of God." *1 Cor. 4:8,16,1*

And, again, the same Apostle adds: "As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, who trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness: God is witness. Nor of men

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sought we glory--neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome as the Apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse [nourisher] cherisheth her children." (*1 Thess. 2:4-7*) The apostles issued neither bulls nor anathemas, but we do find among their loving entreaties such expressions as these: "Being defamed, we *entreat*." "I entreat thee also, true yokefellow." "Rebuke not an elder, but *entreat* him." *1 Cor. 4:13; Phil. 4:3; 1 Tim. 5:1*

The early Church rightly revered the piety and the superior spiritual knowledge and wisdom of the apostles, and, regarding them, as they really were, as the Lord's specially chosen ambassadors to them, they sat at their feet as learners; yet not with blank, unquestioning minds, but with a disposition to try the spirits and to prove the testimony. (*1 John 4:1; 1 Thess. 5:21; Isa. 8:20*) And the apostles, in teaching them, enjoined this attitude of mind, which required a reason for their hope, and encouraged it, and were prepared to meet it--not with enticing words of man's wisdom (of human philosophy and theory), but *in demonstration of the Spirit and of power*, that the faith of the Church might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. (*1 Cor. 2:4,5*) They did not cultivate a blind and superstitious reverence for themselves.

We read that the Bereans "were more noble than they of Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily [to see] whether those things were so." And it was the constant effort of the apostles to show that the gospel which they proclaimed was the very same gospel darkly expressed by the

ancient prophets, "unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but *unto us* [the body of Christ] they did minister the things now reported unto you by them [the apostles] that have preached the Gospel unto you with the holy Spirit sent down from heaven" (**1 Pet. 1:10-12**)--that it was the very same gospel of life and immortality brought to light by the Lord himself--that its greater amplification

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and all the particular details discovered to the Church by them, under the leading and direction of the holy Spirit--whether by special revelations or by other and more natural means, both of which were used--were in fulfilment of the Lord's promise to the apostles, and through them to the whole Church--"I have yet *many things* to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

It was right, therefore, for the Bereans to search the Scriptures to see whether the testimony of the apostles agreed with that of the Law and the prophets, and to compare them also with the teachings of the Lord. Our Lord also invited a similar proving of his testimony by the Law and the prophets, saying, "Search the Scriptures,...for they are they that testify of me." The whole divine testimony must be in harmony, whether it be communicated by the Law, the prophets, the Lord or the apostles. Their entire harmony is the proof of their divine inspiration. And, thank God! we find that harmony existing, so that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments constitute what the Lord himself designates "the harp of God." (**Rev. 15:2**) And the various testimonies of the Law and the prophets are the several chords of that harp, which, when tuned by the holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts, and swept by the fingers of the devoted servants and searchers after divine truth, yields the most enchanting strains that ever fell on mortal ears. Praise the Lord for the exquisite melody of the blessed "song of Moses and the Lamb," which we learn through the testimony of his holy apostles and prophets, of whom the Lord Jesus is chief!

But although the testimony of the Lord and the apostles must harmonize with that of the Law and the prophets, we should expect them to testify of things *new* as well as *old*; for so the prophets have led us to expect. (**Matt. 13:35; Psalms 78:2; Deut. 18:15,18; Dan. 12:9**) And so we find them not only expounding the hidden truths of ancient prophecy but also disclosing new revelations of truth.

Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Teachers

According to the general thought of Christendom, the Lord left the matter of Church organization with provisions which were entirely inadequate to the ends he designed, and has expected his people to use their own wisdom in the matter of organization. Many men of many minds have favored more or less strict organizations, and so we find Christians throughout the world today organized on various lines and with more or less rigidity, and each claiming advantages for his particular denomination or system of government. This is wrong! It is not reasonable to suppose that God, foreknowing this New Creation before the foundation of the world, should be so negligent of his own work as to leave his faithful people without a clear understanding of his will and an adequate arrangement or organization for their well-being. The tendency of the human mind is either toward anarchy on the one hand, or toward tight organization and bondage on the other. The divine arrangement, avoiding both of these extremes, marks out for the New Creation an organization simple in the extreme, and devoid of everything akin to bondage. Indeed, the injunction of the Scriptures to each individual Christian is, "Stand fast, therefore, in the *liberty* wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." *Gal. 5:1*

In showing forth this divine arrangement we must confine ourselves wholly to the divine records, and must entirely ignore ecclesiastical history--remembering that the predicted "falling away" had begun to work even in apostolic times; and that it proceeded rapidly after the death of the apostles, culminating first in the Papal system. In taking the Bible account we may include with the New Testament records the typical arrangements under the Law, but must continually remember that those types represented not only affairs during this Gospel age, but typified also arrangements for the coming Millennial age. For instance, the Day of Atonement and its work represented, as we have

seen, this Gospel age. On that day the High Priest wore not his glorious garments, but simply the holy garments, or linen robes--illustrating the fact that during this Gospel age

neither the Lord nor the Church occupy a place of distinction or glory in the sight of men--their whole standing being represented simply as one of purity, righteousness--typified by the linen robes which, in the case of the Church, symbolize the righteousness of her Lord and Head. It was after the Day of Atonement that the High Priest put on his glorious robes, representing the glories, dignities, etc., of Christ's authority and power during the Millennial age. And the Church is represented with her Lord in the glories of that figure; because as the head of the High Priest represented our Lord and Master, so the body of the priest represented the Church; and the glorious garments, therefore, represented the dignities and honors of the entire Royal Priesthood when the time of exaltation shall have come. The Papal hierarchy--claiming falsely that the *reign* of Christ is being accomplished by proxy, that the popes are his vicegerents, and the cardinals, archbishops and bishops represent the Church in glory and power--attempt to exercise civil and religious control over the world, and counterfeit the glories and dignities of the elect New Creation in the gorgeous robes of office which they wear. The true Royal Priesthood, however, still wear the white robes of sacrifice and wait for the true Lord of the Church, and for the true exaltation to "glory, honor and immortality," when the last member of the elect shall have finished his share in the work of sacrifice.

It is to the New Testament that we must look particularly for our directions respecting the organization and rules of the Church during the days of her humiliation and sacrificing. The fact that these rules are not laid down in a compact form must not deter us from expecting and finding that they are, nevertheless, a complete system. We must fight against the natural expectations of our perverted judgments in respect to laws, and must remember that the

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Church as sons of God are given a "perfect law of liberty," because they are no longer servants, but sons, and because the sons of God must learn to use the liberty of sonship and thereby show the more particularly their absolute obedience to the law and principles of love.

The Apostle sets before our minds a picture of the New Creation which illustrates the entire subject. It is a human figure, the head representing the Lord, the various parts and members representing the Church. In *1 Cor. 12* this subject is grandly elaborated, and with great simplicity, the

explanation given being that, "As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ [one body or company composed of many members]. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into *one body* [whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free]." The Apostle proceeds to call attention to the fact that as the well-being of a human body depends largely upon the unity and harmony and cooperation of all its members, so also it is with the Church, the body of Christ. If one member suffer either pain or degradation or disgrace, all the members are affected, willingly or unwillingly, and if one member is specially blessed or comforted or refreshed, proportionately all others share the blessings. He points out (verse 23) that we seek to cover and hide the weaknesses, blemishes, etc., of our natural bodies and seek to relieve and help them; and that thus it should be with the Church, the body of Christ--the most blemished members should have special care as well as the covering of charity--love; "that there be no schism [division] in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another," for the most humble as well as for the most highly favored member--Verse 25.

According to this the Lord's organization of the Church is a very complete one indeed; but, as in nature, so in grace--where the organization is complete there is the less necessity for splints and bandages. A tree is thoroughly organized and unified from tips to roots, yet the branches are not held on by patent fastenings or cords or screws or

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printed rules and laws; and so with the body of Christ. If properly adjusted and harmonized and united on the lines which the Lord has laid down, there will be no necessity for cords, splints or screws to hold the various members together --no need for laws and creeds and human spectacular appliances to bring them together or hold them together. The one Spirit is the bond of union, and as long as the spirit of life remains, a unity, a oneness of the body must remain also, and this will be a strong or a weak union, according as the Spirit of the Lord abounds.

The Apostle goes further, and points out that God is the superintendent of the affairs of this organization, the New Creation, which he himself devised and inaugurated. His words are, "Now ye are the Body of Christ and members in particular. And God hath *set* some in the Church [*Ecclesia*, body], first, apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers;

after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues." It will be a new thought to many who are used to setting themselves and setting each other in places of glory and honor and trust and service in the Church, to realize that God has promised the superintending of this matter amongst those who are looking to him for guidance and are directed by his Word and Spirit.

If this were recognized how few would dare to seek the chief seats and to wire-pull after political fashion for honorable stations! To realize the divine care over the true Church means first of all to distinguish the true Church from the nominal systems; and then to seek reverently and humbly to know the divine will in respect to all of the true Church's arrangements, services and servants.

The Apostle inquires, "Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?" implying that it will be generally conceded that this is not the case; and that any recognized as filling any of these stations should be able to produce some evidence of his divine appointment, and should exercise his office, or service, not as a man-pleaser, but as pleasing the great overseer of the Church--its Head and Lord. The Apostle calls our attention to the fact that these differences

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in the Church correspond to the differences amongst the members of the natural body, and that each member is necessary and none to be despised. The eye may not say to the foot, I have no need of you; nor to the ear, I have no need of you; nor to the hand, I have no need of you; if they were all one member where were the body? "for the body is not one member but many." Verses 19,14

True, there is not now this same variety of members in the Church; for, as the Apostle pointed out, "Tongues were for a sign not to them that believed, but to them that believed not," likewise were the miracles. When the apostles, in whom resided the power to confer these *gifts* of the Spirit, died, and when those who had received these gifts from them died, these miracles--*gifts*--would, as we have already seen, cease in the Church. But still there would be in the Church a corresponding *work* for every man and for every woman--an opportunity to serve the Lord, the Truth and the fellow-members of the body of Christ, each according to his natural abilities. As those miracles discontinued, education in the Truth and in the knowledge of the Lord and in the graces of the Spirit took their places. Even while these

inferior gifts of healing, tongues, interpretations, and miracles were in the Church, the Apostle exhorted the brethren to "covet earnestly the best gifts."

They could not reasonably covet or expect an apostleship, since there were only twelve; but they might covet or desire to be prophets (expounders) or teachers. "And yet," adds the Apostle, "a still more excellent way I show unto you." (vs. 31) He proceeds to show that far above any of these gifts or services in the Church is the honor of possessing in large measure the spirit of the Master--Love. He points out that the humblest member in the Church who attains to perfect love, has reached a position higher and nobler in the sight of the Lord than that of any apostle or prophet or teacher who lacks the grace of love. He declares that no matter what the gifts, if love be lacking, the whole matter is empty and unsatisfactory in the sight of the Lord.

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Indeed, we may be sure that no one could by the Lord's approval long hold the position of apostle or prophet or teacher in the Church unless he attained a standing of perfect love, or sought, at least, to attain to that standard. Otherwise he assuredly would be permitted to drift into darkness, and perhaps become a teacher of error instead of a teacher of the Truth--a servant of Satan to sift the brethren.

In his letter to the *Ephesians (4:1-16)* the Apostle reiterates this lesson of the oneness of the Church as one body of many members, under one Head, Christ Jesus, and united by one spirit--the spirit of love. He exhorts all such members to walk worthy of their calling in lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. In this chapter the Apostle sets forth the various members of the body appointed to special services in it, and tells us the *object* of the service; saying: "he gave some [to be] apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers; *for the perfecting of the saints* for the work of the ministry [preparing them for the glorious ministry or service of the Millennial Kingdom], for the edifying [building up] of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we,...speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together

and compacted by that which every joint supplieth... maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." *Eph. 4:11-16*

We note the picture which the Apostle draws for us--that of a human body, but small and undeveloped. He informs us that it is the divine will that all of the various members should grow to full development, full strength and power--"the full stature of manhood" is the picture which represents the Church in its proper, complete condition. Carrying

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the figure down through the age to the present time, we see that member after member fell asleep to await the grand organization of the Millennial morning in the First Resurrection, and that the places of these were being continually supplied, so that the Church was never without a full organization, although at times there might be greater weaknesses in one member and greater strength in another. However, the endeavor of each member at all times must be to do everything in his power for the upbuilding of the body, for the strengthening of the members and for their perfection in the graces of the Spirit--"till we all come to the unity of the faith."

Unity of faith is desirable; it is to be striven for--yet not the kind of unity that is generally aimed at. Unity is to be along the lines of "the faith once delivered unto the saints" in its purity and simplicity, and with full liberty to each member to take different views of minor points, and with no instruction whatever in respect to human speculations, theories, etc. The Scriptural idea of unity is upon the foundation principles of the Gospel. (1) Our redemption through the precious blood, and our justification by demonstrated faith therein. (2) Our sanctification, setting apart to the Lord, the Truth and their service--including the service of the brethren. (3) Aside from these essentials, upon which unity must be demanded, there can be no Scriptural fellowship; upon every other point fullest liberty is to be accorded, with, however, a desire to see, and to help others to see, the divine plan in its every feature and detail. Thus each member of the body of Christ, maintaining his own personal liberty, is so thoroughly devoted to the Head and to all the members that it will be his pleasure to lay down all, even life itself, on their behalf.

We have already considered the special work of the apostles, and the fact that their number was limited, and that they are still performing their service in the Church,

speaking as the Lord's mouthpieces to his people through his Word. Let us now examine something respecting these

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other services of the Church to which the Apostle refers as the Lord's gifts to the general body, or *Ecclesia*.

The Lord provides the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, for the blessing of the general body, as respects both their present and their everlasting welfare. It is for those who are earnestly relying upon the Lord as the Head, the Instructor, the Guide of the Church, his body, to expect, look for and notice his gifts in all these particulars; and to accept and to use them--if they would have the promised blessing. These gifts are not forced upon the Church, and those who neglect them, when offered, experience a corresponding loss. The Lord set these in the Church at the beginning and thus gave us the ideal Church arrangement, leaving it to his people to follow the pattern thus set them and to have proportionate blessings; or to ignore the pattern and to have corresponding difficulties and disappointments. Let us, as those who desire to be led and taught of the Lord, seek to learn how he set the various members originally, and what gifts of this kind he has been bestowing upon his people since, that we may thus appreciate whatever gifts of this character are at our disposal, and may the more zealously avail ourselves of them for the future.

The Apostle declares that it is the Lord's pleasure that there be no schism in the body--no splits, no divisions. With human methods divisions are unavoidable--except as in Papacy's period of triumph, when the nominal system became powerful and used drastic methods of persecution in dealing with all not fully in accord with itself. That, however, was a *unity of force*, of compulsion--an outward unity, and not a unity of the heart. Those whom the Son makes free can never participate heartily in such unions, in which personal liberty is utterly destroyed. The difficulty with the Protestant denominations is not that they are too liberal and, therefore, have separated into many fragments, but rather that they still have much of the spirit of the mother institution, without possessing the power which she at one

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time exercised for quelling and suppressing liberty of thought. We will, doubtless, surprise many by saying, that

instead of having too many divisions or splits of the kind we now see on every hand, the real need of the Church of Christ is *still more liberty*--until each individual member shall stand free and independent of all human bonds, creeds, confessions, etc. With each individual Christian standing fast in the liberty wherewith he was made free by the Lord (*Gal. 5:1; John 8:32*), and each individual Christian united in loyalty to the Lord and to his Word, very quickly the original unity which the Scriptures inculcated would be discerned and all true children of God, all members of the New Creation, would find themselves drawn to each other member similarly free, and bound each to the other by the cords of love far more strongly than are men bound in earthly systems and societies. "The love of Christ *constraineth us*" [*holds us together*--Young's Concordance].

2 Cor. 5:14

All the members of the Aaronic family were eligible to the services of the priesthood; nevertheless, there were certain limitations, barriers, and disqualifications for service in this connection. And so it is amongst the antitypical "Royal Priesthood"--all are priests, all are members of the anointed body, and the *anointing* signifies to each a full *authority* to preach and to teach the good tidings, as it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath *anointed me to preach* the good tidings to the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted," etc. While these words applied specially to the Head of the Christ, the New Creation, the Royal Priesthood, they apply also to all the members--hence, in a general sense, every consecrated child of God has in his anointing of the holy Spirit, a full authorization or commission to preach the Word--"to show forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." **1 Pet. 2:9**

But as it was required of the typical priests that they should be free from certain blemishes and should have attained a certain age, so amongst members of the Royal

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Priesthood there are some who lack qualifications for public service which others possess. Each is soberly (**Rom. 12:3,6**) to seek to determine for himself the measure of God's gifts possessed and, hence, the measure of his stewardship and responsibility. And likewise all the members are to take cognizance of one another's natural, as well as spiritual, qualifications and attainments, and to judge of the divine

will accordingly. In the type, age was a factor; but this with the antitypical priests would signify experience, character-development; the blemish of crossed eyes in the type would signify in the antitypical priesthood a lack of clearness of insight and clearness of vision respecting spiritual things, which would properly be a hindrance to public service in the Church. Likewise also all the various blemishes which hindered the typical priesthood would represent various moral and physical or intellectual disabilities amongst the antitypical Royal Priesthood.

Nevertheless, as the deformed priests in the type exercised all the privileges of the others in respect to their own sustenance, eating of the shew-bread, sacrifices, etc., so with us in the antitype--those deformities which might hinder a member of the body of Christ from being a public servant of the Church and of the Truth need not hinder his spiritual development and his recognition, as possessing full rights with all the others at the spiritual table of the Lord and at the throne of grace. As none could exercise the High Priest's office except he were faultless physically and of full age, so those who would serve as ministers of the Truth in "word and doctrine" should not be novices, but members of the body, whose ripeness in character and knowledge and fruits of the Spirit would qualify them for such a service. Such were to be recognized as elders--not necessarily elders in years of natural life, but elders, or seniors, or ripe ones in respect to the Truth, and fitness to counsel and admonish the brethren along the lines of the Lord's Word.

With this understanding of the meaning of the word elder, we recognize the reasonableness of the Scriptures declaring that all who attend to the spiritual ministries of the

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Truth are properly described by the term "Elder"; whether otherwise they are doing the service of an apostle or prophet or evangelist or pastor or teacher. To fill any of these positions of service properly one must be recognized as an Elder in the Church. Thus the apostles declared that they were elders (*1 Pet. 5:1; 2 John 1*); and when referring to the ministers (servants) of the Church and their selection, they are mentioned in our common version of the Bible under three names:

Bishops, Elders, Pastors

These three terms are, however, misleading in view of the misapplication of them in churches of various denominations; hence, it is necessary that we explain that the word bishop simply signifies *overseer*; and that every appointed Elder was recognized as an overseer of a work great or small. Thus, for instance, on one occasion the Apostle was met by the elders of the Church at Ephesus, and in giving them his parting admonition said: "Take heed to yourselves and to the Church over which the holy Spirit hath made you *overseers*." **Acts 20:28**

However, under the Lord's providences some of these elders were granted a wider scope of influence or oversight in the Church and might, therefore, be properly termed *general overseers*. Such were all the apostles--the Apostle Paul having a wider scope of oversight, specially amongst the Churches established in Gentile lands--in Asia Minor and in Southern Europe. But this position of general overseer was not restricted to the apostles: the Lord in his providence raised up others to serve the Church in this manner--"not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind"--with a desire to serve the Lord and the brethren. Primarily, Timothy engaged in this service under the direction of the Apostle Paul and partially as his representative, and was commended to various companies or *ecclesias* of the Lord's people. The Lord was, and is still, entirely competent to continue to send such overseers as he chooses to advise and admonish his flock. And the Lord's people should be thoroughly competent

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to judge of the value of the advice offered by such overseers. It should be attested by a godly life, humble demeanor and spirit of self-sacrifice; by an absence of all scheming for honor and filthy lucre, as well as by teaching which would stand the scrutiny of thoughtful Bible study--searching the Scriptures daily to see whether or not their presentations fully accord with both the letter and spirit of the Word. This, as we have seen, was done with the teachings of the apostles--and as they invited the brethren to do--commending those specially who were thus cautious without being captious, hypercritical. **Acts 17:11**

However, so far as we may judge from Church history, the spirit of rivalry and love of honor rapidly took the place of the spirit of humble devotion and self-sacrifice, while credulity and flattery readily superseded Scripture-searching;

and as a result the overseers gradually became dictatorial --gradually claimed equality with the apostles, etc.-- until finally amongst them arose a rivalry, and some of them became known and distinguished by the title of chief or archbishops. In turn, a rivalry amongst these archbishops led to the exaltation of one of their number to the position of pope. And the same spirit has since obtained to a greater or less degree, not only in Papacy, but also amongst those who have been deceived and misled by her example far away from the simplicity of the primitive arrangement. In consequence, we find today that such an organization as obtained in the primitive Church--namely, without a sectarian name and without glory, honor and authority on the part of a few over the many, and without a division into clergy and laity--is regarded as *no organization at all*. We are happy, however, to take our position amongst these disesteemed ones, to copy closely the example of the primitive Church and to enjoy correspondingly similar liberties and blessings.

As elders of the Church are all overseers, caretakers, watchers of the interests of Zion, some locally and some in the broad and general sense, so also each, according to his talent and ability, might serve the flock, one as an evangelist,

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whose qualifications fitted him and whose conditions permitted him to go about preaching the truth to beginners --finding those possessed of an ear to hear the good tidings, etc.; another serving the flock as a pastor (shepherd), because of special qualifications of a social kind, enabling him to look after the interests of the Lord's people personally, individually--visiting them at their homes, encouraging them, strengthening them, holding together and defending them against the wolves in sheep's clothing who would bite and devour them. "Prophets" also had their special qualifications for service.

The word "prophet" is not generally used today in the broad sense in which it was used in olden times, but is rather understood to signify a seer, or foreteller. The word prophet, however, strictly signifies a *public speaker*--an orator. A seer of visions or a recipient of revelations might also be a prophet, in the sense of a declarer of the same; but the two thoughts are distinctly separate. In the case of Moses and Aaron, Moses was the greater, being the divine representative, and the Lord said to him--"See, I have made thee a god (mighty one or superior) unto Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet"--spokesman, mouthpiece.

(*Exod. 7:1*) We have already seen that several of the apostles were seers in the sense that they were granted a knowledge of things to come; we now remark that they were nearly all prophets too, that is public orators--especially Peter and Paul. But there were many other public speakers, or prophets. Barnabas, for instance, was one; and it is written "Judas and Silas, being prophets [public speakers] also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words." *Acts 15:32*

There is no suggestion in the Scriptures that any person disqualified for the work to be done should be considered the Lord's appointee to that position for which he lacks special adaptation; but rather it is as a duty that in the body of Christ each member should serve the others according to his talents--according to his abilities--and that each should be modest enough, humble enough, "not to think of himself

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more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly," according to the actual value of the talents the Lord has bestowed upon him. Neither should the Church recognize those of their number desiring to be greatest *on that account*. On the contrary, they should take cognizance of humility as being one of the essential qualifications to eldership or to service in any department. If, therefore, two brethren seem to have equal talent, but one is ambitious and forward and the other humble and backward, the Spirit of the Lord, which is the spirit of wisdom and of a sound mind, would teach the Lord's people to appreciate the humbler brother as the one whom the Lord would specially favor and wish them to put into the more prominent place in the service.

It seems less remarkable that "goats" and goat-like sheep in the Lord's flock should aspire to leadership, than that the true sheep who recognize the Master's voice, who know his Spirit and who are seeking to do his will, should with docility permit such goats or goat-like sheep to take the leadership amongst them. It is well that we follow peace with all men; but where we disregard the Word and Spirit of the Lord for the sake of peace it will be sure to result injuriously to a greater or less extent. It is well that all should have the docile, sheep-like nature; but it is necessary also that the sheep have *character*, else they cannot be overcomers; and if they have character they should remember the Chief Shepherd's words, "My sheep hear my voice [obey it]...and they follow me," "a *stranger* will they not follow...for they know not the voice of strangers." (*John 10:5,27*) It is the

duty, therefore, of every sheep to take special notice of the message and the manner of every brother before they aid in putting him forward as an overseer, either local or general. They should first be convinced that he has the real qualifications of an elder in the Church--that he is sound on the basic doctrines of the Gospel--the atonement, redemption through the precious blood of Christ, and full consecration to him, his message, his brethren, his service. They should have charity and sympathy for the weakest of the lambs and for all the mentally and morally lame sheep; but they

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would be doing violence to the divine arrangement to choose such for their leaders or elders. They should have no sympathy with goats, or with wolves in sheep's clothing who strive for place and authority in the Church.

It should be recognized that the *Ecclesia* is far better off without any public servant than to have for a leader a golden-tongued "goat," who would surely not "direct their hearts into the love of God," but seductively into wrong channels. Of such our Lord forewarned the Church; such the Apostle described, saying, "Of yourselves shall men arise speaking perverse things [wrong, misleading doctrines], to draw away disciples after them [to artfully attract followers after themselves]." The Apostle says that many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the Truth will be evil spoken of. **Acts 20:30; 2 Pet. 2:2**

So we see it today. Many are preaching themselves rather than preaching the Gospel, the good tidings of the Kingdom; they are attracting disciples after themselves and their denominations, rather than attracting them to and uniting them only with the Lord, as members of his body. They are seeking to be the heads of churches, instead of having all the members of the body look directly to the Lord as the Head. From all such we should turn away--the true sheep should give them no encouragement in their wrong course. The Apostle Paul speaks of these as having a form of godliness but denying its power. (**2 Tim. 3:5**) They are great sticklers for days, forms, ceremonies, ecclesiastical authorities, etc., and are highly esteemed amongst men, but an abomination in the sight of the Lord, saith the Apostle. The true sheep must not only be careful to recognize the voice of the true Shepherd and to follow him, but they must remember also not to follow, not to support, not to encourage those who are self-seeking. Every one esteemed worthy

of confidence in the Church as an Elder, should be sufficiently well known in advance to justify such confidence; hence, the Apostle says, "not a novice." A novice might do the Church injury and might himself be injured also, by being puffed up, and thus be led away from the Lord

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and the proper spirit and the narrow path toward the Kingdom.

The Apostle Paul* gives very explicit advice concerning who might properly be recognized by the Church as elders --describing in detail what should be their character, etc. In his letter to Timothy on this subject (*1 Tim. 3:1-7*) he reiterates the same in slightly different language. In addressing Titus, who evidently was another general overseer (*Tit. 1:5-11*), he describes their duties toward the Church. The Apostle Peter on the subject says, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder,...Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof...not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." *1 Pet. 5:1-3*

They should be generous men, men of pure lives, having no more than one wife; and if they have children it should be noticed to what extent the parent has exercised a wholesome influence in his own family--for it should reasonably be judged that if he has been derelict in his duty toward his children, he probably would be unwise or derelict in his counsels and his general ministries amongst the Lord's children in the *Ecclesia*, the Church. He is not to be double-tongued or deceptive, not to be a brawler or a contentious person. He should be one of good reputation amongst those outside the Church: not that the world will ever love or rightly appreciate the saints, but that the world should, at least, be unable to point to anything derogatory to their character as respects honesty, uprightness, morality, truthfulness. There is no limitation made respecting the number of elders in a Church or *Ecclesia*.

In addition to the foregoing limitations, it is required that an Elder shall be "apt to teach"; that is to say, he must have ability as a teacher, explainer, expounder of the divine plan, and thus to be able to assist the Lord's flock in word and in doctrine. It is not essential to eldership that the talent

**1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12; Jas. 5:14*

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or qualifications of a "prophet" or public speaker be possessed; there may be found several in the same Church possessing teaching abilities and pastoral and other qualifications of an Elder, and yet possibly none possessing the qualifications of a public speaker or declaimer of the divine plan. The Lord should be trusted to raise up such servants as are needful, and if none are supplied the *need* may be doubted. We might here remark that some of the most prosperous Ecclesias, gatherings or congregations are those in which there is no great talent for public speaking, and in which, consequently, Bible studies are the rule rather than the exception. The Scriptures clearly show that this was a custom in the early Church, too; and that when they came together an opportunity was offered for the exercise of the various talents possessed by the various members of the body--one to speak, others to pray, many, if not all, to sing. Experience seems to show that those companies of the Lord's people which follow this rule most closely, receive the largest amount of blessing and develop the strongest characters. That which is merely heard by the ear, however well-spoken and however good, is not impressed upon the heart so thoroughly as though the individual himself exercised his mind in connection with it, as is sure to be the case in a properly conducted Bible study in which all should have encouragement to take part.

Others of the elders, perhaps not so apt to teach, may be just in their element in prayer and testimony meetings, which should be a feature amongst the various gatherings of the Lord's people. He who finds himself possessed of a good talent of exhorting should exercise that talent rather than let it lie dormant while endeavoring to exercise a talent which he does not possess in any special degree. The Apostle says, "he that exhorteth let him wait upon exhortation," let him give his ability and service in that direction: "him that teacheth [who has a talent for exposition--for making the Truth plain] let him give his attention to the teaching."

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As the word bishop or overseer has a wide range of meaning, so also has the word pastor. No one but an Elder is competent to be a pastor, or overseer, or shepherd. A pastor, or shepherd in a flock, is an overseer of the flock; the two words are practically synonymous. The Lord Jehovah is

our Pastor or Shepherd in the largest sense of the word (*Psa. 23:1*), and his Only Begotten Son, our Lord Jesus, is the great Shepherd and Bishop (overseer) of our souls--to all the flock, everywhere. The general overseers and "Pilgrims" are all shepherds or pastors--looking out for the interest of the general flock; and every local Elder is a pastor, shepherd, overseer in a local capacity. It will be seen, then, that the elders in the Church should primarily possess general qualifications fitting them for eldership, and secondarily that their special natural qualifications should determine in what part of the service they can best serve the Lord's cause--some in connection with the evangelistic work and others in connection with the pastoral work amongst the sheep already evangelized, already consecrated, already in the fold; some locally and some in a wider field.

We read, "Let the elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine." (*1 Tim. 5:17,18*) On the strength of these words the nominal church has built up a class of Ruling Elders; and has claimed for all elders a ruling or authoritative, if not a dictatorial, position amongst the brethren. Such a definition of "ruling" is contrary to all the presentations of the Scriptures on the subject. Timothy, occupying the position of a general overseer, or Elder, was instructed by the Apostle, saying, "Rebuke not an Elder, but exhort him as a brother," etc. "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle toward all men." Nothing here, certainly, would sanction an autocratic ruling, or dictatorial bearing--meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love, must be prominent qualifications of those recognized as elders. They must in every sense of the word be ensamples to the flock. If, therefore, they should be dictatorial, the example

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to the flock would be that all should be dictatorial; but if they should be meek, long-suffering, patient, gentle and loving, then the illustration to all would be in accordance therewith. A more literal rendering of the passage under consideration shows it to mean that honor should be given to the elders in proportion as they manifest faithfulness to the responsibilities of the service they have accepted.

We might, therefore, render the passage thus: Let the prominent elders be accounted worthy of double honor, especially those bending down through hard work in preaching and teaching.

Deacons, Ministers, Servants

As the word bishop signifies overseer merely, and in no sense of the word signifies a lord, or master, though it has gradually come to be so misunderstood by the people, so also is it with the word deacon, which literally signifies servant, or minister. The Apostle refers to himself and to Timothy as "ministers of God." (2 Cor. 6:4) The word here rendered ministers is from the Greek *diakonos*, which signifies servants. The Apostle again says, "Our sufficiency is of God: who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament." (2 Cor. 3:5,6) Here also the Greek word *diakonos* is rendered ministers and signifies servants. In fact, the Apostle declares that himself and Timothy were deacons (servants) of God and deacons (servants) of the New Testament--the New Covenant. We may see then that all true elders in the Church are thus deacons, or servants of God and of the Truth and of the Church--otherwise they should not be recognized as elders at all.

We do not wish to give the idea that no distinction obtained in the early Church as respects service. Quite the contrary. The point we are making is that even the apostles and prophets who were elders in the Church were all deacons, or servants, even as our Lord declared: "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant [*diakonos*]." (Matt. 23:11)

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The character and faithfulness of the servant should mark the degree of honor and esteem that should be rendered to any in the *ecclesias* of the New Creation. As there were servants in the Church not qualified by talents, etc., for recognition as elders, because less apt to teach or less experienced, so, aside from any appointments by the Church, the apostles and prophets (teachers) on various occasions chose certain ones for their servants, or assistants, or deacons; as, for instance, when Paul and Barnabas were together they had John Mark for a time as their servant, or helper. Again, when Paul and Barnabas separated, Barnabas took John with him, while Paul and Silas took Luke with them for a servant, or helper. These helpers did not regard themselves as the equals of the apostles, nor as the equals in service to others of greater talents and experience than themselves; but rejoiced in the privilege of being assistants and servants under the direction of those whom they recognized as being qualified and accepted *servants of*

God and of the Truth. They needed not to be chosen by the Church for such a service to the apostles; as the Church chose its servants or deacons, so the apostles chose their own. Nor was it a matter of constraint, but one of option. John and Luke, we may presume, considered that they could better serve the Lord in this manner than perhaps in any other way open to them, and hence it was of their own free will and without the slightest restraint that they accepted, as they might with equal propriety have refused the service, if they believed that they could more faithfully use their talents in some other manner.

Nevertheless, this word *deacon* is applied in the New Testament to a class of brethren useful as servants of the body of Christ and honored accordingly, but not so well qualified as others for the position of elders. Their choice at all, however, to a special service in the Church implied good character, faithfulness to the Truth and zeal for the service of the Lord and his flock. Thus in the early Church, when

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the distribution of food, etc., for the poor of the flock was arranged, the apostles first undertook the matter themselves; but subsequently when the murmuring arose and the claim was made that some were neglected, the apostles turned the matter over to the believers, the Church, saying--Choose out from amongst you suitable men for this service, and we will give our time, knowledge and talents to the ministry of the Word. *Acts 6:2-5*

It will be remembered that seven servants, or deacons, were chosen, and that amongst these seven was Stephen, who later on became the first martyr--having the honor to be the first to walk in the Master's footsteps even unto death. The fact that Stephen was chosen by the Church to be a deacon in no sense of the word hindered him from preaching the Word in any and every manner in which he found an opportunity. Thus we see the perfect liberty which prevailed in the primitive Church. The whole company, recognizing the talents of any member of the body, might request him to render it a service; but its request and his acceptance was in no sense a bondage--in no sense hindered him from using his talents in any other way he might find opportunity. Stephen, the deacon, faithful in the serving of tables, transacting financial matters for the company, etc., was blessed of the Lord and granted opportunities for the exercise of his zeal and talents in a more public manner in the preaching of the Gospel--his career demonstrating

that the Lord recognized him as an Elder in the Church before the brethren discerned his ability. Doubtless had he lived longer the brethren likewise would in time have discerned his qualifications as an Elder and expounder of the Truth and would so have recognized him.

However, the point we wish to impress is the complete liberty of each individual to use his talents as he may be able, *as an evangelist*, whether by direct appointment of the *Ecclesia* of the New Creation or not. (Stephen would not have been competent to teach in the Church, however, unless

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chosen by the Church to that service.) This absolute liberty of the individual conscience and talents, and the absence of any bondage or authority to restrict, is one of the marked features of the early Church which we do well to copy in spirit and in deed. As the Church has need of elders qualified and competent to teach, and evangelists to preach, so it has need of deacons to serve it in other capacities, as ushers, treasurers, or what not. These are servants of God and of the Church, and are honored correspondingly; the elders are servants, though their service is recognized as being of a higher order--labor in word and doctrine.

Teachers in the Church

As we have just seen, "aptness to teach" is a qualification necessary for the position or service of elders in the Church. We might multiply citations from the Scriptures to show that St. Paul classed himself not only as an *apostle* and as an *elder* or *servant*, but also as a *teacher*, "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but as the holy Spirit teacheth." (*1 Cor. 2:13*) He was not a teacher of languages nor of mathematics nor of astronomy nor of any of the sciences, except the one great science to which the Lord's Gospel, or good tidings, refers. This is the signification of the Apostle's words just quoted; and it is well that all of the Lord's people should keep this strictly in mind. Not only those who teach and preach, but those also who listen, are to see to it that it is not man's wisdom that is proclaimed, but the divine wisdom. Thus the Apostle exhorts Timothy, "Preach the Word." (*2 Tim. 4:2*) "These things command and teach." (*1 Tim. 4:11*) "These things teach and exhort." (*1 Tim. 6:2*) Going still further the Apostle indicates that all of the Church as well as the elders should see to it that teachers of false doctrines, and teachers of philosophy and "science

falsely so-called," are not recognized as teachers of the Church. The Apostle's recommendation is, "If any man teach otherwise," etc., withdraw thyself--do not lend support

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to that which is another Gospel than the one ye have received, which was delivered unto you by them that preached the Gospel unto you with the holy Spirit sent down from heaven. *1 Tim. 6:3-5; Gal. 1:8*

There are some, however, who are competent to teach, capable of making plain to others the divine plan in a private way, who have no capacity for oratory, public speaking, "prophecy." Those who can privately speak a word for the Lord and for his cause are not to be discouraged; but, on the contrary, are to be encouraged to use their every opportunity to serve those who have an ear to hear, and to show forth the praises of our Lord and King. Then, again, we are to distinguish as between "teaching and preaching." (*Acts 15:35*) Preaching is discoursing in public; teaching can generally better be accomplished in a more private manner--in a Bible class or in private conversation--and the ablest preachers, public speakers or "prophets" have found occasionally that their public work prospers best when it is ably supplemented by the less public discourses, by the more private expounding of the deep things of God, to a smaller company.

The gift of the evangelist, the power to stir men's hearts and minds to investigation of the Truth, is a special gift not possessed by all today any more than in the early Church. Moreover, changed conditions have more or less changed the character of this work, so that today we find that in consequence of general education amongst the people, the evangelistic work can largely be accomplished through the printed page. Many are engaged in the present time in this work--scattering tracts and colportaging the SCRIPTURE STUDIES series. The fact that these evangelists are working on lines adapted to our day instead of upon the lines adapted to the past, is no more an argument against this work than is the fact that they travel by steam and electric power instead of on foot or on camels. The evangelization is through the presentation of the Truth--the divine plan of

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the ages--the Word of God--the "good tidings of great joy." According to our judgment, there is no other evangelistic

work today achieving so great results as this. And there are many who have the talent, the qualifications, for engaging in this service, who are not prepared to engage in other departments of the work--many reapers who have not yet gone forth into the vineyard, and on whose behalf we are continually praying that the Lord of the harvest would send them forth--would grant them to see their privileges and opportunities of engaging in this evangelistic ministry.

When Philip, the evangelist, had done what he could for the people of Samaria, Peter and John were sent to them. (*Acts 8:14*) And so our colporteur evangelists, after stirring up the pure minds of their hearers, introduce to them the *Studies in the Scriptures* as teachers from which they can further learn respecting the way of the Lord. As Peter and Paul and James and John, as the Lord's messengers and representatives, wrote epistles to the household of faith, and thus shepherded and counseled and encouraged his flock, so now truth literature visits the friends, personally and collectively, regularly--seeking to confirm their faith and to form and crystallize their characters along the lines established by the Lord and his apostles.

Many Should be Able to Teach

The Apostle wrote to some, "For the time [ye have been in the Truth] ye ought to be teachers, but [in consequence of a lack of zeal for the Lord and a spirit of worldliness] ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God." (*Heb. 5:12*) This implies that in a general sense, at least, the entire Church, the entire priesthood, the members of the New Creation, should become skillful in their Father's Word to the extent that they will be "ready always to give an answer to every man that

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asketh a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and reverence." (*1 Pet. 3:15*) Thus we see again that teaching, Scripturally considered, is not limited to a clerical class; that every member of the New Creation is a member of the Royal Priesthood "anointed to preach," and thus fully authorized to declare the good tidings to those who have ears to hear--each according to his ability to present it faithfully and lucidly. But here comes in a peculiar statement by another Apostle:

"Be Not Many of You Teachers, Brethren"

--*James 3:1*--

What does this mean? The Apostle answers, saying:
"Knowing that ye shall receive severer sentence"--knowing that temptations and responsibilities both increase with every advance step of eminence in the body of Christ. The Apostle does not exhort that none shall become teachers, but would have each one who believes himself possessed of some talent for teaching remember that it is a responsible thing to undertake to any extent to be the mouthpiece of God--to make sure that not a word is uttered which would misrepresent the divine character and plan, and thus dishonor God as well as do injury to those who might hear.

Well were it for the Church if all would recognize and obey this counsel, this wisdom from above. There might be much less teaching done than is now being done; but the effect both upon teachers and learners would be not only a greater reverence for the Lord and the Truth, his Word, but a greater freedom from confusing errors. Along this line, our Master's words imply that some will have a share in the Kingdom whose teachings have not been in the fullest accord with the divine plan; but that the consequent result will be a lower position in the Kingdom than if more earnest heed had been given to have the teaching none other than the divine message. His words are, "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven." *Matt. 5:19*

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"Ye Need Not That Any Man Teach You"

"The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you ye shall abide in him."

"Ye have an unction from the holy one and ye know all things."
1 John 2:27,20

In view of the many scriptures which encourage the Church to learn, to grow in grace and knowledge, to build one another up in the most holy faith, and to expect that the Lord would raise up apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, etc., this statement by the Apostle James seems very peculiar until rightly understood. It has been a stone of

stumbling to quite a few, although we may be sure that the Lord has not permitted any whose hearts were in a proper attitude toward him to be injured by it. The prevalent tenor of the Scripture to the contrary--line upon line and precept upon precept--no less than the experiences of life, are quite sufficient to convince every person of humble mind that there is something radically wrong with the translation of this passage or with the ideas that are generally drawn from it. Those who are injured are usually very self-conscious people, whose self-conceit leads them to prefer that the Lord should treat them separately and apart from all the remainder of the New Creation. Such, however, is in absolute contradiction to the general teaching of the Scriptures that the body is one, and has many members united in the one; and that the nutriment supplied is carried to each member of the body for its nourishment and strengthening through or in conjunction with the other members. Thus the Lord intended to make his people interdependent upon each other, to the intent that there might be no schism in the body; and it is to this end that he has exhorted us through the Apostle not to neglect the assembling of ourselves together, but to remember that he is specially pleased to meet with the Ecclesia, the body, in every place, even if so small a number as "two or three be gathered together" in his name.

Examining the text we find that the Apostle is controverting

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an error prevalent in his day--a gross error which, in the name of the Truth, in the name of Christianity, in the name of discipleship to the Lord, was virtually making void the entire revelation. He declared this erroneous system to be no part of the true Church or its doctrines, but, on the contrary, antichrist, or opposed to Christ while claiming his name; thus sailing under false colors. He says of these that "they went out from us because they were not of us [either they never were true Christians or they had ceased to be such]; for if they had been of us they would have remained with us." He points out their error; namely that the prophecies of a Messiah were figurative, and never to be fulfilled through mankind, and declared this a complete denial of the Gospel statement that the Son of God became flesh, was anointed at his baptism by the holy Spirit as the Messiah and that he redeemed us.

The Apostle's thought is, that any who have become Christians at all, any who have understood the divine plan

to any extent, must first have before them the fact that they and all were sinners and in need of a Redeemer; and, secondly, the fact that Jesus, the Anointed One, had redeemed them by the sacrifice of his own life. The Apostle further declares that they have no need that any man *teach them this basic truth*. They could not be Christians at all and yet be in ignorance of this fundamental of the Christian religion--that Christ died for *their* sins according to the Scriptures, and rose again for their justification--and that our justification and consequent sanctification and hope of glory are all dependent upon the fact and value of Christ's sacrifice on their behalf. He points out that although it might have been possible to trust in and believe on the Father without believing on the Son before the Son was manifested, yet *now*, whosoever denieth the Son of God denies thereby the Father; and no one can confess the Son of God without confessing at the same time the Father and the Father's plan, of which he is the center and executor.

So, then, we today can see exactly what the Apostle meant; namely, that whoever had been begotten of the

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holy Spirit must first have been a believer in the Lord Jesus; that he was the Only Begotten of the Father; that he was manifested in the flesh; that he was holy, harmless and separate from sinners; that he gave himself as our ransom; and that the sacrifice was accepted of the Father and witnessed by his resurrection to be the glorious King and Deliverer. Without this faith no one could receive the holy Spirit, the anointing; consequently, whoever has the anointing needs not that any man shall waste time in discussing further the fundamental question as to whether Jesus was or was not the Son of God; whether or not he was the Redeemer; whether or not he was the anointed Messiah who shall fulfil in God's due time the precious promises of the Scriptures. The same anointing which we have received, if it abides in us, will assure us of the truth of these things--"Even as it hath taught you ye must abide in him." Whoever abides not in him, in the Vine, is--like the branch cut off--sure to wither; whoever abides in him is sure to abide in his Spirit also, and cannot deny him.

"Ye have an unction from the holy one and ye all know it." (*Diaglott*) The holy Spirit was typified throughout the Jewish dispensation by holy oil which, poured upon the head of the High Priest, ran down over all the body; so whoever is of the body of Christ is under the anointing, under

the influence of the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, it is unctuous, smooth, lubricative. Its tendency is to follow peace with all men, so far as is possible, and so far as fidelity to righteousness will permit. It is opposed to friction--to anger, malice, hatred, strife. Those under its influence are glad to be taught of the Lord, and so far from quarreling with his plan and revelation, they readily fall into full harmony with them, and have correspondingly the lubrication promised--the unction, the smoothness, the peace, the joy, the holiness of mind.

Those who have received the Spirit of the Lord in this sense of the word, bringing peace and joy and harmony into their hearts, know that they have these as a result of the Lord's dealings with them, and that they received these

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since they believed on the Lord Jesus and accepted him as the Anointed One. This unction, therefore, is an evidence not only to themselves but, in a considerable measure, an evidence to others that they are members of the body of Christ; while those who lack this peace and joy, and whose hearts are filled with malice and strife and hatred and bickerings and quarrelings and disputes, certainly lack the evidence of the anointing, of the lubrication, of the smoothness which accompanies the Spirit of the Lord. True, we are not all alike, and the smoothness may not in the outward affairs of life manifest itself so quickly in some as in others; but very early in the Christian experience this smoothness should be looked for in the heart, as an evidence that we have been with Jesus and learned of him and received his Spirit, and shortly after it should begin to be evident to others in the daily life.

We see, then, that nothing in the Scriptures opposes the general tenor of the Lord's Word respecting the necessity of teachers and of learning the mind of the Lord through them. Not that we hold that God is dependent upon the teachers, and that he *could not* instruct, edify, and build up the members of the New Creation by some other means or agency; but because his Word declares that this *is* his means and agency, his method for instructing and upbuilding the Church, the body of Christ--that there may be no schism in the body and that each member may learn to sympathize with and cooperate with and assist every other member.

We have already considered the fact that these teachers are not to be regarded as infallible but that their words are to be weighed and measured by the divine standards--the

words of the Lord and the apostles and the holy prophets of past dispensations, who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the holy Spirit for our admonition upon whom the ends of the age have come. We now call attention to the Apostle's declaration, "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things."

Gal. 6:6

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"Him that is Taught" and "Him that Teacheth"

This scripture, in accord with all the others, shows us that God designed to instruct his people by means of each other; and that even the humblest of his flock shall think for himself and thus develop an individual faith as well as an individual character. Alas, that this important matter is so generally overlooked amongst those who name the name of Christ! This scripture recognizes teacher and pupils; but the pupils are to feel free to communicate, to make known to the teachers any and every matter coming to their notice and seeming to bear upon the subject discussed--not as desiring to be teacher but as an intelligent student to an elder brother student. They are not to be machines, nor to be afraid to communicate; but by asking questions, calling attention to what seems to them to be misapplications of Scripture or what not, they are to do their part in keeping the body of Christ and his teachings pure--they are thus to be critics; and instead of being discouraged from doing this, and instead of being told that they must not criticize the teacher or call in question his expositions, they are, on the contrary, urged to communicate, to criticize.

We must not, however, suppose that the Lord wished to encourage any hypercritical spirit, or combative, fault-finding disposition. Such a spirit is entirely contrary to the holy Spirit, and not only so, but would be very dangerous; because whoever in a spirit of debate sets forth a hypothetical, or supposititious case which he does not believe to be the Truth, merely with a view to confusing his opponent, having a "debate," etc., is sure to be injured as well as tolerably sure to injure others by such a course. Honesty to the Truth is a prime essential to progress in it: to oppose what one believes to be the Truth, and to even temporarily uphold what one believes to be an error, "for fun," or for any other reason, will surely be offensive to the Lord and bring some just retribution. Alas, how many have undertaken to "see just what could be said" against a position which they

believed to be the Truth, and have been entangled and entirely

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captivated and blinded while pursuing this course!

Next to the Lord, the Truth is the most precious thing in all the world; it is not to be trifled with, not to be played with; and whoever is negligent along this line will himself sustain injury. See *2 Thess. 2:10,11*.

It is proper to remark that the word "*communicate*" is a broad one, and includes not only communication respecting thoughts, sentiments, etc., but may be understood also to mean that he who is taught and who receives spiritual benefits should be glad to communicate in some manner to the support of those who teach--giving to the Lord, the brethren, the Truth, of the fruit of his labors and talents. And such is the very essence of the holy disposition of the New Creation. Early in Christian experience each learns the meaning of their Master's words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and, hence, all who have this spirit are glad indeed to give of earthly things in the service of the Truth, and that in proportion as they receive spiritual blessings into good and honest hearts. The question of how to give, and of the wisdom to be exercised, will be considered later on, under another head.

Woman's Province in the Church

In some respects this subject could be better considered after examining the general relationship of man and woman in the divine order; but in an important sense this is the appropriate place for its presentation--the other concurrent views, set forth later on, we believe will be found corroborative of what we now present.

Nothing is clearer than that sex is ignored by the Lord in the selecting of his *Ecclesia* of the New Creation. Both males and females are baptized into membership in the "one body" of which Jesus is the Head. Both are, therefore, alike eligible to a share in the First Resurrection and its glory, honor and immortality, on the general condition, "if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." Both have been honorably mentioned by our Lord and the apostles in

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warmest terms. Hence, any limitations placed upon the female as to the character and extent of Gospel service, must

be understood to appertain merely to the present time, while still in the flesh; and must be accounted for in some other manner than by supposing a divine preference for males. We shall endeavor to show that the discriminations between the sexes are along symbolical and typical lines--because the man symbolizes Christ Jesus, the Head of the Church, while the woman symbolizes the Church, the Bride, under the divinely appointed Head.

Our Lord's love for his mother, and for Martha and Mary and other "honorable women who ministered unto him of their substance," is very evident from the record, even aside from the direct statement that he "loved" them (*Jno. 11:5*); yet when choosing his twelve apostles, and later the "seventy," he included none of them. We cannot suppose this to have been an oversight, either--even as it was not by oversight that the female members of the tribe of Levi were, as respected the public services, ignored for the more than sixteen centuries previous. Nor can we explain the matter by supposing that the females of our Lord's friends were not sufficiently educated to be used by him; for of those chosen the record is that it was readily perceived that "they were ignorant and unlearned men." We must, therefore, conclude that it was of divine intention that from amongst the "brethren," only the males were chosen to be the special public servants and ambassadors of the Gospel. And here, be it noted, that this divine arrangement is the reverse of the method of the great Adversary who, although ready to use either sex as his tools, has always found woman his most efficient representative.

The first woman was Satan's first ambassador--a successful one, too, in misleading the first man and plunging the entire race into sin and death. The witches of the past, and spirit mediums, "Christian Scientists" of our times, are all evidences along this same line--of Satan's propaganda through women nearly as marked as the divine propaganda through men. Moreover, the divine program runs

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counter to the natural tendency of all men to specially esteem women in religious matters--to accredit to the sex a higher degree of purity, spirituality, fellowship with God. This tendency is notable in the records of the past as well as in the present, as evidenced by the Egyptian goddess Isis, the Assyrian goddess Ashtaroth, the Greek goddess Diana, and Juno and Venus and Bellona, and the Mariolatry which for centuries and today dominates fully two-thirds of

those claiming the name of Christ--notwithstanding the most explicit appointment of man as the mouthpiece and representative of the Lord in his Church.

Aside from its symbolic meaning, the Lord's Word does not inform us if there be other reasons for sex distinction, and our surmises respecting the matter may or may not be correct: in our opinion, however, some of the qualities of heart and mind which combine in the noblest types of woman, render her unsuitable for public religious services. For instance, by nature woman is, fortunately, endowed with the desire to please and to win *approval* and praise. This quality is an inestimable blessing in the home, leading to the preparation of the numerous table delicacies and attractive home adornments which differentiate a home from the apartments of old maids or old bachelors. The true wife is happy when endeavoring to make her family happy, and rejoices in their manifestations of appreciation of her efforts--cooking, etc., and she should never be denied the encomiums which surely are her due and which her nature craves and which are absolutely essential to her health and progress.

But, if woman be lifted out of her sphere--so large and so important that the poet has well said, "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world"--if she gets before the public as a lecturer or teacher or writer, she gets into a position of great danger; because several of the peculiarities of her sex (one of which we have mentioned) which go to make her a true woman and attractive to true men will conspire under the *unnatural* conditions to spoil her womanhood--to make her "mannish." Nature has set the

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metes and bounds of the sexes, not only in physical contour and hair-suit but equally in qualities of heart and head--adapting each to the other so thoroughly that any interference with, or disregard of, her laws is sure to work injury in the end, however beneficial the changes may temporarily appear to be.

The quality of *approbativeness* which nature has so freely bestowed upon and which rightly exercised is so helpful to her, to her home and to her family, is almost certain to become a snare to her if exercised toward the public--in seeking the approval of the Church or the world. Ambition to shine--to appear wiser and abler than others--is a danger which besets all before the public eye, and, undoubtedly, has stumbled many men who have become puffed up, and

thus have fallen into a snare of the Adversary: but the very womanliness of woman renders her peculiarly liable, not only to herself stumble in her attempt to shine, but liable also to stumble others; because such an one getting off the track would be sure to be supplied by the Adversary with spurious oil--by whose false light many might be led out of the way of the Lord. Thus the Apostle's warning--"Be not many of you teachers, brethren, knowing that a man [who is a teacher] shall receive the severer testing" (*James 3:1*)--would be still more forceful if applied to the sisters. Indeed, the danger with them would be so great that none were appointed to be teachers; and the Apostle writes--"I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over a man, but to be in silence." *1 Tim. 2:11,12*

This emphatic and explicit statement cannot, however, be understood to mean that the sisters of the New Creation may never impart a blessing by telling the old, old story. The same Apostle refers most respectfully to noble women of his day as *helpers* in the ministry. For instance, he mentions Priscilla as well as her husband as "helpers," or "fellow-workers." (*Rom. 16:3*) This signifies more than merely entertainers who had received the Apostle into their home: it meant that they worked with him in his work--not merely in tent-making, but specially in his chief work as a minister

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of the Gospel. In a later verse (6) he mentions Mary's services differently, saying--"Mary bestowed much labor *on us*." She evidently was not a fellow-worker. Her services rendered the Apostle, and which he wished to acknowledge, were personal services--perhaps washing or mending. Priscilla's service, on the contrary, is mentioned in the same language as the services of Urbane (vs. 9). Indeed, since Aquila's name is mentioned after that of his wife, the inference is reasonable that the wife was the more efficient of the two as a "fellow-worker." Tryphena and Tryphosa (vs. 12) are two other sisters whose "*labor in the Lord*" is honorably mentioned.

Any interpretation of the Apostle's words which would ignore all opportunity for the sisters to "labor in the Lord" would manifestly be erroneous. It is in the gatherings of the Church (whether two or three or more) for worship and praise and mutual edification that the sisters are to take a subordinate place and not attempt to be the leaders and teachers--thus to do would be *usurping* authority over

the man, upon whom, both by nature and by precept, the Lord has placed the responsibility of the leading ministries --undoubtedly for wise reasons, whether we could agree respecting them or not.

The Apostle's restrictions evidently related to meetings such as he describes in *1 Corinthians 14*. These meetings included the sisters, who certainly shared all of its blessings--joining in the songs and hymns and spiritual songs and in the prayers, by whomsoever offered. The Apostle wished to inculcate the necessity for order in the meetings, that they all might be the more profited. He urges that not more than one speaker orate or prophesy at a time, and that all others give attention; and that not more than two or three orators or prophets speak at one meeting, so as not to give too great diversity of sentiment at one session. Likewise any speaking unknown tongues were to keep silence unless some one present could interpret their utterances.

Women were not to speak at all in such meetings, although outside the meetings or at home they might "ask

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their own husbands," or, more properly, their own *men*; they could suggest their views or make queries through those brethren (men) with whom they were most intimately acquainted --their husbands, if possible, or brethren with whom they talked on their way homeward from meetings, etc. The word *home* in this text has the significance of *family* or acquaintanceship. The thought then is, Let them ask their questions of or through the males of their acquaintance. The Apostle proceeds to say, "It is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, *as also saith the Law.*" ***1 Cor. 14:34-36***

Evidently some in the Church at Corinth favored the "women's rights" idea, claiming that in the Church the rights of the sexes were indiscriminate. But the Apostle not only negatives this thought but, additionally, reprimands their audacity in thinking to inaugurate a procedure not recognized by others of the Lord's people. His words are, "What, came the word [message] of God out from you [originating with you]? or came it [from elsewhere] *unto you*, only? If any man think himself a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the *commandments of the Lord*," and not merely my personal opinions, or crotchets. We, then, no more than the Corinthians, are to exercise our own preferences or judgments on this subject, but are to bow to the Apostle's statements as

the Lord's command. And if any one disputes the Apostle's guidance on this subject, let him be consistent and reject him as an apostle in toto.

It is proper in this connection to call attention to the Apostle's words when speaking of the gifts from our Lord to the Church--dating from Pentecost. He says, "And he gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (*Eph. 4:11,12*) In the Greek the *article* indicates the gender--masculine, feminine, or neuter. This text then is an excellent one from which to decide how particularly the Lord through the holy Spirit drew the line of

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sex amongst the active servants given to his Church. What are the facts as respects the above text; which gender is indicated in the Greek? We reply that the article *tous* (plural, Accus., *masculine*) occurs before apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastors, and no article at all before teachers, which apparently stands here either for "helpers" (*1 Cor. 12:28*), or else is a comprehensive term referring to the male apostles, male orators, male evangelists and male persons as *all* teachers.

Let us here remark, however, that for a sister to call the attention of the assembly to the words of the Lord or of the apostles on any subject under discussion without giving her own views could not be considered teaching, nor as in any sense usurping authority over the man: she would, on the contrary, merely be calling up the words of recognized and authorized teachers. Similarly for a sister to refer to, or to read to others, this book or other of our publications explanatory of the Scriptures would not be teaching on her part, but by the author quoted. Thus we see that the Lord's arrangements safeguard his flock and at the same time make ample provision for their needs.

All may obey the divine command, but, assuredly, none will comprehend it except as he realizes that in Biblical usage a woman symbolizes the Church, and a man symbolizes the Lord, the Head or Master of the Church. (See *Eph. 5:23; 1 Cor. 11:3*) As the Church is not to attempt to teach the Lord, so woman, who symbolizes the Church, must not assume the role of teacher over man, who symbolically represents the Lord. With this thought before our minds no sister need feel slighted and no brother may feel puffed up by this Scripture regulation; rather, all will have

in mind that the Lord is the only teacher and that the brethren dare not utter wisdom of their own; but merely present to others that which their Head sets forth as the Truth. Let us apply this scripture (*1 Tim. 2:11,12*) to the Lord and the Church, thus--Let a church learn in silence with all subjection. I suffer not a church to teach, nor to usurp authority over Christ but to be in silence."

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"Let Her Be Covered"

We have already pointed out* that the High Priest who typified Christ, the High Priest of our Profession, alone went with uncovered head when in priestly attire; and that all of the under-priests, who typified the Church, "the Royal Priesthood," wore head coverings called "bonnets." The teaching of this type is in full accord with what we have just seen, for in the gatherings of the *Ecclesia* of the New Creation, the Lord, the antitypical High Priest, is represented by the brethren, while the Church or Royal Priesthood is represented by the sisters, who the Apostle declares should likewise wear a head covering as indicating the same lesson--the subserviency of the Church to the Lord. The Apostle details this in *1 Cor. 11:3-7,10-15*.

Some have inferred that as the Apostle mentions a woman's long hair being given her by nature as a covering, that he meant nothing more than this; but verse 6 clearly shows to the contrary--that he meant that women should not only let their hair grow long as nature provided for, but, additionally, should wear a covering, which in verse 10 he declares is a *sign*, or symbolic recognition of being subject to, or under the authority of man; symbolically teaching that the entire Church is under law to Christ. The record of verse 4 seems at first to be in conflict with the requirement that women keep silence in the *ecclesias*. Our thought is that while at the general Church service women are not to take a public part, yet in social meetings for prayer and testimony, and not for doctrinal teaching, there could be no objection to the sisters participating with their heads covered.

Respecting this matter of perpetuating the typical covering of their heads by the sisters, the Apostle urges it, but he does not state it to be a divine command. On the contrary, he adds, "If any man seemeth to be contentious [on the subject] we have no such custom [positive law in the Church]." It should not be considered a vital subject; though all who are seeking to do the Lord's will should be

**Tabernacle Shadows of the Better Sacrifices*, p. 36.

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particular in this as well as in other regards from the time they discern its appropriateness as a symbol. The words, "because of the angels," seem to refer to the chosen *elders* of the Church, who specially represent the Lord, the Head, in the *ecclesias*. **Rev. 2:1**

* * *

Summarizing, we suggest that the most liberal interpretation possible should be given to the inspired Apostle's words respecting the scope of the liberty of the sisters in the affairs of the Church. Our judgment of this we set forth thus:

(1) The sisters have the same liberty as the brethren in the matter of the election of the Church's servants--the Elders and Deacons.

(2) The sisters cannot serve as elders or teachers in the Church, because, the Apostle says, "I suffer not a woman to teach." (**1 Tim. 2:12**) This, however, need not be understood to hinder the sisters from participating in meetings not of the teaching or preaching kind; such as prayer and testimony meetings, Berean studies, etc., because the Apostle says that if she pray or prophesy (speak) it should be with her head covered, representing her acknowledgment of the fact that the Lord, the Great Teacher, is specially represented by the brethren. (**1 Cor. 11:5,7,10**) Such participation need not be considered teaching; because neither are the brethren who participate teachers; as the Apostle says "Are all teachers?" No, the teachers or Elders are specially chosen, though always from among the males. **Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 2:24; 1 Cor. 12:28,29**

Still I have the power to make them
Like the snowflake in its fall.

Through my heart the words so simple
Throbbled with echo in and out:
Crimson--scarlet--white as snowflake--
Can this man? and can *God not*?

Now upon a day thereafter,
(Thus the tale went on at will),
To the queen there came a present
From the master at the mill.

Fold on fold of fairest texture
Lay the paper, purest white;
On each sheet there gleamed the letters
Of her name in golden light.

Precious lesson, wrote the master,
Hath my mill thus given me,
Showing how our Christ can gather
Vilest hearts from land or sea;

In some heavenly alembic,
Snowy white from crimson bring;
Stamp his name on each, and bear them
To the palace of the king.

* * *

O what wondrous visions wrapped me!
Heaven's gates seemed opened wide,
Even I stood clear and faultless,
By my dear Redeemer's side.

Faultless in his glory's presence!
Faultless in that dazzling light!
Christ's own love, majestic, tender,
Made my crimson snowy white!