

## *Response by William Kelly to J. S. Teulon's Plymouth Brethren*

*The History and Teaching of the Plymouth Brethren.* By J. S. Teulon, M.A., Prebendary of the Cathedra, and Vice-principle of the Theological College, Chichester. Published under the direction of the Tract Committee, London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, &c.

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{Comments in braces, such as this note, are added by Roy A. Huebner.}

### *Chapter 1: Introduction*

Here are the words with which the author begins his task:

The religious movement with which these pages are concerned has arisen during the present century. From very small beginnings it has in the course of fifty years attained a wide-spread influence, and has enlisted under its banner persons of distinguished rank and of the highest intellectual culture. Nor has its work been by any means confined to the country of its birth. It has found a home in many continental States; it is well known in the colonies, and in America; while in most of the larger towns of Great Britain its representatives have their places of assembly (p. 5).

The next words are not so correct:

Though it employs evangelistic agencies to make its tenets known, and to gather in its converts, the main instrument of its propagation has been the press rather than the pulpit [an unwitting mistake], and numbers, to whom the society itself is little more than a name, have unconsciously imbibed its principles from a perusal of its periodicals, its pamphlets, and its leaflets.

There might have been added larger works of exposition, as well as hymns, to the sources of indirect influence among such as have never known their oral ministry, and have never seriously considered the responsibility of acknowledging divine truth by a practice corresponding to it. One could not desire the truth to be less owned as of God; but it is deplorable for all who thus trifle with that which is meant to form our hearts in fellowship with Him and to fashion our walk every day. But the truth is that, whilst a call went forth from the earliest days of Brethren to the converted (none so distinctively recalling souls to Christ and the church, in the confession of the present ruin of Christendom), activity in the gospel also *characterized* them from the first, as the late Mr. J. N. Darby used to say; and none had larger or more correct means of knowing its truth.

To what then must be attributed such impressions as

those of Mr. T. and many more? To two causes particularly: the narrowness of those outside, who, because of the earnest pressure of the divine word as a whole on all saints, inferred indifference to perishing sinners; and, again, the still more culpable one-sidedness of individuals within, who really were and are under the error of slighting evangelistic zeal, and of restricting themselves, and all subject to their influence, to the testimony of Christian and ecclesiastical truth. Now it is not and never was possible to hinder such aberrations; and wise men in our midst have not only reproved shallow and mischievous pettiness of this kind, but felt, spoken, written, and labored with all largeness of heart as well in the gospel as in the church. I do not doubt, however, that (whether in the English establishment or in dissent) evangelical pre-occupation with the work of awakening souls is the most fertile source of this reproach; for it is jealous of any advance in scriptural intelligence beyond the barest elements. Even a full gospel is apt to be regarded with suspicion by such as think it the sole worthy aim to arrest the godless and win the careless to Christ. Many years ago I remember hearing of a little meeting in a small town in Wilts, where were about a dozen brothers, all of whom used, after the Lord's supper on each Lord's day, to disperse themselves over the neighboring villages, freely and earnestly preaching the glad tidings; yet even there and then people used to say, Brethren never preach the gospel to the unconverted! Could infatuation be more complete? Is it of any use to reason with minds closed to the force of facts so patent?

The next remarks are better:

It is always instructive, and often most interesting, to trace the rise of an influential school or sect, to note the circumstances which gave it birth, and the different forms which it has assumed in the course of its development. Such movements are not the result of chance; nor do they merely represent the product of individual piety, genius, or self-will. Though in most cases they may be referred to some individual

founder, they could never gain wide acceptance unless they were felt in some measure to supply some want of the age; and therefore a careful study of them will often furnish us with a key to the religious history of the day in which they arose. But the interest and instruction are multiplied tenfold when the movement under consideration has arisen in our own age. It then becomes a paramount duty to examine it with care. It throws light upon the period in which we live, and even in its most abnormal developments may remind the church of the day of some portion of her inheritance of truth which has been forgotten for a season, but for the revival of which the circumstances of the time are imperatively calling; while on the other hand the special character of any false teaching which may accompany such movements demands the attentive and dispassionate examination of all who desire to see their way through the perplexities of their time, and to secure the religious interests of their country (pp. 6, 7).

Note in passing the importance given by our author to “age” and “country”: no one intelligent in the true character of the truth on the one hand, and of the church on the other, could so think or speak. Even a divine institution is superior to such considerations, and if possible more evidently as also

more absolutely that word of God which liveth and abideth. Christ gave Himself for our sins to deliver us out of this present evil age. We are not of the world, as He is not. But, to proceed,

All these considerations apply in full force to the remarkable movement with which we are now concerned. Its rapid growth, its wide-spread influence, its tenacious hold on those who join it, all go to show that it is felt by many both in this and foreign countries to furnish some kind of supply to the religious necessities of the age. An examination of it then may help us to see what these necessities are, and should lead Churchmen to inquire further whether the Church herself out of the abundant stores committed to her keeping is not fully able to supply them. (Ib.)

Mr. T. may be assured that those he cross-examines hail the fullest and most minute scrutiny of any alleged heterodoxy, knowing that error is as dishonoring to God as damaging to man. God’s word will not fail also to show how far the Anglican body answers to His system of the church. For we can do nothing against the truth but for the truth.

## Chapter 2: The History of the Plymouth Brethren

There is this difficulty in speaking of the early facts that those with whom the movement commenced in Dublin are now passed away. If any information from one of the earliest can be relied on, two brethren in Dublin began to take the Lord’s Supper together not later than 1826, and a few by degrees joined them. It was not merely for the study of the scriptures, mutual conference and prayer. <sup>1</sup> A great accession of spiritual power came in with Mr. Darby who relinquished his clerical position in 1827, and published his *Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ* “in 1828. Later on, Mr. A. N. Groves, so far from suggesting any distinctive truth or practice, only dropped in among them, and always remained, as a sort of “free lance”; he never shared their decided convictions, but retained to the last a link with the ordinary ways of Christendom. Mr. J. G. Bellett also was slow in breaking off his old connections. There may have been others of similar feeling. But these remarks are quite inapplicable even to those who preceded Mr. D., as well as to himself. The late Dr. C. {Cronin} has named to me his distinct abandonment of his ecclesiastical associations at an earlier date than is here set down, before he saw his liberty to remember Christ in the breaking of bread. Probably the hearty welcome of such as

still frequented their churches or chapels might easily lead to the notion that none for a time saw farther. It is, however, a positive error; for those who began to meet together were far from wishing to attend ordinary services. That they originally meant meetings of a subsidiary character is the dream of one -- perhaps of more -- who always wished something of the sort, and, of course, never could be regarded as going with Brethren intelligently or thoroughly. It is true that Mr. G. {A. N. Groves} remonstrated with Mr. D., and mainly because of his own view of Matt. 13:30, which proves that he never had the least real light on the nature of the church; but who ever heard of a single brother sympathizing with Mr. G.’s mistake, save members of sects outside who naturally and highly approve of it?

There are other flaws in the account. The society at Teignmouth (to which, as I understand, allusion is made) was strictly Baptist {where Henry Craik and George Muller were}; and Mr. B. W. Newton never received English orders. But that he did not adopt in due time and in its full extent the principle of “open ministry” (though it be not a phrase used by wise brethren) is disproved by his paper “On the Apostacy of the Present Dispensation” (*Christian Witness* 5:83-99), as the following extracts bear witness, though the expression be not accurate, as is usual in Mr. N.’s writings.

And accordingly it is not in the rejection of Jesus, nor the rejection of God as God, but in the rejection of God as at present acting on the earth, viz., in the

1. {This was a meeting of Dr. Cronin’s, discussed in *John Nelson Darby: Precious Truths Revived and Defended*, vol. 1, 1826-1845, on the recovery of truth. It broke up, and in late 1827, at J. N. Darby’s suggestion, four began to break bread -- which was the actual beginning.}

Spirit in the Church, that we find the great present evidence of the apostasy of the dispensation to which we belong. In the 12th chapter of the 1st of Corinthians we find the relation of the Holy Spirit to Christ's body the Church very clearly unfolded. First, He gives it its living power of unity. By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body; and, secondly, He rules in the Church, for He divideth to every man severally as He will.

Here then are two things. With respect to the first, the loss of that manifested unity to which the Church is called, and the little concern manifested by believers as to what schism is, and its danger; these and other questions connected with this rejection of the Spirit as the author of union, have been so frequently dwelt upon in this work, that I pass this part of this subject now, and confine myself to the second, viz., the refusal to own the Holy Ghost as the One who alone can and who alone does give order and office in the church of God.

Such gifts, then, are given; such persons endowed by the Holy Ghost do exist: the question is, does the professing Church of God bow to the Spirit's appointments? or does it reject them, and substitute others in their stead? I need not refer to the Church of Rome to show how office is supposed to give to carnal and unregenerate men authority to minister to the Church of God, though no spiritual nor even moral qualification be found in them; for these things are equally found, equally defended in the Establishment of our own country. Those whom the Spirit qualifies are set aside, and those whom man qualifies are substituted in their room.

If not, where is the Church whose only care it is to see to whom among them the Spirit has divided any of His blessed gifts? and to own such and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, whether they be rich or poor, high or low, learned or unlearned? If such be the order of ministerial recognition, it is well; but if not, if things which the world has and handles, things with which the Holy Spirit (whom the world cannot receive) has no communion, regulate the arrangements of the Church of God, -- if education or rank, the will of the prince or the landowner, or purchase-money, control the appointment, -- then it is plain that it is the world which rules, and not the Spirit of God.

Again,

the necessary effect of such a principle's operation is so decidedly to put the voice of the people in the place of the Spirit of God, that we cannot regard the dissenting systems less chargeable with this sin of refusing to acknowledge the Holy Ghost than the Establishment. Indeed in theory the latter is more consistent with the truth, for it does allow that all authority and regulating power descends from God, and cannot have its origin in or sanction from man.

Had Mr. N. {B. W. Newton} abode in the principles here enunciated and applied, none could have asked more; but, as

is well known he gave up much here and elsewhere taught by him,<sup>2</sup> and betrayed what was far more serious, fundamental heterodoxy as to the doctrine of Christ. To "presidency" no intelligent brother objects, seeing that it is laid down in Rom. 12:8, and 1 Thess. 5:12, apart from all question of apostolic authority in appointment. Mr. T.'s information was incorrect.

Whatever the difference as to prophecy, the rupture at Plymouth in 1845 was mainly on ecclesiastical grounds (that God was practically displaced in His assembly through a subversion of our confessed principles, and evil not only unjudged, but through the suppression of a weekly meeting for enquiry the remedy for much taken away). It is certain that through corrupting influence at that time in Ebrington St. {Plymouth, England} the church's responsibility to judge evil was denied, as well as the unity of Christ's body on earth. He who in such circumstances could justify going on with the Ebrington Street party seems to me without conscience as to holiness and without faith as to unity, abandoning the rights of Christ in both.

Mr. N.'s {Newton} heterodoxy as to Christ appeared, as Mr. Teulon says, about two years after {in 1847}; and the exposure was so convincing and complete that all the leaders implicated printed and circulated each an unreserved confession, save Mr. N., (as well as S. P. Tregelles) who owned but the use of wrong theological terms and a misapplication of Rom. 5., and withdrew his tracts for re-consideration. Not only did no good fruit appear thence, but he subsequently wrote a letter on Christ's Humanity, in which he maintained the principles of his former tracts and sought to defend or explain them, thus annulling any supposed worth in his "Acknowledgment of Error." It is owned, even by one opposed to us, that

the errors without any doubt touch the foundations of our faith, and by this means overthrow not only the unity of the church, but its very existence.

It is really anti-christian. doctrine. How could any soul who loved Christ and was jealous for His glory be "satisfied"?

Meanwhile the Baptist brethren at Teignmouth had migrated to Bristol, and, after giving up their peculiar principles, had at length professed to own the great truth of the presence and free action of the Holy Ghost in the assembly; so that a little company of brethren previously separate were induced to be with them on the common ground of saints gathered to Christ's name. In 1848 partisans of Mr. N., now all but universally regarded as anti-christian, were received at Bethesda, their meeting-room, and this, as Mr. Darby's circular states {*Collected Writings* 15:164} (not Mr. T.), "with a positive refusal to investigate the Plymouth errors." C. W. Doctr, iv., 254.) {CW 15:164.}

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2. "At the Clifton meeting {1838} Mr. Newton, speaking of ministry and the points connected with it, told me that his principles were changed." J. N. D.'s *Narrative of Facts*, C. W. Eccles. iv. 22. {CW 20:14}.

A paper was read, signed by Messrs. Craik and Muller and eight others, to the body at Bethesda in which they diligently extenuate and palliate Mr. Newton's doctrine, though refusing investigation of it, and blame as far as they can those who have opposed it. (Ib. 255.)

And these avowed partisans, who would have been everywhere rejected among us on the word in 2 John, were deliberately received and kept in so as to drive out a considerable number of godly brethren whose remonstrance was set at nought. "The Letter of the Ten" is the paper in question, which is far from repudiating those blasphemies, but rather an elaborate excuse for a very flagrant defiance of unity and indifference to fundamental error. Mr. T. seems not aware that Bethesda subsequently was so roused by the remonstrance of their friends as to hold seven meetings in which they did publicly judge the errors to be as blasphemous as Brethren had affirmed. But even so they got rid of the Newtonian partisans privately! so that two of the Ten leaders went out, in avowed dissent from that theoretic judgment, and set up a cause of their own and had Mr. N. {Newton} to help at the Music Hall. The movement failed however; the other Newtonians left Bristol; and the two leaders (who had thus joined in open support of an anti-christian teacher on Bethesda's own showing) were allowed to come back on their owning that they should not have left Bethesda, without one reference to the real wickedness of supporting an Antichrist. Those who make much of Mr. Darby's over-sanguine visit to Mr. Miller after the seven meetings, take care to hide this overwhelming proof of treachery to Christ, as well as Mr. Craik's declaration in 1857 that the judgment expressed in the Letter of the Ten had never been repudiated.

It is true that Open Brethren, "the followers of Messrs.

Muller and Craik," as Mr. T. calls them (p. 18), maintain the mutual independence of their different assemblies. They are on congregational ground. Is he not aware that no church principle is so diametrically opposed to those which governed Brethren from the beginning? An invisible unity all Independents allow in heaven; Brethren had no communion save on the ground of Christ's one body on earth, though they freely received godly persons from orthodox societies in His name, but never as recognising for a moment their associations as of God. And so they do still; whereas, if I am informed aright, Open Brethren at home and abroad rather boast of their care -- to me sectarianism -- in receiving none without formal reception by their churches, though probably many among them have not slipped into this {much different today}.

I do not dwell on what is said in p.19 of "Mr. Darby's followers," save remarking,

- (1) that if "they are willing to receive individuals" from among the various religious bodies to the Lord's Table, they are adhering to that original principle; and
- (2) that Mr. D. himself in his Bethesda circular excepted cases of ignorance of what had passed, while refusing to receive from Bethesda and of course all on the "loose ground," as opening the door to that terrible evil {Newtonianism} from which at great cost God's mercy had delivered us.

It is incorrect to say there was "a division" in 1866 or at any other time on the score of Mr. Darby's views of Christ's sufferings. He was most ignorantly and unjustly assailed, and a few turned aside; but too inconsiderable a number withdrew to be so designated, sorrowful as it was for any to go, and especially on such an illusive ground. Mr. T. is wholly misinformed as to the views in question and would do well to study the incriminated pamphlet.

### *Chapter 3: The Church*

The doctrine of the church is viewed as essential to a full understanding of Brethren's position. A better proof of this it would be hard to conceive than the fact that a short treatise was once issued under two forms: first, with the title of "One body and One Spirit," setting forth the Scriptural testimony to the nature, membership, ministry, government, and discipline of the church; next, with the title of "The 'Brethren,'" and no other change than the addition of a few lines at the beginning to explain its special aim. This excepted, it was the same essay. What was drawn from Scripture as to the essential characteristics of the church exactly suited the "Brethren," taking into account what no intelligent Christian would deny, the absence of the Apostles &c. on the one hand, and the present ruin-state of Christendom on the other. The author is quite correct in his remark, which goes farther than he contemplated.

But after stating that Brethren assert the church's existence from Pentecost and not before (because it {i.e., the church's existence} supposes the accomplishment of Christ's sacrifice, and the presence of the Holy Spirit on earth consequent on Christ's ascension to heaven, p. 23), he says, p. 24, that "so far the teaching of the Brethren does not differ from that of the Church herself,"<sup>3</sup> and is fully borne out by the most express

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3. Curiously enough, the Presbyterian Mr. Thos. Croskery, in his soi-disant "Refutation," controverts this in the wake of Mr. B. W. Newton, and insists rabidly on the existence of the church before Pentecost. He too follows others in strange mistakes about the early days of Brethren. Not merely does he repeat the absurdity of Mr. A. N. Groves being a "founder"! (a very pardonable idea in the attached members of his own family, and especially in such as never go beyond their crude thoughts); but he speaks of a society formed at Plymouth in 1831, including Messrs. B. W. N., Tregelles, Soltau,

testimonies of the New Testament,” (See S. Matt. 11:11; John 7:39; Heb. 11:40.)

The texts cited are an unfortunate selection, not one of them directly treating of the church, only collaterally. But we need not dwell on this; for the proofs in the New Testament are many and express. But where and what has Anglicanism taught about it? It is hard to say. The notions of its teachers and members are notoriously conflicting. The vast majority seem to hold that the invisible church has gone on from the beginning, and will to the end; and that there has been a visible church, concurrent with the invisible and inclusive of it. The former seems clearly implied in the Collect for All Saints' Day:

Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body &c.

When greater strictness of speech is intended, we hear of “the Christian Church” or something equivalent. Where have the standards of the Church of England committed themselves to any definite teaching on the nature of the church, Christ's body? That they have defined it to be a distinctively New Testament or Pentecostal creation, till our Lord comes again, is more than doubtful. The teaching of Brethren on this head is in general confessed to differ essentially from that of Nationalism or Dissent. “Send us Thine Holy Ghost,” &c., as in the Collect for the Sunday after Ascension day, is not a petition heard among those who truly believe in His presence as sent down to abide with us for ever. And so prays year by year an Evangelical conglomerate of Anglicans, Methodists, and other Dissenters, for a fresh outpouring of the Spirit.

But here we are met by the astounding assertion that this sacred society, so divine in its origin, so well provided with all that was necessary to preserve it from age to age, is in a state of hopeless irremediable corruption . . . The continuance of God's goodness to her was suspended from the beginning upon the condition of her continuance in His goodness: that continuance, the Brethren say, has not been fulfilled, therefore her doom is sealed,” sp. 24, 25.

The assertion is solemn; but why “astounding,” if Brethren but believe and declare what Scripture says? This then is the question: how is it written? God has not left the decision to our spiritual perception or intelligence. Humility -- of all consequence to the believer -- might well shrink from pronouncing sentence on that which normally ought to be an object of such loving service and of profound respect as God's church here below. For this reason as for others He has graciously given ample testimony, so as to cut off hesitation and thus range true humility on the side of faith in His word,

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&c., and of Messrs. M. {Muller} and C. {Craik} establishing a similar society at Bristol. It was, if I err not, only in 1831 that Mr. Darby was first introduced through Newman at Oxford to Mr. G. V. Wigram, Sir. L. C. L. Brenton, B. W. N., Jarrett, &c. The others were later, especially Bristol not beginning on any ground of resemblance to Brethren. {See the book recommended in footnote 1.}

a due sense of Christ's glory, and a conscience exercised to discern both good and evil. Not that in the worst times provision is not made for the truly faithful: God fails in nothing. The ruin is owing to the creature only, notwithstanding rich favour, adequate power to sustain, and abundant warning; but even so the ruin is in the public or common answer to the glory of the Lord now, and in no way touches the security of individuals in His grace.

What then saith the Scripture?

Matt. 13:24-30 is plain. The servants thought to correct the mischief done by the enemy; the householder ruled it irreparable till the judgment at the consummation of the age. Only then does the Lord allow the extirpation of the tares sown at the beginning. No wonder a ruined crop is not regarded as peculiar to these latter days: did it not exist in a “measure from the beginning”?

Rom. 11:20-22 is no less decisive. The Gentile grafted into the good olive-tree, which has replaced the broken off Jewish branches, stands “by faith,” not by indefeasible right as Rome vainly claims in the face of the very epistle which contradicts it; and it has God's goodness expressly *if* it continue therein: “*otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*” -- Christendom, no less than the Jew. Now let any believer read as before God the close of Acts 2 and 4, and then let him, judging by that standard, answer whether professing Christians have continued in God's goodness. If not, what is the sentence of His word? Excision, beyond controversy, whatever the patience of God meanwhile.

The Corr. and Gal. are not cited, because they speak for the most part of particular assemblies, and not of a general state as in the two Scriptures reasoned on. But assuredly we have the evidence of no small evils blighting the testimony to Christ in both. Morally as well as doctrinally, leaven of a Sadducean or of a Pharisaic type was already threatening the whole lump. If the light in Ephesus shone brightly, so much the more sad that the Lord is heard by His servant John charging its angel,

Remember therefore whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first works: or else I come to thee and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent.

Can any sober Christian doubt that the threat was soon executed? To the Philippians the apostle says “All seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ.” Was this continuing in God's goodness?

Many walk of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is the belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things.

Is this continuing in God's goodness? If not, what then? The epistle to the Colossians supposes a more deadly evil at work there: philosophy and vain deceit, not without religious forms, which struck at the glory of the Head as well as at all the

privileges of the Christian in union with Him. Was this continuance in God's goodness?

But these, grave as they are, are dust of the balance before 2 Thess. 2, where the apostle declares that the mystery of lawlessness already worketh: only there is one that restraineth now, until he be out of the way, and then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall destroy; &c.: or, as he had intimated earlier, the falling away, the apostacy, shall come first, and the man of sin be revealed. There are thus from apostolic days three predicted and connected stages: the mystery of lawlessness, the apostacy, and the man of sin or lawless one revealed, till the Lord Jesus is revealed for his destruction. Is this continuing in God's goodness? Is it not a breakdown of the Christian society complete enough to satisfy Mr. T. if he believes the inspired apostle? The latter part of the New Testament would only confirm in the strongest way the beginning; but more than enough is cited to show why it is not regarded by Brethren as a matter of surprise.

And who can deny the analogy of the fall in man, of the ruin in Israel, and of the misgovernment of the Gentile powers? At the appearing of Christ shall be, not merely the full judgment of all these, but the glorious substitution in grace and power, and the blessed display, of the divine purpose in all those systems where the creature had so disastrously failed, when taken up by the Second Man to God's praise.

As to the means or evidence of Christendom's ruin, it is certain that the world is in the New Testament ever regarded as wholly antagonistic to the Father, whose children we are, and its friendship is enmity with God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ. We are not of the world, as Christ is not who died for all that they which live should no longer live to themselves but to Him who for their sakes died and rose again. To seek and embrace the world is worthy of Babylon, not of her who is espoused as a pure virgin to Christ. It is the acceptance of evil which is fatal, not the entrance of a hypocrite or an unbeliever who deceives. Now Article xxvi. quietly seeks to sanction evil having chief authority in the ministration of the word and sacraments, because done in Christ's name! while it speaks of a discipline which is as inadequate in practice as it is worldly in principle. Yet in the Homilies the right use of ecclesiastical discipline is laid down as the third mark of a true church; and Communion read in Lent is a sorry substitute for the godly discipline which needs to be restored. Is this then the church sustained through God's faithfulness of grace?

Mr T. erroneously imputes to Brethren the notion that apostolic appointment "belonged to the Church only while it was among the Jews," p. 27. On the contrary all admit that the choice of elders is most distinctly made by Paul and Barnabas among the Gentiles, not to speak of Titus later still under the apostle's direction in Crete. On the one hand the New Testament discloses a direct supply of gifts from Christ the Head for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building of the body of Christ; and this,

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 (Eph. 4). This grace cannot fail, because it rests exclusively on His ever active love to His own. Hence (if we heed Scripture) ordination never was practiced as to apostles or prophets, as to evangelists, or pastors, or teachers: if so, where? when? by whom? or on whom? It is allowed on the other hand that the apostle, or an apostolic delegate, did choose and appoint elders, not the disciples choosing and the apostles appointing, but the apostles for the disciples. But the Scripture which demonstrates this is equally clear that no provision is made in it to perpetuate this ordaining authority. Gifts according to it were to abide, not those local charges. It is vain to reason from that which we think must or ought to be: those who assert are logically bound to prove; and we can readily and certainly do so for the gifts, not those who claim the local charge of elders. This would imply apostolic succession; as we frankly allow to the Anglican the invalidity of dissenting ordination. But what of their own? It is in general confidently derived from Peter, who is to this end made the first bishop of Rome, and thus would secure the primacy also. But this is to ignore and annul Scripture, which assigns the apostleship of the circumcision to Peter, as of the uncircumcision to Paul, who ought to have been, but was not even imagined to be, the spring of orders in the west by the ecclesiastical fabulists. God has thus poured confusion on the clerical scheme, which is opposed to Scripture even in its theory.

And what is the practical issue? That the apostle Paul could not produce a valid title, and that Bishop Colenso can; that Dr. Pusey was a qualified presbyter, and that Mr. Spurgeon is a quack. If this which Mr. T. must substantially admit (save perhaps a quibbling assumption as to S. Paul) be not what he calls

encroaching on the jurisdiction of the Holy Ghost, and so far as human power can do so, hampering His work among the sons of men, p.28,

it will at any rate receive no more refutation here. It is the genuine and necessary working of the clerical system in direct opposition to the free action of the Holy Spirit within the assembly of God.

The argument in pp. 30-35 fails to prove that the church was meant, according to God's will, to be an unholy body. We have never denied that it quickly fell from its holy standing, and that He let us know that so it would be, but nowhere to sanction evil in it. It is not Brethren who overlook the parable of the wheat and the tares, but such as falsely apply to church constitution and discipline what the Lord explained to be the mingled crop of righteous and wicked in "the world" under the reign of the heavens till the Lord execute judgment in His day. The popular interpretation is demonstrably unsound, because it sets Matt. 13:30 in irreconcilable antagonism to 1 Cor. 5. For, so misapplied, the Lord in the parable forbids that purging out of the manifestly wicked which the Spirit enjoins peremptorily in the epistle! Rightly understood, the two

Scriptures are in perfect harmony, as Brethren see, and Anglicans &c. do not; for the Lord prohibits present *extermination* of the wicked, whereas the Holy Spirit insists on their *excommunication*. Till judgment they are to be together in the world; the wicked are not to be together with the righteous in the church, but to be put out.

Again, Matt. 22:10 is no less perverted to justify the evil thought of unholiness in the church; for it speaks solely of those whom the Christian call finds, indiscriminately in the servant's eyes, and not at all what grace does for the guilty when clothed with the marriage garment. A false doctrine always involves misuse of Scripture, as this to sanction "bad and good" *within the assembly*. So Matt. 24:12, Acts 20:29, 30, 2 Thess. 2, 1 Tim. 4, 2 Tim. 2, 3, 1 John 2, 2 Pet. 2, 3, Jude, prove nothing more surely than "that the dispensation would fail," if every one who names the Lord's name is really responsible to depart from iniquity. Brethren are the last to suppose "that the divine charter of the Church would be cancelled, or the Presence of Christ be withdrawn from the work of His hands" (p. 33).

All this is mistake of the question. Brethren hold the terrible growth and development of that evil which has ruined the public testimony of Christendom, but the inalienable responsibility of all that are His to depart from iniquity, according to the abiding charter of the church, and counting on Christ's unfailing presence in the midst of even two or three gathered {together} to His name {Matt. 18:20}. And the teaching of the Epistles fully corroborates this; for while grave evil manifestly did enter, holy discipline is made obligatory. Would the apostle Paul, or the church in general, have owned the assemblies in Corinth, Colosse, or Galatia, if they had rejected his authority and kept the denounced evil within? Would it have been godly to have gone on if the whole lump had been leavened? It is rebellious insubjection to the Lord's commandments that would unchurch. So with the seven Apocalyptic churches {Rev. 3, 3}: the Lord denounces terrible evils in several; but it is to have the evil judged. If they had not repented, would they have been churches of God all the same? This is the ecclesiastical corruption which Brethren deny; and to lay the ruin or cessation of churches on God's providence rather than on man's sin seems to Brethren more worthy of a professional divine than of a believer.

There is equal confusion and error as to our views of ordination and ministry in pp. 35-52. No brother denies the common application of 1 Cor. 9:1 to Paul and the twelve; and the argued parallel between the miracles, ministry, and methods of S. Paul and S. Peter in no way enfeebles the heavenly character of Paul's apostleship, which is a fact as patent as it is important. In this way only has he been regarded as typical of others since, who in an incomparably humbler way have been given of Christ as gifts for the perfecting of the saints. It is unfounded that Brethren do or ever did expect that all the ministers of Christ would have a miraculous call like his, any more than the apostle expected it. And none more than Brethren have dwelt on his appointing elders with Barnabas, or

his directions to Timothy and Titus {as apostolic delegates}. Mere elders could not thus appoint; none but an apostle or his delegate with express authority to this end {Titus 1:5}. But that neither had permanent diocesan place 2 Tim. 4:9, 21, Titus 3:12 show, besides total silence as to the continuance of such powers. They had a direct and limited commission defined during his life without a word providing for the time following his death, though he supposes this at hand in one of these very Epistles.

This may suffice to show others, if not Mr. T., how he misunderstands the scriptural truth on which our position is founded. We do not believe there is any "radical change in the church's constitution" (p. 40), but only in exterior means of government, which never were indispensable for the churches, and are recognized before they were appointed. (Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5). Elders therefore were desirable, but not essential. But we do believe, as scripture warrants, that those to whom evangelizing and teaching were committed by Christ will surely continue till the end. These are not elders, but gifts with which "exceptional arrangement" never had to do. It is all wrong therefore to talk of the elders &c. being "succeeded by another system utterly unlike it"; for the supply of gifts was before the local charges {i.e., elders}, went on with it side by side, and alone can be proved to abide.

Local charges clearly, even when apostolically appointed, are not the gifts which depend on the risen Christ, the ascended Head. Hence these abide now as then, being directly raised up by Him, like Judas and Silas, like Apollos, like Epaphras or Epaphroditus, like Trophimus or Tychicus or Archippus or Zenas. They were gifts unto the work of ministry, unto edifying of the body of Christ {Eph. 3}. We insist on Christ's guarantee of continuing such gifts till the church be complete. But local charges {elders} cannot be in due scriptural order without an apostolic authority {Titus 1:5}, which those who assert are bound to prove. If Mr. T. own the continuance of these gifts, as he appears to do in pp. 40, 41, we have no controversy on this head; but he assumes without proof that the local charge of elders abides. If he or any other can show us authority competent to appoint presbyters, Brethren would be the last to despise aught that is really of the Lord. Brethren abstain from such appointments, because confessedly none among them lays claim to any such authority. But they are unaware of its existence either in Nationalism {national churches} or in Dissent, to say nothing of the idolatrous system of Rome. If authority be asserted, it ought to be unquestionable. Imitation, however close, is unreal. If it does not even resemble the true and divine, what is its worth? The inspired record has living value, as in other ways, so in this of exposing unreal pretension. In a day of ruin it lays bare spurious authority, and it establishes the gracious provision of God for His children even then, that the simplest need not stray nor sit down in the poor consolation of accepting the lesser of two evils. There is always a holy path for the faithful.

## *Chapter 4: The Resource of the Faithful amid The Ruin of the Church*

The first step that they insist on, says. Mr. T.,

is entire separation from the Church and all other christian societies. This is of course a necessary consequence of the view they take of the state of those societies. The arguments against separation, which may be fairly urged in dealing with the members of other sects, have no place here. If universal Christendom is in a state of utter condemnation, if the fires of Divine wrath are destined shortly to consume it, separation becomes not only lawful but necessary. It is worse than useless, it is sinful to remain in a society, which lies under a Divine sentence, and accordingly the very first requisition of the Brethren is ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate.’ It is admitted, indeed, that individuals who abide in ‘the ruin’ may be saved at last; but by ‘touching the unclean thing’ they deprive themselves of the fulness of Gospel privileges, and especially of that great blessing of visible unity which Christendom at large has forfeited for ever. (pp. 43, 44.)

Does Mr. T. really think we claim to restore “visible unity”? That we are bound, ceasing from the causes and results of disunion, to insist on the true ground of unity and thus walk, is another thing, and true.

Doubtless this is said with upright intention, which indeed characterizes our author favorably, in contrast almost singular with others in their critiques; but every intelligent person among Brethren would demur to the opening phrase, “entire separation from the Church,” &c., and for the simple and sufficient reason that we regard “separation from the Church” as entirely unjustifiable. The church may surely lose its character (as at Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Rome, says Article 19. {of the Church of England}) not only in life but in faith, by departure from its distinctive principles. If there be acceptance of evil in its confession or its conduct, then separation from evil according to scripture is imperative; because its leavened condition is incompatible with its claim to be considered Christ’s witness, and hence with God’s aim, nature, will, and authority, as made known in His word, which acts and is meant to act on the conscience of the believer.

Time was when all western Christendom was Romanist: Mr. T., it is to be presumed, holds cheaply their reproach on the Anglican body of “entire separation from the Church”; nor does he want any reason from us for not joining any of “all other Christian societies.” He assumes that the Anglican establishment is “the Church,” which we deny, believing it to be at issue with God’s constitution of the Church in its headship, its ministry, and its membership. For

(1) the Sovereign’s chief government of estates ecclesiastical is inconsistent with Christ’s headship; and none can serve two masters.

(2) The ministry is doubly unsound; not only in claiming godly order and lawful consecration for its “bishops, priests, and deacons,” without and against scripture, but in rejecting the free action of the Holy Ghost in gift, which is the only true scriptural ground of Christian service, now that we have neither apostle, not apostolic vicar, to validate local charges. And

(3) as the rubric insists that every parishioner shall communicate at the least three times in the year (only excepting an open and notorious evil liver or an impenitent offender in wrong or malice), it is plain that its membership is fundamentally vicious by embracing the decent world as a whole, instead of contemplating none but those baptized by the one Spirit into the one body, believers on the Lord Jesus Christ, enjoying the like gift of the Holy Ghost as God gave at the beginning. Brethren therefore separate, from the Anglican establishment, not for its state only through abuses of various kinds, but because its *constitution*, were there no abuses, essentially differs from that of God’s church as revealed in scripture; in order to walk together, confessing their weakness and shortcoming, on the imperishable principles of His church. How faithfully carry out the church according to God’s word, without separating from what is opposed to its nature? This we seek to do.

Mr. T. allows that “with perfect truth” we point to Christ as the true center, and to the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven as the true power, of unity. Only he adds, that in so saying we but echo

the voice of universal Christendom; for no truths have obtained more general recognition than those just named (pp. 44, 45).

Would to God this were the fact! Though not a young man, nor unacquainted with all that bears the name of the Lord all over the earth, I know of no Christian society which either confesses them as the truth, or even attempts to reduce them to practice, as already shown in Chap. 3. It is an amiable but grievous misapprehension: no evidence is even essayed of what really does not exist. But having stated what is manifestly unfounded (though in good faith, as Mr. T. does not quite comprehend the matter), he immediately after shows that, in asserting too much, he in effect says nothing. For, closing one paragraph with the flourish about “the voice of universal Christendom,” he opens the next with the words “But having abandoned the divinely constituted society [by which, I suppose, he means Anglicanism now, and Romanism for many centuries before the Reformation!], in which the expression of those truths has ever been found by those who sought it (!), they are obliged to seek for their realization by a method of their own.” But this is as wholly mistaken as inconsistent. For how could there be the



disunions of Christendom, or the different denominations which men call "churches," with their manifold and even discordant tongues, in nothing more notorious than their slight of Christ as the center, and the Holy Spirit as the power, of unity, if they all uttered, and uttered truly, this one voice? And if we listen to the Anglican society alone, nothing is farther from the actual fact, nothing less before the minds of its founders, than such a practical development of these truths as is seen in the church of the Scriptures. They just wished to turn over the people *en masse* from Popery to Protestantism, and to a Protestantism of their own, different from Luther's on the one hand, and from Calvin's on the other.

So far, too, are Brethren from abandoning the divinely constituted society in which the expression of those foundation-truths of the church of God are found, that it is precisely on this they have fallen back, in ceasing to do this unscriptural thing, or in correcting that unscriptural thought. They clear themselves of every known accretion, sectarian or worldly, in order to abide faithfully in their relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ, as members of His body. They own and act on the truth of His body, the church, and nothing else; welcoming all others who give credible witness that they are His, and in the position wherein God has set each of them in the church. This, in its poor measure, is holding fast, not casting aside, the only ecclesiastical association of which God speaks, for it is on the ground of the assembly instituted by Him. Inventions ecclesiastical of man, ancient or modern, are of no account in their eyes; because they are substitutes for, rivals of, and rebels against, that which alone is of God. If we hear the scriptures, we cannot overlook the saints from Pentecost meeting in the power of the Holy Ghost round the person of Christ, and thus worshiping and holding communion with the Father, as Mr. T. describes the aim of Brethren. Nor can it be denied that, according to the Acts and Epistles, the Holy Ghost did act in the assembly as well as individually, to exalt and endear the Lord unto the glory of God, in the varied need and to the blessing of all concerned.

Thus even St. Paul was but *a* minister of *the* assembly (Col. 1): *the* minister of *an* assembly is unknown to scripture, and therefore an encroachment on God's revealed will. Disorders might enter, but scripture rebukes and corrects them, were they but an inopportune display of miraculous power. The commandment of the Lord enforces edification and order, but unquestionably on the ground of the presence and free action of the Holy Ghost in the assembly. To abandon this is to abandon the only divine constitution and the sole normal working of a church, as such, which scripture furnishes. The very aberrations at Corinth were the occasion of the fullest instruction on church matters in the New Testament. Christendom in general, and Anglicanism in particular, have not even sought to realize "the assembly" of scripture; but resorted, each sect, to notions and practices of its own. Brethren, whatever their weakness, and it is not small, own the obligation of cleaving to the assembly, while they avoid the assumption and imitation of apostolic authority.

Mr. T. states fairly on the whole (pp. 46, 47) what Brethren hold as to gifts according to the word, save that he

does not with it all connect the Lord's place whose glory the Spirit is here to make good. Hence the prominence given to His authority in 1 Cor. 14, where the exercise of gifts in the assembly is regulated. But the practical difficulty is pleaded:

who is to decide whether this or that brother possesses the requisite gift?

To an outside mind, to a theorist, the solution seems difficult, and the more if God be left out; but why doubt His gracious care in that which so nearly concerns Himself and His children? No one would conceal that questions arise here as everywhere; but God watches over those who desire to do His will; and in practice there is perhaps more loss from the backwardness of those who might help but shrink from an overstrained sense of responsibility, than trial of patience through the forwardness of the incompetent. Men of spiritual intelligence in scripture are found generally and everywhere among Brethren; and it is easier to pass before a bishop's examining chaplain than to deceive such, though they assume no authority to interdict, unless error or other evil should draw out open rebuke or even more. It is a delusion to suppose (as in p. 48) that there is in any instance for the assembly an approach to electing its own ministers for the time being. The Lord is counted on, and the Holy Spirit knows how to guide. But along with this outside the assembly we have always maintained individual responsibility in the exercise of gift; each servant being responsible to trade with the goods entrusted to him for this purpose by the Master (Matt. 25, Luke 19). In No. 3 of "Lectures on the Church of God" {by W. Kelly} there seems absolutely no ground for the imputation. The page, if not the words, should have been cited.

To worship with its central institution, the Lord's Supper on the Lord's day, Brethren have recalled the attention of Christians. Mr. T. notices this in pp. 48-50, with the discipline in 50-52 scripture enjoins to guard all; but his comment is slight. It is Matt. 18:20, rather than 16:18, (p. 53) that we point to for the Lord's guaranteed presence to two or three gathered to His name -- the highest sanction and highest favor the church enjoyed even at Pentecost. Christendom as a whole has become like "the camp" of Israel; an earthly religion for man in the flesh, which suits the world and seeks its glory, instead of boasting only in the cross, walking and worshiping in the faith of the heavenly glory of Him who was here put only to shame and death. Mr. T. (p. 54) repeats to us the old popish cavil against the Reformers: if Brethren are right as to the assembly, where are we to find a true expression of it from the apostolic age till now? He forgets that this is part of the evidence as to the ruin-state of Christendom. Had we seen any saints manifesting, in ever such feebleness but truly, God's assembly, we should have found ourselves there, instead of beginning afresh on that ground in separation from all the systems which ignored it. The argument in p. 55 drawn from ecclesiastical history is therefore quite worthless. So the scriptural argument in p. 56, founded on "elders," &c., does not even touch the question of the assembly; as any Christian ought to see from the undeniable fact that churches are fully recognized before those charges were appointed in them; no elders as yet being referred to in Rome or in Corinth, but the strongest presumption of their absence. It is the old error of confounding the church with the officials, where

there were officials, and of denying the church to be where they were not; a probably Ignatian invention at issue with scriptural truth.

But pp. 57-59 are worse, and illustrate how tradition ever tends to unbelieving views and ways. For it is boldly laid down that the regulations in 1 Cor. 14 have reference to a state of things which no longer exists. Why then should Anglicans or others habitually quote, for practical guidance, words out of this chapter from v. 1 to v. 40? It is granted at once that Mr. T.'s unbelief is logically more consistent with the routine of his system, as of the rest of Christendom. But one's heart prefers the well-meant but blundering application of these precious words of the Lord, however little they suit arrangements which essentially differ from the order and decency demanded by holy writ. Does Mr. T. question that the "order" of the assembly laid down in 1 Cor. 14 was then invariable "in all churches of the saints"? So little is that "order" founded on the miraculous endowments of tongues or miracles, as his argument assumes, that one of the objects of 1 Cor. 12-14 is to lower the overweening value set on those displays by the ostentatious brethren in Corinth, and to claim the superiority of such a gift as "prophesying," because it builds up the assembly. Power is inferior to spiritual intelligence, and the higher gifts {as prophecy} which the Corinthians slighted in their folly abide to this day for comfort, edification, and exhortation.<sup>4</sup>

The real ground of the regulations, then, is *the presence of the Spirit sent down to remain in and with us for ever*. Undoubtedly (and there we have no controversy with Mr. T., but with Irvingites or mere fanatics) tongues and other miracles ceased; and when they did, the references to them would no longer apply. But therefore to infer that the always and immeasurably more important "state of things," which turned on the presence of the Spirit and His free action in the assembly, no longer exists, is as unfounded as it is ruinous. Sign-gifts formed but part; and, however momentous for the time, being vouchers of the Holy Ghost's presence as a new and stupendous fact, are not to be compared in value with those gifts which laid the foundation and were to carry on the building of God's habitations by the Spirit. The regulations of 1 Cor. 14 implied of course the very small part of the Spirit's power which wrought in a tongue or its interpretation; but they contain the general course of the assembly, and from first to last they subordinate extraordinary powers (even when in action) to the spiritual and ordinary ways of the Holy Ghost in building up the faithful. It is the traditional school of Christendom which assumes the transitory character of 1 Cor. 14 because in it are *some* regulations of sign-gifts passed away. But this chapter regulates speaking to edification, exhortation, and comfort, which believers need at least as much now as ever; and it refers to prayer, and singing, to blessing and thanksgiving, which are surely not "a state of things passed away," any more than the assembly itself, and its responsibility to be energized of the Spirit in subjection to the commandment of the Lord.

It is Mr. T. and his friends who are therefore plainly

opposed to all sound reasoning on this head; but, what is worse, they practically treat 1 Cor. 12, 14 as a state of things dead and gone, because the extraordinary or sign gifts no longer exist. And what can be less sound than to claim that *they* truly heed the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, because they imitate the apostle or his vicar, without the commission they enjoyed, as compared with Brethren who refuse to go beyond their province, and can too easily use these very Epistles to refute traditional pretensions? If Mr. T. could show us with the least appearance of solidity persons with such true apostolic title to appoint elders or deacons, we should gladly bow; for we have not the most distant aversion to the exercise of just authority. But our faith in the word and our value for apostolic order arm us strongly against mere imitation or assumption, even if it could boast of the hoary old age of fifteen centuries, instead of the rather green one of three or four.

What is erroneously branded as our "entirely modern system" (p. 59) is the very same in substance as that in which all assemblies at the first found themselves which had not the added privilege of an apostle or apostolic delegate to choose elders for them. We frankly own the deficiency in this respect, as they no doubt did; but we refuse unscriptural methods of appointing these charges, such as Christendom has long adopted, as different from one another as from God's word. To use such methods would be a loss, not a gain.

Mr. T. admits "the undoubted truths" Brethren have enshrined in that early churchism which we find in Holy Writ, and which he unintelligently libels as a novel system. But his verbal admission that "far more discipline is needed" in Anglicanism, according to the desire of the Communion Service, does not rebut the fact of its shameless absence, especially when one of its own standards confesses the right use of ecclesiastical discipline to be one of the three marks of a true church. And the prayer in the second collect for Good Friday, or any little development of what they call lay agency (p. 90), cannot atone for their absolute annulling of the only principle and practice of the assembly known to God's word, to which Brethren, if alone, by grace adhere; though it be equally binding on all the members of Christ's body. "What! came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?" To separate from an unscriptural system is not to separate from the church (p. 60) but from that which never was the church. Neither in Anglicanism nor in Dissent was Christ ever in any real sense the one center, nor the Holy Ghost the one power, of gathering. Separation, if we find ourselves in what is false, is a necessary first step toward carrying out the true. But we need to be guided only by the word and the Spirit of God, with Christ before our eyes; for error is easy and manifold, and truth is one. All real Christians are members of the one body. Oh that they were content, judging before God themselves and all that hinders others justly, to let go the petty differences that scatter, and to hold fast Him who died to gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad!

4. {See W. Kelly's *Action of the Holy Spirit in the Assembly*.}

## *Chapter 5: Justification*

It is confessed (I.) that the truth of justification, including pardon and acceptance, is asserted by Brethren

with an emphasis and an earnestness which leaves nothing to be desired; their frank and unreserved recognition of them accounts for much of their influence on the religious life of the present day, and if in the details of their teaching on this wide subject, we find some things which we are compelled to criticize severely, their main points of agreement must never be forgotten (pp. 62, 63).

The grounds for Mr. T.'s criticism of details will perhaps appear to be his own want of light; the soundness of the doctrine on that which is of all importance for the individual soul is allowed in general by their censor, as well it might be, if it but echo scripture. In Anglicanism is any approach to this true? Are they not, like others, obscure and shallow as to God's righteousness, where they are not in error? never corresponding in their measure with the depth and accuracy of God's word? Art. 11 (of the Thirty-nine Articles) says:

We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own merits or deservings; wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.

This does not say much, if anything, for our present question; yet it were well if most Anglican preachers taught accordingly. Very different is the Tridentine {Roman Catholic} statement:

Quae enim iustitia nostra dicitur, quia per eam nobis inhaerentem iustificamur ilia eadem Dei est, quia a Deo nobis infunditur per Christi meritum.

This at least is Egyptian darkness: the bold identification of man's righteousness with God's; and the profane effort to consecrate this virtual denial of our justification on the one side, and of God's righteousness on the other, by making Christ's merit its source. It is the gospel of God's grace ignored, -- yea, apostate rejection of Christ's salvation for every one that believes, in order to set up mere naturalism under the forgery of Christ's name.

### II. "But further," (says Mr. T.)

they have done good service in bringing out into a clear, strong light, one aspect of the doctrine of justification which some previous systems had lost sight of, viz. the close connection of this great gift with the resurrection of our Lord. On this point they have been misunderstood by some of their opponents, who speak of the prominence given by them to the doctrine of the resurrection as though it involved a depreciation of the work that was done upon the Cross. The following quotations will prove that they

are in little danger of falling into error on this head; whilst at the same time they show the exact place assigned by them to the resurrection in the economy of Redemption" (pp. 63, 64).

More than one writer is cited, with the comment,

in all this there is nothing which detracts from the value or the dignity of the sacrifice offered upon the Cross. On the contrary, it is but an echo of the teaching of St. Paul," &c. (p. 65).

The fact seems to be, that Mr. T. has learned a little through reading various tracts, though not enough to form or warrant a solid and ripe judgment.

How little there is a just claim to discernment is evident from his speaking of a "remarkable resemblance" between the treatises of the Brethren on this particular point and some of the writings of the Tractarian school; though he doubts the ridiculous fable of the *British Quarterly Review* (p. 409 of the No. for Oct. 1873) that Brethren derived their doctrine of justification from Dr. Newman (p. 67). That Irvingism as well as Tractarianism protested against Evangelicalism on this head is true; and so did Brethren: but their ground was as different as the aim and the result. For the Irvingite used to get rid of all just thoughts of Christ's work, on which justification depends, by the statement that it is at-one-ment which was the true want and real blessing, not atonement in the sense of sin-bearing on the cross. And very similarly the late Bishop of Oxford used to say, that the essential difference between the Puseyite system and his father's Evangelicalism lay in the Tractarians giving to the Incarnation the value which the Evangelicals assigned to the cross. Thus these two new parties (Irvingites and Tractarians) wholly departed from the truth; for they laid the stress, not on the infinite work of redemption, where evil was divinely judged and borne away for faith, but on the Word made flesh -- the blessed manifestation of the person of the Savior. This is a grand truth, no doubt; but rather a means to the end of vindicating God in His mercy to sinners, which in no way gives effect to His grace in saving us from our sins, so as to range His righteousness on the side of justifying the believer. Incarnation was the display of living grace in Christ; but His blood-shedding made it a just thing for God to justify the believer. His law, and much more than His law, had been perfectly illustrated in His life here below; but in His vicarious and sacrificial death God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become God's righteousness in Him risen and glorified.

Hence Irvingism and Tractarianism alike keep the soul on this side of the cross, where sin was not yet dealt with; and remission of sins is a hope, rather than a possessed privilege, according to the efficacy of Christ's blood in the sight of God, and the believer knowing himself in Christ risen from the dead. Wherever that is so, there is no deliverance from law,

any more than from flesh and the world; but those so beguiled are kept still under the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto they desire to be in bondage. Every one is, at least all the baptized are, viewed as in a salvable state; and none can be regarded as truly and for ever saved -- this being the vain confidence of heretics! So, on their own showing, no papist was farther from the truth than Drs. Newman and Pusey when insisting on their Tractarianism Faith was made by them the sum of christian virtues! Hence justification by faith meant justification by the fruits of the Spirit!! Thus they coalesced with the old Pelagians and modern Quakers, with mystic and self-righteous schools of all ages; which may differ in form, but agree in making an amelioration within the real resting-place, with God's mercy in Christ a sort of make-weight for all shortcomings.

Indeed, nothing serves to put in stronger contrast their absolutely opposed doctrine, than the way in which such a case is handled as the believing robber on the cross in Luke 23. Dr. N. is, of course, obliged there to admit salvation without priest, sacrament, or works; but then he essays to guard his system by attributing the saving virtue to the faith as implicitly containing all, and having extraordinary merit in these exceptional circumstances! The truth, on the contrary, is that grace gave his awakened conscience to rest without hesitation on the Savior, the first-fruits of His suffering for sins, and the striking witness of immediate, everlasting, and complete cleansing by the blood of Christ for the paradise of God: In none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other Name under heaven that is given among men, wherein we must be saved. There is real contrast where Mr. T. fancies a "remarkable resemblance; and the Tractarian idea is as dark, as Brethren have been given to present in a clear strong light" not one aspect only, but the entire field of this truth as revealed in scripture. The Evangelical view is not false, like that of the Tractarians and Irvingites, but rather meager and shallow, being sometimes clouded by bringing in the law without warrant of God's word, to supplement the true way of justification in virtue of the death and resurrection of Christ.

This brings us to **III.**, where we are told (p. 69), that

Brethren have certainly not assigned its proper position, viz. His obedience to the law of God during His earthly life;

and that their statements are a recoil from the Puritanism of the seventeenth century, the active and passive righteousness of Christ imputed to us, as taught then and since chiefly by nonconformists. Strange to say, Mr. T., though he does not apparently adopt this system, is not unwilling to draw a shaft or two from its quiver. We certainly do not deny the fact, or the importance, of the Son of God born of woman, born under law; but the connection of these facts in scripture is, not with His obeying the law to acquire righteousness for Himself or for us, but

that He might redeem them which were under the law [Jewish believers] that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye [Galatian believers] are sons,

God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying, Abba, Father.

Jew or Gentile, all who believe have now, in virtue of redemption, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost given to us. Not only does scripture never divide Christ's work in Puritan fashion, but it never makes our Savior's fulfilment of the law "an essential qualification" for His work on the cross; His perfection as man, on the contrary, went far beyond the law, which was the measure imposed of God on fallen and sinful man. In all His life, and in every act, there was not only the perfection of man toward God, but of God in man and toward man. No believer doubts, therefore, that there never was a flaw, inwardly or outwardly; but even the mildest form in this legal school of presenting Christ's life does unwittingly dishonor to Him, who, though He came under law, glorified His Father immeasurably beyond it throughout life up to death -- the death of the cross.

2. To make of Christ's death a fulfilling of the law for us, His legal obedience, is a perversion of scripture, and most offensive to all right feeling. It was by the grace of God He tasted death for every man. He came to do God's will; taking away the first -- what the law required -- that He might establish the second; by which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Hence, instead of making law of none effect through faith, we establish law; for law never had such a vindication as when the Lord Jesus died, a victim under its curse, and the answer to all its sacrificial types. Certainly, the humblest among Brethren believe this at least as fully as the vice-principal of Chichester College, without denying the boundless grace of Christ's death, as if it were but a part of the moral law, i.e. a human duty, to the slight of the divine judgment of sin.

3. "It is perfectly clear" that the language in Rom. 3:21, and in Gal. 2:21, goes farther than is here and generally allowed. We are not at liberty to curtail an absolute statement, more especially when we have to do with inspired words. Men may plead their lack of foresight, or infirmity of expression: God's word needs no such apology. It is untrue that the apostle excludes "simply" our own legal obedience from the work of justification: in the widest way, he glories in God's righteousness apart from law, and expresses it in terms altogether unrestricted in Rom. 3.

So in Gal. 2, the apostle declares that, if righteousness came through law, then Christ died in vain. It is not giving full scope to scripture, if we limit this to our obeying the law. The apostle puts it absolutely; no interpreter is entitled to make it relative. Witness how strange and lame the plan is: first, our righteousness or justification by Christ's obeying the law for us; and *then* His death, to extricate us from wrath, because of our sins! Is there not an inversion of divine order in this imaginary scheme? How it stands in contrast with the beauty of scriptural truth! For however Christ glorified His Father (and He did so perfectly) in His life on earth, He was truly the grain of wheat which abode by itself; alone, till dying, it bore much fruit {John 12:24}. So He suffered for our sins, and

rising from the dead, gave us a place in Him, to live evermore of His life in resurrection, set free from all condemnation (Rom. 8:1-4).

Thus, not only were we justified in the power of His blood, but we have "justification of life" (Rom. 5:18); a truth unheard in the pulpit, and unknown to divinity schools. They try to drag the mind back to the days before redemption, when God had not yet condemned sin in the flesh in His own Son; not only a man in the likeness of flesh of sin, but a sacrifice for it, a sin-offering: whereas scripture brings into prominence first His death, and then His resurrection; that the believer may know himself set free from the law of sin and death by a wholly different law -- the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus {Rom. 8:2}. For indeed we died with Christ and were raised together with Him; not only He dying for us, but we dead with Him, as our very baptism attests {Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12}. Those greatly err, therefore, who would send us back with the Puritans to the legal estate before the cross, or the peace made through its blood, instead of going forward, according to the unquestionable doctrine of Paul, into the estate of Christ's risen life, and the liberty of the Spirit which is characteristic of Christianity.

Be it noticed that the establishment of law in Rom. 3:31 has not the least connection, with Christ's obeying it, as the Puritans say, to give us active righteousness. For the entire context is decisive in speaking only of Christ set forth as a propitiatory or mercy-seat through faith in His blood, and thus displaying, apart from law, God's righteousness, both in vindication of His past forbearance and in the present time; so that He might be just and might justify him that has faith in Jesus. This is a law of faith which excludes Jewish boasting or Puritan theology; for the sole establishing of law, which is here set forth to our faith, is Christ's death, without the least reference to His making out righteousness for us by obeying the law in His life. Never was law so solemnly and gloriously established, as when the divine Savior bore its curse on the cross; its authority was upheld by that which delivered from its penalty.

The use of the law made by the apostle in Rom. 5:20 is to point out that it came in beside or by the bye; that the offence, or trespass under law, might abound. It is an added matter and subordinate aim, quite distinct from the direct teaching, just before, of that one act of righteousness, or obedience of One, which alone could constitute any righteous; and, in fact, does so for the many. This incidental allusion, however, in no way warrants the modern dogma of the active righteousness, but rather pointedly omits any such idea as intended of God, turning us at once away from the special and secondary object, to dwell on the grand general triumph of grace abounding over sin; "that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Rom. 8:4, refers, not to Christ obeying the law for us, but to the righteous requirement of the law fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. It is practical

righteousness in such as live of Christ's life, to produce the fruit of righteousness which is by Him to God's glory and praise, loving God and their neighbor. But this is Pauline truth, not Puritanism. Those under grace (not law) are led to bear fruits of the Spirit: against such there is no law. "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under law but under grace." Is it possible to conceive contradiction more direct to the Catechism on the Westminster Confession.

IV. It is objected, also, that the gift of justification is held to be abiding. This is to predicate the safety not of all the baptized, but of all born of God. Every simple Christian believes that a professor may draw back to perdition. It is *not* said, that "whatever sin or failure there may be in our course, our salvation is secure": individuals may thus speak among Brethren, as elsewhere. But the warning is, that a man who does not buffet the body and lead it captive may have preached to others and be himself rejected (or a castaway) {1 Cor. 9:27}. It is clear that the objector, like the mass in his own system and others, does not hold the eternal life of the believer in any just and uninterrupted sense. Yet Scripture is plain on this momentous truth. It is natural that those who think that life -- one cannot properly call it eternal life -- may be lost and regained, should regard justifying grace as equally defectible: ideas not only unknown but opposed to scripture. The Colossian christians were not singular; yet the apostle could thank the Father who made them meet to be partakers of the saints in light, as he could tell the Hebrews that we have been sanctified through the offering of Jesus Christ once for all; yea, that by one offering He has perfected for ever -- in perpetuity, or for uninterrupted continuance -- those that are sanctified, as all real christians are {Heb. 10}.

No one doubts that, in case of sin into which anyone may fall, true self-judgment and confession, which is a virtual seeking forgiveness of his God and Father {1 John 2:1, 2}, are needful to restore the communion which has been interrupted. We reject the false thought, so destructive of "grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ," that the relationship is thereby lost; we repudiate the unbelieving way which would merge converted and unconverted in a promiscuous fashion. "Forgive us our trespasses" is a question between the children and their Father; to bring in the unconverted ruins it; and this is what Mr. T.'s system does. Thus every sense of relationship vanishes; and daily government {of the Father's discipline} is confounded with forgiveness for eternity.

It is inexact that Heb. 10:2, any more than 10, 14, speaks of the offering apart from its application to the saints. The doctrine on the contrary is, that as Christ is now seated in unbroken continuance at God's right hand, so we christians have been and are perpetually perfected by His infinitely efficacious work according to God's will. It is unbelief as dishonoring to God and detrimental to man to deny the application as it is to deny the virtue of Christ's sacrifice. The Anglican may, like the Romanist, deny the present application to the believer; as the Socinian, like other infidels, denies the

atonement value of His death. But to withhold a needed treasure comes to the same result as if there were no treasure to withhold. It is not Brethren, as some Methodist preacher said, who confound in any way the offering with its application, but dealers in tradition; who fear to trust and teach the full abiding blessedness, resulting from Christ's work to every believer.

With Christ's work the apostle sedulously binds up its application to us by faith:

And the Holy Ghost also beareth witness to us: for after He hath said . . . and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

The application is just the point in Heb. 10, as the sacrifice itself rather in Heb. 9; and he judaizes who teaches repeated purging by Christ's blood. Under the law there were repeated sacrifices, and repeated cleansings thereby; under the gospel, as there is one everlasting efficacious offering, so also one complete and enduring purgation {Heb. 10}. There is, along with this, the constant need of cleansing by the Spirit's moral use of the word "the washing of water by the word" (John 13:10); but the blood abides for the believer in unchanging virtue before God. 1 John 1:9 is the simple fact, and no question of time; else one perverts it to contradict Heb. 10, Rev. 1:5, and the scriptures in general which treat of redemption by Christ's blood.

V. The last point attacked here is Brethren's view of baptism. Mr. T. goes too far in assuming divergence from scripture. We insist on baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2); we call on those awakened, like Saul of Tarsus, to be baptized and wash away their sins, calling on the name of the Lord (Acts 22). We regard it as baptism to Christ's death (Rom. 6:12; Col. 2), burial with Him by baptism to death; as a putting on of Christ (Gal. 3); as that which, in a figure or in answering fashion, saves (1 Pet. 3). The washing of "regeneration" is quite distinct from new birth (see Matt. 19), and in Titus 3 distinguished from the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

Now we affirm by the scriptural test the Anglican doctrine is unsound. For there, as in Romanism, baptism is made the means of the new birth; whereas we are told that it is burial into Christ's death, and not a channel for the communication of life. Let Mr. T. weigh his own examples: had not the sin-convicted Jews life at Pentecost? had not Saul life before baptism? No doubt "the gift of the Spirit" was subsequent: but it is a total fallacy to confound, as they do, birth of the Spirit with the Spirit given to believers, a power and privilege beyond life. Calvin was right in denying John 3 to teach Christian or any other baptism; but this error lies at the root of all the Services, Catechism, &c. New birth is nowhere attributed to baptism in scripture. "As many as are baptized unto Jesus Christ are baptized unto his death" {Rom. 6:3} Baptism is therefore a sign of salvation by Christ's death, and in no way a means of quickening. Still less does baptism give union with Christ. "By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" {1 Cor. 12:13} -- a baptism never in scripture mixed up with water-baptism. And can one fail to see that the

apostle Paul could never say he was not sent to baptize but to preach {1 Cor. 1:17}, if their system of quickening ordinances were true? All is confusion in these traditional schemes and their advocates. Alas! faith and the word and preaching are nowhere, in order to exalt ordinances as life-giving, and the sacerdotal class supposed to be invested with their administration on our Lord's part. The apostles James (1:18) and John (1 John 5:1), Paul (1 Cor. 4:15), and Peter (1 Pet. 1:23), all expressly and exclusively connect being born again with the word of God, never with baptism; which represents not life given, but the believer's dying with Christ to sin; so that he is thenceforth (and it is initiatory) to reckon himself dead to sin. The Book of Common Prayer ignores all this; as one versed in scripture will gather from its confounding things that differ.

## Chapter 6: Sanctification

It is entirely allowed to our critic that the doctrine of sanctification is vital. If wrong there, people are wrong fundamentally, if not fatally. We do not shrink from the closest scrutiny, having only scripture to form our faith, without the bias of human formularies to warp the judgment. Here again it is conceded that Brethren's general doctrine as to the source and agent of sanctification "is that of the Church in all ages" (pp. 90, 91). "But when we proceed to enquire into their views as to the nature and working of this gift, their peculiarities begin to show themselves." Whose view is really defective and unsound will soon appear.

Thus Mr. T. wholly misunderstands the question in thinking that, according to Brethren, sanctification in any Christian application means "the mere setting apart and consecrating to God's service" (p. 92); as in sanctifying the sabbath (Gen. 2), the firstborn of Israel (Exod. 13), or the temple of Solomon (1 Chron. 7:16). No book, tract, teaching, or brother, of the least consideration, ever so reduced "sanctification" as bearing on the separation of a sinner to God. Methinks such a sense could be found by every Anglican (though not there only) much nearer home; but the notion is absolutely unknown among Brethren. Indeed, Mr. T. himself is radically in error; for in this connection he can see only "a prolonged process by which evil dispositions are cured, evil habits are broken off, and the man more and more renewed in the spirit of his mind after the image of Him that created him."

Now any intelligent reader of our writings ought to know without a shadow of doubt that we hold, as unequivocally and fully at least as himself, the practical sense of sanctification, as in 1 Thess. 4 and 5, and Heb. 12:14. Accordingly Mr. T. is compelled to own that Brethren admit the importance of sanctification in the practical and of course progressive sense, as taught in these texts; but he alleges that they "direct attention mainly to the former meaning [i.e., the absolute setting apart of the person to God], which they declare to be that most frequently employed in scripture" (p. 94); and three writers are cited in confirmation of it.

Now the fact is that Mr. T. overlooks the nature of the sanctification in principle, or absolute setting apart, of the believer to God, which all Brethren hold as that first sense, contradistinguished from practical holiness in the second place. Far from those that regard it as a form or even "an empty form," they believe "sanctification of the Spirit," to take the phrase in 1 Pet. 1:2, to be inseparable from the quickening grace of Christ, by which the soul has new and everlasting life imparted which it never possessed before. Is not this if true its most momentous sense? For, unless this be realised as a groundwork, practical holiness has no place and is an impossibility; whereas if the person is thus set apart to God by the life-giving operation of the Spirit, begotten by the

word of truth, practical holiness becomes an immediate and felt responsibility of every day, as scripture declares and experience shows abundantly. Yet it is in this primary sense that the word is for the most part, if not altogether, unknown in the language of theology. Hence Brethren are the more bound to urge it, in zeal for God's truth all but universally ignored, and therefore in love and bounden duty for the best interests of God's church.

When Old Testament usage is referred to, it is merely for the general idea of setting apart to God. But no brother conceives that in the New Testament it is an outward form, as so often in the Old. On the contrary, "sanctification of the Spirit" {1 Pet. 1:2} is by the apostle of the circumcision contrasted with the separative ordinance of a fleshly kind familiar to every Jew. Ours is inward and real, as being of the Holy Spirit; who thereby constitutes the person thus severed from the world a saint, not in name or profession only but in deed and truth having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God which liveth and abideth.

Now *this* is the fuller meaning generally attached to the term sanctification in the New Testament, which is put by Mr. T. and his Anglican friends, and Roman Catholics, and Protestants in general, "quite in the background," to say the least; whereas Brethren only, as far as I am aware, are witnesses of this great truth, having recovered it from the rubbish of ages into its just and commanding place as set out in Scripture.<sup>5</sup> So unaccustomed is our censor to the truth and depth of sanctification in its primary New Testament sense that he never realises his own misconception of the matter in dispute. But he is inexcusable in supposing that, if any sober mind contended for a mere consecration as generally used in the Old Testament, the same person could say that such a consecration involves and secures everlasting salvation. This is the inconsistency of the reasoning in pp. 95, 96, not in the least degree of those he criticises. Brethren affirm that the New Testament speaks of a primary sanctification which is complete, as in 1 Cor. 6:11, where it is no more a progressive thing than the washing or the justification mentioned before and after. Will he or any Pelagian even argue that this means our old nature getting better? Is he not compelled to own that the apostle here beyond cavil treats the Corinthian believers, not as gradually advancing in holiness, but as already sanctified in fact? Others like Dean Alford may lower it down to mere Old Testament consecration, *in direct antagonism* to Brethren's teaching that it is a real and everlasting separation to God.

We all heartily agree that every Christian is called to

5. {See the paper *Sanctification*, by W. Kelly.}

grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and that this is sanctification in the secondary sense of practical separation from evil to a fuller enjoyment of God. But we agree with Mr. T. that “the difference between their teaching and that of the rest of Christendom” in the primary sense lies far deeper than phraseology; and as he does not face the scriptures we cite, let some one else essay the task. 1 Pet. 1:2 demands full consideration on this head. The ordinary view, which maintains for the New Testament only or chiefly sanctification in the sense of progressive holiness, makes this scripture unintelligible or worse. For with such a view practical holiness would precede the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ or justification, which might suit a Romanist perhaps, but is flat contrary to all Reformed doctrine. Again, practical holiness would precede obedience, and thus expose souls *either* to fall into the substitutional notion of Christ’s obedience, which is assuredly not taught here, *or* to mere nonsense, for obedience is a large part of practical holiness instead of being its result or aim.

And Mr. T. ought to have learned, from one of the papers he cites, the hopeless difficulties into which the prevalent ignoring of sanctification in its primary New Testament sense brings even able and pious men. Take for instance Beza’s version “ad sanctificationem spiritus, per obedientiam et aspersionem sanguinis I. C.” To what was such a perversion due? Certainly not to lack of scholarship, for none of the early Protestants was a better Greek and Latin scholar than the successor to Calvin. It was owing solely to the same mischievous tradition which blots out the fundamental and primary New Testament sense of sanctification {i.e., positional sanctification}, seeing scarce anything more than the secondary progressive sense which nobody combats. It is worse even than the unmeaning Vulgate version, which makes *év* and *εís* equivalent; for Beza renders *év* *ad* and *εís* *per*! If he had known the truth to which Brethren have recalled attention, the difficulty would have vanished.

Peter tells the believing remnant of the dispersion in Asia Minor that they were elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in (or by) sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ {1 Pet. 1:2}. They would at once feel the allusion to Ex. 24 where the mediator Moses sprinkles with blood the book and the people, pledged to obey the law under the sanction of the death attested in that blood. Now it was {for the Christian} a personal election, not a national one according to the call of Jehovah, but of God revealing Himself by the blessed name of Father, in the separative power of the Holy Spirit, that it might be living reality and not an external and fleshly form; to obey as the Lord Jesus obeyed and to be sprinkled with His blood which speaks of peace made through His cross, instead of that which threatened death as the penalty of disobedience.

As Mr. T. evades the truth, though plainly set before his eyes, so he is wrong on all the doctrinal issues he specifies as involved in the primary sense of the word.

I. Rom. 6, 7, and Gal. 2, 5, with other scriptures,

exclude the law as a rule of life from sanctification in every sense.

We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?

Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law but under grace.

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ, that ye should be to another who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God.

Thus through Christ’s efficacious death are we delivered, not merely by His life communicated to us, nor by His death for our sins only, but also by our death with Him who is risen, and we in Him. It is not that the law is dead, as the Authorised Version says (Rom. 6:6), following the unfounded and dangerous misreading of the Received Text; but we, if we had been Jews even, are, as believers, discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held. The law lives to condemn the guilty, and the awakened soul submits to its killing power.

For I through the law am dead to the law (the clean opposite of a rule of life), that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ, yet I live; no longer I, but Christ liveth in me; and that life] which I now live in the flesh I live in faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me {Gal. 2:19-20}.

This is the true rule of life for the Christian. The power of sin, on the contrary, is the law, says the apostle in 1 Cor. 15:56: not because the commandment is not holy and righteous, and good, but because the material on which it acts -- the flesh -- is only evil continually. Life is not in the law, but in the Son of God; and what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and [as an offering] for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; the righteous import of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Those under the law, or that desire to be, break it by biting and devouring one another. Those who walk [in or by] the Spirit do not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law {Gal. 5:19}.

Can words more definitely negative the notion that it is our rule of life? This is Christ held up in the word brought home by the Holy Ghost. Against the fruit of the Spirit there is no law; but grace alone produces it. And bear in mind that the point discussed in this place is not justification, but practical holiness and the power that forms it.

II. It is wholly false that the truth of our primary sanctification hinders, for it immensely promotes, the pressure of growth on our souls. The converse is true, and the real danger of Christendom’s ignorance is that millions are full of words, thoughts, feelings, efforts after practical holiness, who have never been sanctified personally, but are still dead in



trespasses in {sic} sins. We must have life in Christ, and stand in our true relationship to God, before the question of a holy walk or growth in grace begins.

III. The truth of our primary {i.e., positional} sanctification by the Spirit in not the least degree renders void the solemn warnings of scripture (1 & 2 Cor., Heb. 5). Indeed these warnings pre-suppose the Christian's privilege, and we are admonished to

hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end";

to hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

Cast not away therefore your confidence which hath great recompense of reward."

We are not of them that draw back unto perdition.

Doubtless these exhortations or warnings act only on the faithful. Formalists may shudder for a moment, but pay no obedient heed; and, not being sanctified by the Spirit, their endeavors after practical holiness are only a fair show in the flesh. Godly Anglicans know this but too well.

IV. The last objection is simply a denial of what every intelligent Christian holds: the coexistence of the two natures, the old man and the new, in the believer. <sup>6</sup> It agrees indeed with the low views set forth on original sin by the Council of Trent and Popish theology in general. <sup>7</sup> But the Articles 9, 15, 16, should have taught better; not to speak of the perfect apostolic doctrine, the best of all. Ignorance of life in Christ,

as well as of redemption, lies at the bottom of this, in which all Arminians would join. May we say, if it be needed by any one that has read our writings, that we seriously object to the error expressed in the Authorised Version {KJV} of Gal. 5:17, last clause? It is untrue and unholy. We are responsible never to sin, and the Spirit is in us to give adequate power to prevent it. Verse 16 contradicts the rendering of 17: the Revised Version {of 1881} is right. The Authorised Version here naturally means an excuse for sinning, one of the consequences of non-deliverance from law, the other on the opposite side being the presumptuous thought of perfection attainable here below, into one or other of which all are apt to fall who know not the gospel by faith. From Tyndale the English versions were bad. The more do I regret that Mr. Green and the Bishop of Durham differ from Bishop Ellicott and Dean Alford in saying that *ἴνα* here seems to denote simply the *result*. Any sense here but *purpose* is as opposed to the context as to truth and holiness.

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6. {Strictly speaking, "*the old man*" refers to Adam; "*the new man*" is Christ. These two phrases are generic, hence we do not rightly say 'my old man,' when we really mean "*my old nature*." So, too, we do not rightly say 'my new man' when we mean "*my new nature*," if speaking carefully.}

7. As it will be more satisfactory to others, I extract from a zealous, competent, and learned Romanist, Dr. J. A. Möhler, his summary statement on this head.

The Council further represents justification, as a renewal of the inward man, by means whereof we become really just (L. c. c. vii.), as inherent (inherens) in the believer, and as a restoration of the primeval state of humanity. On this account, the same synod observes, that, by the act of justification, faith, hope, and charity are infused into the heart of man; and that it is only in this way he is truly united with Christ, and becomes a living member of His body (*Ib.*)

In other words, justification is considered to be sanctification (!) and forgiveness of sins, as the latter is involved in the former, and the former in the latter: it is considered an infusion of the love of God into our hearts through the Holy Spirit; and the interior state of the justified man is regarded as holy feeling, -- as a sanctified inclination of the will, -- as habitual pleasure and joy in the Divine law, -- as a decided and active disposition to fulfil the same in all the occurrences of life, -- in short, as a way of feeling which is in itself acceptable and well-pleasing to God. When God declares a man to be just and well-pleasing to Him, he really is so. (Symb. I. iii. § 13).

## *Chapter 7: the Christian's Rule of Life*

I am sure that those who, like our author (p. 119), say that our statements on this subject recall the vagaries of Antinomian heresy, can have no direct or full acquaintance with them, any more than understanding of those he criticizes now. The fatal defect in all those misguided visionaries, singular to say, is the same defect which appears no less in their legal adversaries. Neither side knew life in Christ risen from the dead as the real present life of the Christian. Both A. Burgess and R. Towne, to take those clashing combatants of the Commonwealth period as an instance, were on the same superficial ground where most pious people in and out of the National Establishment are found today; unless some are yet lower, putting their trust in saving ordinances. But most look for evidence of fruits of the Spirit to satisfy themselves that they are indeed born of Him, leading to so much internal examination as may give a hope, and often plunging the godly in fear. How different this from the blessed grace and truth in Christ, the object of faith before our souls, which by the Spirit are brought into living association with Him! Thus there is a real life imparted, and the believer is united to Christ, and looks to share the bright inheritance of glory along with Him. Even now, in virtue of this wondrous grace, God has not only forgiven us all trespasses, but quickened us together with Christ, raised us up together, and seated us in (not yet with) Him in heavenly places.

Now neither the Antinomians nor the Legalists understood these fundamental privileges of the Christian's standing in Christ, and I see no trace that they are one whit better known even by real Christians generally in our day. Hence the inability to appreciate truth on most subjects, particularly on such a question as the one before us, where Mr. T. admits "the evident desire of many of their writers to enforce a high standard of practical holiness" -- a thing never true of real Antinomians. We may here again see shortly whose doctrine and logic are most at fault.

Now it is an unguarded statement of Brethren's assertion of scriptural truth, that "by the law, they explain themselves to mean, not the whole Mosaic system, but the moral as distinguished from the ceremonial portions of it" (p. 116). Mr. T. ought to know that, in the tenth vol. of the *Collected Writings* {of J. N. Darby} of one most esteemed among them, there occur on this very point the following words, with which every brother would concur:

If I speak of *moral law* (which scripture does not) I make it by the very expression a fatal thing to be delivered from it. Yet Paul says, the Christian is delivered from the law. If I make of the law a moral law (including therein the principles of the New Testament, and all morality in heart and life), to say a Christian is delivered from it is nonsense, or utterly monstrous wickedness; certainly it is not Christianity. Conformity to the divine will, and that as obedience

to commandments, is alike the joy and the duty of the renewed mind. I say, obedience to commandments. Some are afraid of the word, as if it would weaken love and the idea of a new creation; scripture is not. Obedience, and keeping the commandments of one we love, is the proof of that love, and the delight of the new nature. Did I do all right, and not do it in obedience, I should do nothing right, because my true relationship and heart-reference to God would be left out. This is love, that we keep His commandments. We are sanctified to the obedience of Christ {1 Pet. 1:2}. Christ Himself says, The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me; but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father hath given me commandment, even so I do {John 14:30-31}. His highest act of love is His highest act of obedience.

But this it is that just makes it so mischievous to put the Christian under the law and change the scripture phraseology to another, and speak of the moral law being gone as a rule of life; and having no passage in which moral law is used, quoting Paul's statements as to 'law,' from which he says, and insists on it as one of the chief topics of his teaching, we are delivered. Not merely that we are not justified by its works (*yet we should be if the moral law were kept*, and so he declares, 'the doer of the law shall be justified'; but that we are delivered from it. A Christian is delivered from it, because it is ruinous in its effect to every fallen son of Adam. Is it morality that is ruinous, or obedience to Christ's precepts? That were a blasphemy to say, and shocking to every christian mind. But it is of law the apostle declares, what was ordained to life he found to be to death (Rom. 7). It is a ministration of death, and ministration of condemnation (2 Cor. 3:7-9). As many as are of its works -- on the principle of it -- its works are not bad ones -- are under a curse (Gal. 3:10). That is, law means, in the apostle's use of it, something else than a rule or measure of conduct. It is a principle of dealing with men which necessarily destroys and condemns them. This is the way the Spirit of God uses law in contrast with Christ; and never, in christian teaching, puts men under it, but carefully shows how they are delivered from it -- are no longer under it.

Nor does Scripture ever think of saying, You are not under the law in one way, but you are in another; you are not for justification, but you are as a rule of life. It declares you are not under law but under grace; and if you are under law, you are condemned and under a curse. It must have its own proper force and effect. Remark, it puts it as a principle contrasted with grace. But will a man say, You wrong us in saying we hold that a Christian is under law? I ask, How is that obligatory which a man is not under? --

from which he is delivered? No; the apostle carefully insists that the law is good, that it is not the fault of the law that we are condemned, if we have to say to it (but he as carefully declares we are if we have); and that in fact we are delivered from it; that if led by the Spirit, we are not under law. He uses it to express a principle, a manner of dealing on the part of God, contrasted with grace. That is the way he speaks of law. I repeat it, scripture speaks elaborately of being delivered from the law as ministering death and a curse, declaring that we are not under it. Use the term 'moral law,' and say so, and see where you bring us (Doctrinal 3:4-7.) {CW 10:3-4.}

One might have written to the same effect, but I considered that the words of an essay written solely to expound the truth, not to contradict another, would be more to the purpose, and therefore I add this extract more, to save needless argumentation:

I declare according to scripture that law must have its effect, as declared in the word of God, always necessarily upon whatever is under it; but that that effect is always, according to scripture, condemnation and death, and nothing else, upon a being who has in him a lust or a fault; that it knows no mercy, but that it pronounces a curse upon every one who does not continue in all things written in it; and that whosoever is of the works of the law is under the curse. Now in fact the Christian has sin in him as a human being, and alas! fails; and if the law applies to him, he is under the curse; for it brings a curse on every one who sins. Do I enfeeble its authority? I maintain and establish it in the fullest way. I ask, Have you to say to the law? Then you are under the curse; no escaping, no exemption. Its authority and claims must be maintained, its righteous exactions made good. Have you failed? Yes, you have. Then you are under the curse. No, you say; but I am a Christian: the law is still binding upon me, but I am not under a curse. Has not the law pronounced a curse on one who fails? Yes, you are under it; you have failed; and are not cursed after all! Its authority is not maintained; for you are under it: it has cursed you, and you are not cursed! If you had said, I *was* under it, and failed, and Christ died and bore its curse! and now, as redeemed, I am on another footing and not under law but under grace, its authority *is* maintained. But if you are put *back again* under law after Christ has died and risen again, and you are in Christ, and you fail and come under no curse, its authority is destroyed; for it pronounces a curse, and you are not cursed at all. The man who puts a Christian under law destroys the authority of the law, or puts a Christian under the curse; 'for in many things we all offend.' He fancies he establishes law but destroys its authority. He only establishes the full immutable authority of law, who declares that a Christian is not under it at all, and therefore cannot be cursed by its just and holy curse (*ibid*, 6-7).

Is it not strange that Mr. T. had this very paper under his eye, as appears from his quotation in p. 117, and yet labored

under the impression he states as to the moral law?

I. First then, how comes it that we do not find Anglicans, any more than Puritans, dilating (as the apostle does) on the death of the Christian from law, and on his deliverance so as to be under grace, not law? Brethren dwell on it, as believing in its reality and all-importance through redemption; if others do not, it is because, not understanding it, they feel not its comfort.

But it is sought to neutralize the christian's death to law by reducing it to the relations of law to man unrenewed. Of course this is common ground: all agree

- (1) that the law cannot justify a sinner;
- (2) that it cannot give life or power; and
- (3) that, far from quickening, it provokes by its prohibitions the evils in the flesh it condemns. But it is wholly false that these cases exhaust or explain the apostle's teaching.

Gal. 3:10 is said evidently to mean as many as depend on their works of justification, also Gal. 5:18, and 2:19. Here we fairly join issue. Our censor maintains that in these passages the apostle is not treating of the law as a rule of life, but of those unrenewed men who looked to the law for justification; we maintain that Scripture embraces both and sets aside all such misuse of the law. In his unconverted state Paul was once alive apart from law; when renewed he through law, died to law that he might live to God {Gal. 2:19}. So far from being in this last state, a man seeking justification by law, he is showing the great christian privilege of death with Christ as the one door of deliverance, after realizing death in his conscience as the inevitable consequence of being under law. He only when converted owned all its force in death that he might be cleared, not only from sin but from law, and live to God; he could say, I am crucified with Christ, and no longer live I, but Christ liveth in me.

This evidently goes farther than resting on Christ's blood for the remission of sins. It is a person dead with Christ and alive in Him to God, dead to law as well as to sin, but Christ living in him. Paul is explaining the principle of the life of faith right through the course, on the ground of the grace of God in deliverance from law. In Gal. 3 the apostle is avowedly correcting the Galatian error of seeking perfection in flesh by law after receiving the Spirit by the report of faith; which is enough to refute the defective view of Mr. Teulon. This he follows by citing Deut. 27. to show that law has no blessing, nothing but curse for as many as take the principle of works of law. This is not merely justification, but life; and both are by faith, not law. Even as God blessed Abraham before the law, and has now made good the promise to us, faith having come, and ourselves (even if we had been Jews) no longer under the tutelage of law (Gal. 3:23): a passage which strikes even a prejudiced mind. As to Gal. 5, it is extraordinary how any one could apply the latter half otherwise than to the exclusion of law from being our rule of life. After freedom by and in Christ the Galatian saints were

to beware of being again in a yoke of bondage. The whole thing is excluded, not only justification by law, but having it as a rule of life, to which he opposes walking in and by the Spirit as truth and power against fulfilling flesh's lust. The latter verses treat exclusively of life and walk, not under law, but under grace, as opposed to Catholicism as to evangelicalism. No one denies that one so walking can and ought to derive divine guidance from every part of the Old Testament as well as from the New Testament.

With this agrees of course all that the Epistle to the Romans says on the matter, and it is remarkably full as well as precise. Not so Mr. Teulon (p. 127), who from 1 John 3:4 says that as *ἀνομία* means disregard of law, walking in newness of life must involve the keeping of the law -- as wrong in philology as in doctrine. "Sin is lawlessness," say the Revisers correctly. Mr. Teulon reasons from transgression or disregard of the law, the old error of the Authorised Version {KJV} so fertile in mischief on this head. Lawlessness is that self will which sets God's will at nought for one's own, if one never had heard of the Ten Commandments, the open contrast with Christ who came to do, and ever, the will of God His Father, which went immeasurably beyond the law, even as the Christian's obedience should also. But necessarily the greater includes the less: and if one walks according to the Spirit as we ought, *a fortiori* is the righteous import, the *δικαίωμα*, of the law fulfilled in such a conversation. Our walk as Christians ought to be by the Spirit the suitable expression of the life we have in Christ, governed by the whole word of God.

The query in Rom. 6 is the usual objection of the flesh, that sovereign grace seems to allow living in sin. This the apostle answers, not by asserting the law as the Christian rule as if we were Jews, but by declaring that in our very baptism we died with Christ to sin, and therefore buried with Him have now to walk in newness of life {Rom. 6:4}. He argues, not from a motive, but from the blessed fact of Christ's death and resurrection in which the baptized profess to have part. But he goes on to declare that by His death we have done not only with sin, but with law and are under grace, and that sin shall not have dominion over us because we are: a solemn consideration for those whose teaching keeps them under law.

Even Mr. Teulon confesses that Rom. 7 certainly seems at first sight against his view. If he understood it duly, he would feel that the truth of Christ's death and of ours who believe with Him closes the question of law which has dominion over a man only as long as he lives {Rom. 7:1}. But the Christian as such has died, or become dead, to the law by the body of Christ, to be to another, to Him who was raised from the dead that we should bring forth fruit to God. To be under the law, when we have thus Christ risen, is in the apostolic doctrine spiritual adultery and exactly the system here commended to us, but rejected by us.

**II.** The reasoning (pp. 131-137) on man's position with God between the fall and the law of Sinai is in the usual style of hypothesis, without and against Scripture, to the total loss

of the understanding of God's ways when man was without law, and when put, as Israel alone was, under law; but wholly distinct from the gospel going out as now. And some of us know enough of the Fathers to say that they knew the truth even less than an evangelical: so that all of what is called the ancient church teaching weighs less with us than one shred of Scripture.

**III.** It is unfounded that Christ is by the apostle opposed to the law only as the ground of justification and as the source of life. Christ is the pattern Man whose example is set before us, and whose words by the Holy Spirit transform us as we behold Him on high. It is false that, because the Lord came under law, we ought to be; for even those under it (the Jewish believers) He came to redeem that they might receive sonship, as Gal. 4 carefully shows. Whereas the Galatians became sons through faith, without any such previous subjection to law, and had the Spirit of His Son sent into their hearts accordingly. The mischief for them was coming under law in any shape, ceremonial or moral, after Christ was known, the very thing which is so unintelligently urged on us. And it is an exceeding though of course unintentional derogation from the depth and height, length and breadth, of Christ's doing the will of God to lower it down to its least part, the obedience of the law. No one doubts that this is true in every Christian walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit; but we are called far beyond law every day to imitate God as dear children, to walk in love, as Christ also loved us and gave Himself for us; to endure a great fight of afflictions; and when we do well and suffer, to take it patiently. This is not law (though we do love God and our neighbor, as no doubt all believers ever did), but it is grace with God, and the path of those who follow Christ's steps.

## *Chapter 8: The Relations of the Christian to the World*

It is not correct to imply (p. 142) that the ancient separatists, and not the church, separated themselves as far as possible from the world. It is no less an error, that Brethren, even the strictest, denounce secular life generally, as though it were a service of Satan, and only allow those they can influence to practice medicine and a few handicraft trades. In their ranks have we not seen men of every degree, barristers, solicitors, bankers, manufacturers, merchants, landlords, land-agents, farmers, authors, artists, musicians, accountants, actuaries, chiefs and subordinates in the civil service, or in trade and commerce, as well as in educational work of all grades and varieties? In fact it would be hard to say where they are not found, save in the coveted places of worldly legislation, religion, and power, which must now be shared with notorious profligates, papists, revolutionaries, and infidels.

As to military and naval service, Brethren leave the question (as scripture does) to the conscience, intelligence, and devotedness of the individuals concerned. Even among Anglicans, one has rarely heard of a godly youth seeking a commission. But many an officer, naval and military, has been afterwards brought to God. Now while we deprecate all pressure, we cannot but value the grace which leads some to sacrifice their earthly interests by abandoning what true-hearted believers must feel to be unsuitable to Christ and the christian.

My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, &c.

One can understand a man in a high position of this sort hesitating as he thought of his large family, perhaps with no other provision; but it is a sorrowful fact that professional teachers of religion, established or dissenting, are generally the most forward in lulling consciences asleep, and encouraging christians to oppose the evident spirit, as well as the plain words, of scripture. Is it not ominous of coming and speedy judgment on Christendom? -- of that long-suspended sentence, "Now is the judgment of this world"? {John 12:31}.

Really Mr. T. is not acquainted with the facts on the one hand, nor does he know the principle on the other. He appears to think that Brethren will have no "intercourse with the unconverted"; which is absurdly and notoriously untrue, (as it would be in distinct opposition to the ruling of the apostle in 1 Cor. 5:10); and he evidently treats it as extreme error

that they refuse to associate themselves with others, even for religious purposes, unless they are assured that those with whom they join are, in their view, 'converted men,' &c. p. 143.

"Even for religious purposes!" why, this is just what is so serious. We have no peculiar "view" about conversion, but are quite content to abide by the adequate testimony of christians, whether churchmen or dissenters. To be associated

for religious purposes with men who are not credibly regarded as reconciled to God is as monstrous in our eyes, as that christian work should be done by christian men seems to our friend's mind. The truth is, that we know and desire no society for such purposes save the one and only one that God has formed -- His church; and even in the present scattering of its members, we would meet on no other principle than that one, which is equally open to, and, binding on all, the faithful, the one body of Christ.

Yet Mr. T. in the next paragraph (pp. 143, 144) admits, as he must, that separateness from the world is involved in the very idea of a christian; and that nothing should be undertaken which prejudices our position as members of God's household, or impairs in the least degree our loyalty to Him. But he instantly shrinks from the consequences, and demurs to the loss of secular office, and pleads for a mixed society for christian objects; he talks of "theories," but in truth it is the practical result which repels and tries him, like others.

We have seen how wrong the common notion of "the flesh" is: along with it goes no less lack of understanding as to "the world." And it is of painful interest, however instructive, to note how want of divine light as to both corresponds with ignorance of the Spirit's power and workings on the one hand, and of "the Father's" love and glory on the other; and this practically, quite as much as doctrinally. But this by the way, as being too large a theme for a passing discussion.

It is evident that Mr. T. does not believe that man as he is in his best estate, fallen man, is altogether vanity; and worse, dead in trespasses and sins. He does not believe that baptized man, at least, needs to be born of God; and he argues (pp. 145-147) as if Christendom were not swayed, like China or Japan, by the gratifications of sense, the attractions of wealth and grandeur, or the aspirations of intellect. Can he really mean that society in London, or even Chichester, has not the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, {1 John 2:16} as its ruling principle? Human society in itself is estranged from God. Christian profession does not alter this -- nothing but life in Christ by the power of the Spirit, faith working by love, which every saint is responsible to display, dead to sin and to the law, as well as crucified to the world and the world to him.

So little is our author acquainted with revealed truth, that he strives to find a plea for the world in the paradisiacal state (p. 148); whereas it is plain from scripture that the distinction of nations and tongues was due to the divine judgment on mankind which would unite in self will and independence of God, to make itself a name, and therefore was by His sentence and power broken up into nations by separating languages. And it is a dogmatic fact of the deepest import that Adam only became a father after he was fallen, and an outcast from God.

Subjection to the powers that be, and prayer for the sovereign and all in authority, in no way furnish the shadow of a proof that a christian ought to exercise worldly authority. The reasoning, in pp. 149, 152, is beside the mark: no christians now on earth so strongly urge submission to every such institution as Brethren, as Mr. T. seems to know, with readiness to suffer where they must obey God rather than man {Acts 5:29}. And this it is which has ever and chiefly provoked the enmity and scorn of the political nonconformists; and where, one grieves to ask, are they not political? Alas! are churchmen, so called, better in this respect? or are they not both running a race of rivalry for the things of the world, its influence, honors, and emoluments -- the one to keep, the other to gain, indirectly if not directly? One may point to p. 169 in proof of the low naturalism into which Mr. T., like most, is fallen.

We are therefore (!) justified in regarding Him [the world-rejected and crucified Christ!] as being in the fullest and highest sense the *Founder of modern philanthropy!* as He is also the Author and Giver of that advanced scientific knowledge (!! ) which has made philanthropic effort so much more efficient than it used to be in supplying the needs, and in alleviating the sufferings and sorrows of mankind.

Is it not an awful delusion to misrepresent the Lord of glory as if He were the Author and Giver of that scientific knowledge in modern times, of which some of the most impious infidels have been among the chief discoverers and promoters? Men who dare to say such things should have at least the wit to refrain from perverting Scripture to support their unholy assertions.

Nor is it true that the christians of the apostolic age were so exclusively of the lower orders as to yield no possible cases of declining rank and political office; or that there is anything to exclude the most unworldly brother from being in an imperial household or the treasurer (or steward) of a city (p. 153). The reasoning that follows to the end of the chapter (pp. 154-170) is even weaker than this, or founded on mere misconception of the facts. The worst of all, however, is the darkness it betrays to Christ's will and glory. To the christian, the governing consideration ought to be that which, being His pleasure, bears witness to His grace and truth, and so magnifies His name in a world which cast Him out, even to the death of the cross. It is in vain to cry up the refining and elevating influence on the world of a course which sacrifices His glory; what grief of the Holy Ghost who is here to promote it according to the will of God the Father! The philanthropy of God, according to scripture, is the last thing Brethren disparage; it is blotted out and falsified by admixture with the world, which can have no real fellowship with the cross any more than with the heavenly exaltation of Christ; as the church ought to have none with the world whose "friendship is enmity with God." To tax the christians who value high positions in the world with instinctive "selfishness or covetousness," albeit in that "flesh" which is in all, might have some semblance of truth, even if it sounded uncharitable;

to attribute it to the "theory" of Brethren, if this be the truth of God, as we are sure is a libel as bold as it is ignorant.

An extract from the fifteenth chapter (omitting the notes) of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" will afford a striking comment on this point; as it shows that what a clergyman now censures in Brethren, the skeptical historian ridicules, whilst he mingles praise, in the early church:

It is a very honorable circumstance for the morals of the early Christians, that even their faults, or rather errors, were derived from the excess of virtue. The bishops and doctors of the church, whose evidence attests, and whose authority might influence, the professions, the principles, and even the practice of their contemporaries, had studied the scriptures with less skill than devotion; and they often received in the most literal sense those rigid precepts of Christ and the apostles, to which the prudence of succeeding commentators have applied a looser and more figurative mode of interpretation. Ambitious to exalt the perfection of the gospel above the wisdom of philosophy, the zealous fathers have carried the duties of self- mortification, of purity, and of patience, to a height which it is scarcely possible to attain, and much less to preserve, in our present state of weakness and corruption. A doctrine so extraordinary and so sublime must inevitably command the veneration of the people; but it was ill calculated to obtain the suffrage of those worldly philosophers, who, in the conduct of this transitory life, consult only the feelings of nature and the interests of society.

There are two very natural propensities which we may distinguish in the most virtuous and liberal dispositions -- the love of pleasure and the love of action. If the former be refined by art and learning, improved by the charms of social intercourse, and corrected by a just regard to economy, to health, and to reputation, it is productive of the greatest part of the happiness of private life. The love of action is a principle of a much stronger and more doubtful nature. It often leads to anger, to ambition, and to revenge; but when it is guided by the sense of propriety and benevolence, it becomes the parent of every virtue; and if those virtues are accompanied with equal ability, a family, a state, or an empire may be indebted for their safety and prosperity to the undaunted courage of a single man. To the love of pleasure we may therefore ascribe most of the agreeable, to the love of action we may attribute most of the useful and respectable qualifications. The character in which both the one and the other should be united and harmonised would seem to constitute the most perfect idea of human nature. The insensible and inactive disposition, which should be supposed alike destitute of both, would be rejected by the common consent of mankind as utterly incapable of producing any happiness to the individual or any public benefit to the world. But it was not in this world that the primitive Christians were desirous of making themselves either agreeable or useful.

The acquisition of knowledge, the exercise of our

reason and fancy, and the cheerful flow of unguarded conversation, may employ the leisure of a liberal mind. Such amusements however were rejected with abhorrence, or admitted with the utmost caution, by the society of the fathers, who despised all knowledge that was not useful to salvation, and who considered all levity of speech as a criminal abuse of the gift of speech. In our present state of existence the body is so inseparably connected with the soul, that it seems to be our interest to taste with innocence and moderation the enjoyments of which that faithful companion is susceptible. Very different was the reasoning of our devout predecessors; vainly aspiring to imitate the perfection of angels, they disdained, or affected to disdain, every earthly or corporeal delight. Some of our senses indeed are necessary for our preservation, others for our subsistence, and others again for our information, and thus far it was impossible to reject the use of them. The first sensation of pleasure was marked as the first moment of their abuse. The unfeeling candidate for heaven was instructed, not only to resist the grosser allurements of the taste or smell, but even to shut his ears against the profane harmony of sounds, and to view with indifference the most finished productions of human art. Gay apparel, magnificent houses, and elegant furniture, were supposed to unite the double guilt of pride and of sensuality: a simple and mortified appearance was more suitable to the Christian, &c.

The Christians were not less averse to the business than to the pleasures of this world. The defence of our persons and property they knew not how to reconcile with the patient doctrine which enjoined an unlimited forgiveness of past injuries, and commanded them to invite the repetition of fresh insults. Their simplicity was offended by the use of oaths, by the pomp of magistracy, and by the active contention of public life; nor could their humane ignorance be convinced that it was lawful on any occasion to shed the blood of our fellow-creatures, either by the sword of justice or by that of war; even though their criminal or hostile attempts should threaten the peace and safety of the whole community. It was acknowledged that under a less perfect law the power of the Jewish constitution had been exercised, with the sanction of heaven, by inspired prophets and by anointed kings. The Christians felt and confessed that such institutions might be necessary for the present system of the world, and they cheerfully submitted to the authority of their pagan governors. But while they inculcated the maxims of passive obedience, they refused to take any active part in the civil administration or the military defence of the empire. Some indulgence might perhaps be allowed to those persons who, before their conversion, were already engaged in such violent and sanguinary occupations; but it was impossible that the Christians, without renouncing a more sacred duty, could assume the character of soldiers, of magistrates, or of princes. This indolent or even criminal disregard to the public welfare exposed them to the contempt and reproaches of the pagans, who very frequently asked,

what must be the fate of the empire, attacked on every side by the barbarians, if all mankind should adopt the pusillanimous sentiments of the new sect? To this insulting question the Christian apologists returned obscure and ambiguous answers; as they were unwilling to reveal the secret cause of their security: the expectation, that before the conversion of mankind was accomplished, war, government, the Roman Empire, and the world itself, would be no more. It may be observed, that in this instance, the situation of the first Christians coincided very happily with their religious scruples, and that their aversion to an active life contributed rather to excuse them from the service than to exclude them from the honours of the state and army.

But the human character, however it may be exalted or depressed by a temporary enthusiasm, will return by degrees to its proper and natural level, and will resume those passions that seem most adapted to its present conditions. The primitive Christians were dead to the business and pleasures of the world; but their love of action, which could never be entirely extinguished, soon revived, and found a new occupation in the government of the church. A separate society, which attacked the established religion of the empire, was obliged to adopt some form of internal policy, and to appoint a sufficient number of ministers, entrusted not only with the spiritual functions, but even with the temporal direction of the Christian commonwealth. The safety of that society, its honour, its aggrandisement, even in the most pious minds, were productive of a spirit of patriotism, such as the first of the Romans had felt for the Republic; and sometimes of a similar indifference in the use of whatever means might probably conduce to so desirable an end. The ambition of raising themselves or their friends to the honours and offices of the church was disguised by the laudable intention of devoting to the public benefit the power and consideration which, for that purpose only, it became their duty to solicit. In the exercise of their functions, &c.

The Christian religion, which addresses itself to the whole human race, must consequently collect a far greater number of proselytes from the lower than from the superior ranks of life. This innocent and natural circumstance has been improved into a very odious imputation, which seems to be less strenuously denied by the apologists than it is urged by the adversaries of the faith; that the new sect of Christians was almost entirely composed of the dregs of the populace, of peasants and slaves, the last of whom might sometimes introduce the missionaries into the rich and noble families to which they belonged. These obscure teachers (such was the charge of malice and infidelity) are as mute in public as they are loquacious and dogmatical in private. . . . As the humble faith of Christ diffused itself through the world, it was embraced by several persons who derived some consequence from the advantages of nature or fortune . . . And yet these exceptions are either too few in

number, or too recent in time, entirely to remove the imputation of ignorance and obscurity which has been so arrogantly cast on the first proselytes of Christianity. Instead of employing in our defence the fiction of later ages, it will be more prudent to convert the occasion of scandal into a subject of edification. Our serious thoughts will suggest to us, that the apostles themselves were chosen by providence among the fishermen of Galilee, and that the lower we depress the temporal condition of the first Christians, the more reason we shall find to admire their merit and success.

To fair minds the parallel will appear sufficiently evident between sceptical attacks on the early church and modern criticism of Brethren. They are both due to a similar unbelief, which slights Christ and the things unseen, and seeks at any rate to enjoy the present. When Christendom becomes infidel, judgment is at hand.

The world then is that social system which binds men together here below for pleasure or profit, ambition or utility, in real independence of God, whatever its professed religion or irreligion. It is characterized in scripture by rejecting the Son of God and ignoring the Holy Spirit. The death of Christ, instead of delivering it from Satan's thralldom, was rather that unspeakably solemn fact whereby he became its prince and the god of this age -- the present evil age. The outward recognition of Christianity has not made the world cease to be the world, but rather given occasion for its greater guilt; first, by the unbelief that corrupts the truth, and, secondly, by the more daring infidelity which is rapidly casting the truth off and apostatising from it. And what will the end be? The divine judgment of Babylon, and of the two beasts -- the world-power and the religious power: Rome is apostate and Jerusalem is apostate, in their last unholy alliance against the King of kings and the Lord of lords, when He shines forth from heaven for the sudden and irremediable destruction of themselves and their adherents. God has graciously disclosed this supreme catastrophe, in order to warn and guard His own from every current of error (more especially from all the novel expedients and experiments of the age, where man is sought, and his wisdom is trusted without God's word or Spirit), that they may the more diligently cleave to the only Lord and Saviour with full purpose of heart, cheered by the blessed promise that He is coming quickly, to receive them unto Himself; that they may be in the Father's house where He is, and accompany Him when He appears to judgment.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the world, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever {1 John 2:15-17}.

William Kelly