

Who are the Successors  
of the  
Apostolic Churches ?

By the Rev. Thos. H. Squire, D.D.



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Word of God.**

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## PREFATORY NOTE

By the late Rev. H. AUGUSTUS SQUIRE

(*First Bishop of the International Old Baptist Union.*)

It is said that *truth* needs no apology, therefore I have none to offer for what I may have to say. To end all controversy, it is hardly possible to conceive anything of more importance than that we should possess a *correct knowledge of the doctrines of Christ* in these days of perplexity and bewilderment in Theology. There can be no real unity in Christendom until the leaders of the different societies are willing to forego their own ideas and opinions, and come back to New Testament Primitive Christianity from which all, more or less, sad to say, have gone astray.

Having carefully read and compared the various passages of Scripture given in this work in support of the Doctrines of Christ and His Apostles as they existed in their purity and simplicity at the commencement of Christianity, it affords me great pleasure in writing this preface, as I consider that those *important doctrines* have been impartially handled and clearly set forth in this work which all lovers of God's truth will do well to study. Truth alone being the object of this treatise, the whole matter has been carefully gone into by the Author, without prejudice to any particular sect or party, and this is as it should be. Of course what constituted the doctrines of Christ in the Apostolic age, constitute the doctrines of Christ now, as there is no variableness with God. The principles which God enjoined upon all mankind then, as necessary to salvation, are equally binding upon mankind now, "for the word of the Lord endureth for ever." The object Christ had in view then, was the salvation of the human race, He has the same object in view now, and therefore the same simple Gospel is for "every creature." The Gospel was then, as it is now, the power of God unto salvation, and God will not give His glory unto another. The departure from the word of God is the cause of the weakness of Christendom.

When the principles of the Gospel were *first given*, God was *very particular* that *all things whatsoever He had commanded* should strictly be observed by *every creature* until the end of the world (Matt. xxviii. 20). He who changes not, is as particular to-day. We earnestly and solemnly contend, not only for all the doctrines of Christ and His Apostles, but also for the same Spirit and power that possessed them—

and accompanied their word. We need them all :—the letter, practice, life, and Spirit of the ancients.

As the Gospel message is a savour of life unto life or of death unto death to all who hear it, surely it demands a solemn and impartial investigation from everyone.

This work is not only well written, but every doctrine of Christ is thoroughly proved by Scripture from beginning to end, and it therefore should be carefully read by all lovers of truth. Christ is the Author of His own principles, and only that which comes from Him can lead men to Him ; aside from Christ we are like the moon which only shines as it is shone upon. Thus, John truly says, " He that *abideth in the doctrines of Christ*, he hath both the Father and the Son."

" The foundation of God standeth sure." " We are built upon the foundation of Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone." Therefore, let us "*hold fast* the form of sound words," and thus "*live by every word* that proceedeth from the mouth of God," and be happy in time and saved in eternity.

## CHAPTER 1.

### **Apostolical Succession.**

If we herein speak not according to the Scriptures—unwrested and un-adulterated—our assertions are not of God, and should by all means be thrust aside. There are far too many human commentaries upon, and interpretations of what the Lord has been pleased to reveal to man, and God forbid that we should endeavour, in ever so small a degree, to add to their number.

Our object is to answer the enquiry of the sincere and humble for the " old paths," and in so doing, we do not wish to deny everyone else's opinion for the purpose of establishing our own, but rather do we say from our hearts—" Let God be true, though EVERY MAN a liar." In this day of doubt and query, the question is often asked of the Christian, " Out of so many sects of the Christian religion, each professing to be the most right and Scriptural, and yet each differing—in some cases even to contradiction—more or less from others, and that not upon minor matters only, but upon most important points of doctrine, church discipline, &c.,—*which is the most pure church of Christ ?*"

Some will probably answer that certain churches can claim to be successors of the Apostolic Churches by the right of their leaders having received their offices in succession from the very Apostles themselves, and of their churches having been founded by them ; but this answer does not suffice for thoughtful Christians. Aside from the fact that this so-called " Apostolical Succession " contains too many broken and doubtful links for the chain to be considered of much value,—true Christianity is not an heir-loom which can be handed down from father to son, neither can it be bestowed from generation to generation simply by the imposition of hands. A man is not a follower of Christ because his forefathers died at the stake for their faith, but " pure religion " is a personal matter for individuals to settle between God and themselves.

In the days of the Apostles there existed Christian churches founded by them and other disciples, on the plans dictated by the Holy Spirit,

the faith and practice of which are given in the Scriptures, and we make the un-deniable assertion that the church or individual which differs most from the faith and practice of the Apostolic Churches, is furthest from being their representative, while the church that most agrees with both their faith and practice is their true successor, whether it has come down by a long line of Bishops from the first Pope of Rome, or whether its only plea for succession be its truth and purity. In the words of the prophet we say—"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." "Jesus answered and said, My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me. If any man will do His will, He shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself" (John vii. 16, 17). Christ here gives us a key to the knowledge of the true doctrine of God, "If any man will do His will." There is no need, therefore, for doubt and perplexity; comply with the conditions, do the will of God, and you "shall know of the doctrine." The disciples knew of the doctrine, and taught it. "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed" (2 John 9, 10). The believers in those days did not understand shaking hands with error, or wishing it success. "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness . . . from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim. vi. 3, 5). "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee" (1 Tim. iv. 16).

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times, some shall depart from **THE FAITH**, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. iv. 1). "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine . . . and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim. iv. 3, 4).

The Evil One who has ever been on the alert to annul the commandments of the Almighty, when by stirring up persecution against them he has failed to drive men from "the faith once delivered to the saints," has artfully led them into disobedience and unbelief by gentler methods; but, as Jesus said, "In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. xv. 9).

Let us heed the injunction of St. Paul, "There be some that trouble you and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though *we or an angel from heaven*, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. i. 7—9). What that Gospel really was it shall be our endeavour to show.

## CHAPTER II.

### The First Christian Churches.

When our Lord sent forth the Apostles with the Gospel message, and the command to teach all nations beginning at Jerusalem, He enjoined

upon them that they should teach them "to observe all things whatsoever" He had commanded them. After they were "endued with power from on high" at the day of Pentecost, the Lord permitted persecution to come upon the believers that they might fulfil His command, and it's beneficial effect was, that they "went everywhere preaching the word." In course of time, beside the church at Jerusalem, other churches were raised up, and these for many years continued steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching. It is at these—before their subsequent declension from their purity and simplicity—that we are about to look. **LET US OBSERVE THEIR CONDITION.** Were they approved and protected by the great and powerful? Were they acknowledged as Divine institutions, and their teachings universally approved and practised? By no means. They were **SMALL AND UNPOPULAR.**

The natural success or prosperity of a cause is no proof of God's favour,—indeed, judging by Scriptural and historical records, the contrary would seem to be the case. Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Brahminism, Roman Catholicism, and other false systems have progressed and prospered far more than true Christianity has ever done.

The Truth of God was never popular. If we glance at the condition of the ancient saints referred to in Heb. xi., we shall at once acknowledge this fact. "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy :) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth" (Heb. xi. 35-38).

Noah and his family stood alone with their faith in God, in the antediluvian world. Lot and his daughters were the only ones in the cities of the plain who believed God's Word and acted upon it.

Elijah and the few faithful ones in his day were in the minority, and were persecuted on account of their allegiance to the Truth of God, while the hosts of Israel were idolaters, and the prophets of Baal fed at the king's table. Thus we might continue to tell of Jeremiah, Daniel, the three Hebrew children, and many other Old Testament witnesses who chose unpopularity rather than relinquish the truth of God. But to come to New Testament times, we find that in the days of our Lord's dwelling on the earth, His followers were few and despised like their Master; and after His death and ascension, as He had foretold, it came to pass (John xv. 20):—"If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." The Apostles and followers of Jesus were scourged, imprisoned, despised, defamed, and counted "as the offscouring of all things," and often finally sealed their testimony for Christ with their lives. So it continued for years until the truth became corrupt and Satan had no more need to stir up persecution against the false Christianity that was taught by the precepts of men.

If we turn to the following passages we shall find confirmation of the smallness of the Christian churches in the Apostles' days.

"**GREET THE CHURCH THAT IS IN THEIR HOUSE**" (Rom. xvi. v).  
 "With the church that is in their house" (1 Cor. xvi. 19). "Salute the

brethren that are in Laodicea and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house" (Col. iv. 15). "To the church in thy house" (Philemon 2). How different to the progress of error and the popularity of the notions of uninspired men in all ages, are these simple records to the faithfulness of the few who met in the houses of their brethren, and contended for the faith and truth of God amidst the spiritual darkness in which they lived.

Do we need any further demonstration of the unpopularity of the truth? It can be found in the history of the Christian Faith since those days. Whenever the world approves and the multitude applauds, it is time for the sincere Christian to examine himself and his faith by the Word of God, for depend upon it, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever, therefore, will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James iv. 4).

### CHAPTER III.

#### Repentance and Faith.

The Apostolic Churches *taught Repentance from sin and from dead works*. Christ declared, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"—and the first steps in the new birth are Repentance, and faith in the atonement of Christ. True Repentance leads the penitent to God in contrition, seeking for mercy and forgiveness. The Lord Jesus Himself taught thus, and commanded His disciples to do likewise. "Repent ye and believe the Gospel" (Mark i. 15). "Joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke xv. 7-10). "For I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" (Matt. ix. 13). "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv. 47). "And they went out and preached that men should repent" (Mark vi. 12). "Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts iii. 19). "Repent and turn to God and do works meet for repentance" (Acts xxvi. 20). God "Now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts xvii. 30). "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter iii. 9).

*They taught Faith which leads to salvation through the blood of Christ.*

Jesus said, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins" (John viii. 24). "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life" (John vi. 47). "Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him, whom He hath sent" (John vi. 29). "That all men through Him might believe" (John i. 7). "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name" (John i. 12). "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name" (John xx. 31). "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. x. 39). "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ" (Gal. ii. 16). The church that does not teach Repentance and Faith, is not a successor of the Apostolic Church.

## CHAPTER IV.

**Baptism.**

*They taught and practised Baptism by immersion, for believers only.*

CHRIST SET THEM THE EXAMPLE. "Jesus was Baptized of John in Jordan" (Mark i. 9). Apart from the true meaning of *the un-translated word* "Baptism," which signifies *dipping*, it is evident that the Scriptural mode of Baptism *was by immersion*, and not either by sprinkling or pouring, from the following:—

"After these things came JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES into the land of Judæa, and there He tarried with them and BAPTIZED. And John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, *because there was much water there*, and they came and were baptized. And they came unto John, and said unto Him, Rabbi, He (Jesus) that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold, THE SAME BAPTIZETH and all men come to him" (John iii. 22, 23, 26). "JESUS MADE AND BAPTIZED more disciples than John—though Jesus Himself baptized not, but His DISCIPLES" (John iv. 1, 2).

Ananias said to Paul, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and WASH away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts xxii. 16). "And they went DOWN INTO THE WATER both Philip and the Eunuch and he baptized him" (Acts viii. 38).

We are BURIED with Him by baptism" (Rom. vi. 4). "The like figure whereunto Baptism doth also now save us (not the *putting away of the filth of the flesh*, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. iii. 21). "For as many of you as have been BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST have put on Christ" (Gal. iii. 27).

It cannot mean that the "much water" of Ænon was needed for either sprinkling or pouring, seeing that in those modes a little can be made to go a very long way. Who ever heard of *washing*, or "putting away the filth of the flesh" by sprinkling a little water upon one's brow? Either these were unmeaning figures, or they pointed to immersion. It is unnecessary to go "down into the water" to be sprinkled or have water poured upon one. How anybody can be "buried" by sprinkling or pouring, or sprinkled or poured "into Christ" are questions beyond our power to answer.

No! the word "baptism" will not bear being uniformly rendered either *sprinkling or pouring*; but in every instance where it is used it *will* admit of the substitution of its true meaning—*immersion or dipping*. Triune Baptism, or three immersions, which was afterwards practised by a back-sliding and corrupted church, was certainly not the mode of the Apostolic churches, for the Scriptures not only do not contain a single instance of its use, but much to the contrary. The likeness of Baptism to burial and resurrection (Roman vi. 4) ceases if the believer be buried three times.

God the Father is the Author of Baptism, God the Son obeyed the ordinance, and God the Holy Ghost honoured that obedience with His blessing.

"There was a man *sent from God* whose name was John." And

John said of Christ, "I knew Him not; but *He that sent me to baptize with water*, said unto me; upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost" (John i. 6, 33). "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. iii. 16, 17). This baptism was to be taught and practised upon *all believers in every nation*, and was not confined to the days of the Apostles, seeing that it was an impossibility for those whose lives were no longer than other men's, to *teach all nations*, or "preach the gospel to every creature," when millions have lived since their death.

All Christians will admit that the gospel message, given by Christ, was not for a particular time or people, but was intended to be proclaimed until the end of time, and as Baptism is part of that message, none have authority to lay it aside as useless or obsolete if they profess to believe or teach the Gospel of Christ. An un-baptized minister or member was unknown in the early churches, and an un-baptized believer in these days is slothful and disobedient to say the least of it.

The Lord Himself gave the command to His followers—"Go ye therefore and *teach all nations, baptizing them* in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). "Go ye into *all the world* and preach *the Gospel to every creature*. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 15, 16).

Some have contended that this meant that the disciples were to teach the "*baptism of the Holy Ghost*" We would ask these, whether a man can baptize—that is *immerse*—another person *with the Holy Ghost*? And do it "in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"? If they reply in the affirmative, I would ask whether they have ever performed this wonderful ceremony, and if not, how dare they be disobedient to the direct command, "go ye therefore" and do this? These human inventions to disannul the precepts of God, are a disgrace to those who use them. "Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

The disciples were obedient to their Master's command, and "went everywhere preaching the word." "Then said Peter unto them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for (unto) the remission of sins. Then they that gladly received His words were baptized" (Acts ii. 38, 41). "And they spake unto him (the jailor) the word of the Lord and to all that were in his house, and he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes and was baptized he and all his straightway" (Acts xvi. 32, 33). "And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized" (Acts xviii. 8). "But when they (the Samaritans) believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women" (Acts viii. 12). "When they (the Ephesians) heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts xix. 5). "Then answered Peter, can any man forbid water that these should not

be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts x. 47, 48).

Much more might be said upon this important subject, but space forbids. Able writers have dealt at length with the matter,\* and we recommend *honest doubters* to search the Scriptures prayerfully for themselves. The church that omits to teach believers Baptism is not a successor of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER V.

### The Laying on of Hands.

*They believed in and practised the Laying on of hands—after baptism—for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and contended for the glorious gifts of the Holy Spirit.*

*The Laying on of hands* was not a new institution even in Christ's day. That the patriarchs in earliest times laid their hands upon the heads of those they blessed, may be inferred from the account of Jacob blessing Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. xlvii. 14-17). In the typical transferring of sin to the animals about to be sacrificed under the Mosaic law—the Laying on of hands was used (Exod. xxix. 10, 15, 19; Lev. viii. 14, 18, 22; Lev. i. 4; Lev. iii. 2, 8, 13; Lev. iv. 15; Lev. xvi. 21).

In conferring office, and healing the sick, as will be shown further on, the Laying on of hands was the mode employed.

The Laying on of hands, Paul declares to be A DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, "Therefore leaving *the principles of the doctrine of Christ* . . . of the doctrine of baptisms and of laying on of hands" (Heb. vi. 1, 2). Jesus certainly practised this ordinance Himself, in both blessing little children (Matt. xix. 13), and healing the sick (Luke iv. 40, &c.) though it is not stated that He laid on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost—the cause being that "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, for Jesus was not yet glorified." It was useless to lay on hands for this purpose until after Christ's ascension to His Father to send the Comforter," and "obtain gifts for men." But that Christ taught this ordinance to His followers—probably during the forty days between His resurrection and ascension when He spoke "of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God" (Acts i. 3),—is proved beyond question to all who believe Paul's record (Heb. vi. 1, 2), and it is equally certain that this doctrine was taught and practised by the early Christians, and *honoured by God*, which would certainly not have been the case if it were not according to His mind.

One of the earliest conquests of the Gospel was made in the city of Samaria, where Philip had baptized a great number of believers, and that they might abide in all of Christ's doctrines the Apostles sent unto them Peter and John, "who when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, for as yet He was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then *laid they their hands on them* and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that *through laying on of the Apostles' hands the Holy*

\*See "The Baptism of Water; is it of heaven or of men?" by Rev. H. A. Squire. Price 6d. post free 8d., from the Old Baptist Union Book and Tract Society.

*Ghost was given* he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power that on whomsoever I lay hands he may receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts viii. 15-19) At Paul's conversion, the Lord, by a vision, spoke to Ananias, commanding him to go to Paul, "Who," said the Lord, "hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and *putting his hand on him* that he might receive his sight . . . And Ananias went his way and entered into the house, and *putting his hands on him* said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight *and be filled with the Holy Ghost*" (Acts ix. 12, 17). Paul writing to Timothy, exhorts him, "Stir up the gift of God which is in thee *by the putting on of my hands*" (2 Tim. i. 6, 14). "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee *by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*" (1 Tim. iv. 14). "The prophecies which went before on thee" (1 Tim. i. 18). The Ephesians who had believed did not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost until after they had received this ordinance. "They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had *laid his hands upon* them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied" (Acts xix. 5, 6).

This outpouring of the Holy Spirit which the believers received, imparted unto them glorious gifts and blessings. "On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God" (Acts x. 45, 46). "Now concerning Spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of Wisdom; to another the word of Knowledge, by the same Spirit; to another Faith, by the same Spirit; to another the Gifts of Healing, by the same Spirit; to another the Working of Miracles; to another Prophecy; to another Discerning of Spirits; to another divers kinds of Tongues; to another the Interpretation of Tongues: but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. And God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But *covet earnestly the best gifts*" (1 Cor. xii. 1, 4, 8, 11, 28, 31). Read also the whole of 1 Cor. xiv.

In these days, many will have it that the doctrine of the Laying on of Hands, with the accompanying gifts of the Holy Ghost, and other blessings, were only intended for Apostolical times, and consequently are not to be contended for *now*. But could we not assert upon equal grounds that the doctrines of Repentance, Faith, Baptism, &c., were also confined to those days? There is not a passage in the New Testament that can be adduced to prove that any of these truths were only meant for a certain period or people, but there is every evidence to show that the unchangeable God has given these ordinances for all believers to the end of time. "These signs shall follow *them that believe*," whoever they are, and in whatever age they live.

Does the reader ask, why—if these spiritual gifts were intended to remain in the church,—they have not been manifested more since Apos-

tological times? The question is a natural one, and easily answered. What has been the attitude of the Christian church since those days, towards these truths?

So far from obeying the command, "Wherefore brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues" (1 Cor. xiv. 39)—prophecy has been, and would be to-day, forbidden and sneered at, and the gifts of healing, miracles, and tongues, denied and contended *against* by the Christian world at large. Can we wonder then, that God's blessings which are conditional, and by no means compulsory, should have been withheld from those who have not sought, believed in, or deserved them? When Christians cease to circumscribe God, and refuse His gifts, or prevent their bestowal by unbelief and disobedience to the conditions upon which they depend, then,—and not before—will "the signs follow," and the blessings be given.

Why should we contend that God's gifts, and some of His doctrines were only for Apostolical times? Do we not *need* them now? Is not the church suffering for want of them? If they are useless, why did "God set them in the church" (1 Cor. xii. 28, 30)? Let us beware, lest in our ignorance we charge Him with folly.

The Laying on of Hands was not confined to the Apostles. Ananias (Acts ix. 17), Timothy (1 Tim. v. 22), the Elders or Presbytery (1 Tim. iv. 14), Titus (Tit. i. 5-9), and even the great Paul himself were not included in the chosen twelve, yet these laid their hands upon the heads of others, and God honoured the rite with His blessing. And after the Apostle's death the Laying on of Hands was observed. For nearly 800 years it was the universal accompaniment of Baptism, and the Waldenses, the Old Baptists, and others—have continued the practice unto the present day.

Is it not the duty of *every Christian* to lay this Christ-given foundation of "Repentance from dead works, of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of Laying on of Hands" (Heb. vi. 1, 2)? The church which does not practise the Laying on of Hands is not a successor of the Apostolical Churches.

## CHAPTER VI.

### The Lord's Supper.

*They believed in and practised the institution of Christ called the Communion or Lord's Supper.*

The Lord Jesus Himself not only instituted this ordinance, but enjoined its observance upon all His followers "And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it unto them saying, This is My body which is given for you: **THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.** Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood which is shed for you" (Luke xxii. 17-20). See also Matt. xxvi. 26-29, and Mark xiv. 22-25. The believers were careful to observe this rite after Christ's death, thus showing that they knew it was to be continued until His second coming. "And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship,

and in breaking of bread and in prayers" (Acts ii. 42).

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor. x. 16, 17). After condemning some that improperly partook of the ordinance, Paul says—"For I HAVE RECEIVED OF THE LORD that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is My body, which is broken for you: THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. After the same manner also He took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death TILL HE COME. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup" (1 Cor. xi. 23-28).

There are some who have the amazing impudence to declare this ordinance as well as others, unnecessary and unimportant. Let these remember the solemn warning of Christ,—“He that breaks one of the least of these My commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.” The church which does not practise the Lord's Supper, or that blasphemously wrests it from its Scriptural simplicity, is not a successor of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Divine Healing.

*They taught the healing of the sick by the power of God through prayer and the laying on of hands.*

Jesus commanded the seventy disciples whom He sent forth to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom—"Heal the sick" (Luke x. 9). It is also said concerning the twelve Apostles—"And He sent them to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the Gospel and healing everywhere" (Luke ix. 2, 6). "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out devils" (Matt. x. 8). Mark records the mode of healing practised by those whom Jesus sent, thus—"And they cast out many devils, and *anointed with oil* many that were sick, and healed them" (Mark vi. 13). Jesus Himself laid His hands on many sick folk and healed them. "And Jesus laid His hands on every one of them and healed them" (Luke iv. 40). "He laid His hands upon a few sick folk and healed them" (Mark vi. 5; also Mark vii. 32). The disciples, after Christ's ascension, also performed many miracles of healing by the Laying on of hands. "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul" (Acts xix. 11). "And by the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people" (Acts v. 12). "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people" (Acts vi. 8). Through Philip in Samaria, many wonders were wrought. "For unclean spirits crying with a loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed" (Acts viii. 7). "And it can be passed that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of

a bloody flux : to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and *laid his hands* on him and healed him " (Acts xxviii. 8). Paul speaks of certain *members of the church* possessing the "gift of healing" (1 Cor. xii. 9, 30), which is—with other like precious gifts—bestowed by the Holy Spirit, "to every man, severally, as He will"; and the injunction of James is—"Is any sick among you? let him call for **THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH**, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" (Jas. v. 14, 15). That the healing of the sick is a blessing for even our day, is proved by Christ's own words. He made no distinction as regards the work of preaching the Gospel or sharing its blessings, between Apostles and other believers—man alone makes such distinction to his own hurt.

In His last great command and promise, Jesus said, "And these signs shall follow **THEM THAT BELIEVE**; in My name shall **THEY** cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; **THEY SHALL LAY HANDS ON THE SICK** and they shall recover" (Mark xvi. 17, 18).

These promises have been fulfilled again and again. "The prayer of faith" has prevailed with God, and the sick have certainly been healed, even in this our day, to the confusion of sceptics and joy of the faithful. Instead of contending against such Scriptural blessings, Christians should praise God for His witnessing to the truth of His word. Doubtless,—as in everything else worth imitating—there is imposture and hypocrisy in this matter, which has hindered the faith of many; but the truth remains unaltered, that Christ has declared: "These signs shall follow," and we are witnesses to the fulfilment of His promise. The church which does not contend for Divine Healing, is not a successor of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### **Inspiration and Revelation.**

*They believed in the unchangeableness of God, and therefore contended for Divine inspiration and continual revelation.*

Of God it is truly written—"The Father of Lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas. i. 17). "The same yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8).

Since God changes not and is "no respecter of persons," why should not "holy men of God speak as they are moved by the Holy Ghost" to-day, as in old times; and have the revelation of God's mind and will in things concerning them in this their generation,—as God's servants always had both under the law and gospel, until men, by their unbelief and disregard of God's commands, shut up the heavens as braes against themselves? If men have the Spirit of God in the present age—and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9)—is there any reason why He should not "lead and guide" them into a knowledge of God's will, or inspire them to utter forth the things of God like the prophets and seers of old? As truly as the Apostolic Churches contended for revelation by the Holy Ghost, so should every believer in the present day, or else he should confess that God has changed and has recalled the blessings which he once gave to His children. Christians

seem afraid to contend for the unchangeable blessings of God, as though God had promised what He now could not or would not perform. Let us see what the Apostolic Churches believed with respect to inspiration:—"The things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God. Now, we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things of God" (1 Cor. ii. 11, 12, 13, 10). This prophetic, revealing, searching Spirit, was not only for the Apostles, but *for every believer*, as Jesus said, "He that believeth on Me as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive" (John vii. 38, 39). "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old" (Matt. xiii. 52). Modern teachers do well if they contend for the "*old*" things, but they either are not entrusted with the "*new*", or fail to bring them forth out of the treasury. "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak, and HE WILL SHOW YOU THINGS TO COME" (John xvi. 13). "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you [the Ephesian saints] the spirit of wisdom and REVELATION in the knowledge of Him" (Eph. i. 17). "Finding disciples . . . who said to Paul through the Spirit that he should not go up to Jerusalem" (Acts xxi. 4). "Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings" (1 Thes. v. 19, 20). "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14). Peter, speaking of Cornelius and those believers with him, said, "And as I began to speak the Holy Ghost fell on them AS ON US AT THE BEGINNING. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts xi. 15-17). Those who contend that the Apostles, Paul, Timothy and others, all had blessings not intended for others, will have to prove that such was the case with Cornelius and all his companions—for the same Spirit and gifts came upon them and many others, as on Peter and the twelve. There are New Testament prophets as well as Old, for Acts xiii. 1, says, "There were in the church that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers." "And the same man [Philip] had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy" (Acts xxi. 9). "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter i. 21). "But ye have an unction from the Holy One and know all things" (1 John ii. 20). "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10).

God's promise "to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call,"—as quoted by Peter at Pentecost, is not yet recalled. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God. I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on My servants and on My hand-maidens I will pour out in

those days of My Spirit and they shall prophesy" (Acts ii. 17, 18). Nevertheless, the believer has a touch-stone by which to prove all things—for "Many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many." Spiritualism is increasing under various disguises and appellations, and we need to "try the Spirits" of those who profess to speak in the Name of the Lord. God's Spirit will never utter anything that contradicts what He hath already revealed in the Scriptures:—"To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." But the church that does not contend for continual Divine Inspiration and Revelation is not a successor of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER IX.

### The Godhead.

*They believed in the Godhead consisting of three distinct persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.* They did not believe in God as a Being "without body, parts, or passions," who dwells nowhere in particular, and yet is omnipresent: a God who is Father to Himself, and Son to Himself, who came down from Heaven to earth, and yet remained in Heaven, who ascended to Himself, and sits at His own right hand, who even now lives in Heaven, and yet is with His disciples on the earth. "Who"—as popular opinion declares,—"is so great that the heavens cannot contain Him, and yet so small that He dwells in man's poor heart." Is it possible to conceive a more ridiculous and God-dishonouring idea than this? Certainly there is not a more unscriptural one, and such doctrine was never taught by the Apostles, nor believed in by the early Churches! Well might one who believed thus, confess, "This doctrine is a mystery" (Broughton's "Dictionary of all religions"), for it is in opposition to all common sense—and we will add, all spiritual sense also. The 1st Article of the Episcopalian Creed, most truly and clearly explains the Trinity thus: "And in unity of this *Godhead* there be three persons," and if this scriptural fact were simply believed without further mystification, even a child could comprehend this matter about which sages have wrangled and shaken the head in doubt and despair. Man himself is responsible for this, as for many other mysteries into which he has plunged,—the Scriptures are plain enough upon the subject.

Although there are three persons in the Godhead these acting in unity in all things ("Verily I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise" John v. 19) are known as "but one God and their name one"; although even in the Old Testament Scriptures the Trinity is unmistakably revealed. The first name of God we meet with in Genesis is plural, "In the beginning God [Hebrew, Elohim—plural] created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. i. 1); compare this with John i. 2, 3, and Heb. i. 2. The following also refer to more than one person:—"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. i. 26). "Who will go for us?" (Isa. vi. 8). "And the Lord God said, behold the man is become as one of us" (Gen. iii. 22). "My persons" and "Thy persons," are a faithful translation of the original, rendered "My presence" and "Thy presence" in Exodus xxxiii. 14, 15. "Show us what shall happen . . . that we may consider them" (Isa. xii.

21, 23). The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are also separately mentioned in the Old Testament: see Isa. xl. 13, lxiii. 14, Zech. xiii. 7, &c.

The Apostles and those taught by them certainly believed in God the Father, as being another distinct personage from Christ Jesus His Son, and the Holy Spirit which proceedeth from the Father and the Son. That Christ had a bodily form, parts, and passions, no one will deny, and He "Being the brightness of His glory, and the *express image* of His Father's Person" (Heb. i. 3), of course the Father and Son are alike in form. "Christ who is *the image* of God" (2 Cor. iv. 4). "He that seeth Me, seeth Him that sent Me" (John xii. 45). "Who being in the *form of God* thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Phil. ii. 6). "Who is *the image* of the [to mortals] invisible God, the first-born of every creature" (Col. i. 15). And yet some assert that God has no image, no body, no parts. If God have none, neither have we, for He said in the day of creation, "Let us make man in *our image* after *our likeness*" (Gen. i. 26). "So God created man *in His own image*; in the *image of God* created He him" (Gen. i. 27). "In the *likeness of God* made He man" (Gen. v. i.). "In the image of God made He man" (Gen. ix. 6). "Men which are made *after the similitude* of God" (Jas. iii. 9).

Is it possible to conceive, much more make a likeness of a Being "without body, parts, or passions?"

That God the Father and the Son are not one Person, is plainly proved from the following passages of Scripture:—Jesus was surely not addressing Himself when He exclaimed, "I thank *Thee O Father* . . . even so Father for it seemed good in *Thy sight*. All things are delivered unto Me of My Father" (Matt. xi. 25-27). "But of that day and of that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, *neither the Son but the Father*" (Mark xiii. 32). If the Father and the Son were *one person*, as many suppose, how could Christ have declared that *He knew not*, and in the same breath that *He did know*? How some people would make God a liar by their unscriptural notions! "And He said, Abba Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me; nevertheless *not what I will*, but *what Thou wilt*" (Mark xiv. 36). In these appeals it is evident that the Saviour was looking beyond Himself to His Father in Heaven. "Then said Jesus, Father forgive them" (Luke xxiii. 34). "Father into *Thy hands* I commend *My spirit*" (Luke xxiii. 46). "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John i. 14).

If Christ were God the Father, there is indeed a "mystery" here, as in other similar passages where it says that Christ Jesus was "the only begotten Son" of God. "The Son can do nothing of Himself but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth . . . For *the Father judgeth no man* but hath *committed all judgment unto the Son*. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (John v. 19-7). "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father" (John v. 45).

Here is a string of proofs to what we have declared, and in no other way can these passages be reconciled with truth. "Jesus knowing that

the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God" (John xiii. 3). "I go to the Father" (John xvi. 16). "Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father" (Rom. vi. 4). "When Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father" (1 Cor. xv. 24). "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John ii. 1). Jesus could not come or go to Himself, neither give up the kingdom to Himself, nor plead to Himself, therefore the Father and Son are Two Persons.

See also Matt. ii. 27, vii. 21, x. 32, xv. 13, xvi. 17, xviii. 10, 19, 35, xxv. 34, xx. 23, xxvi. 29; Mark i. 1; Luke i. 35, x. 22, xxii. 29, xxiv. 49; John i. 34, iii. 18, v. 25, ix. 35, x. 36, vi. 27, 37, viii. 16, 18, 27, 29, x. 15, xii. 27, 28, 50, xiii. 1-3, xiv. 6, 8, 13, 31, xv. 9, 16, xvi. 3, 15, 25, 28, 32, xvii. 1, 5, 7, 11, 24, 25; Rom. xv. 6; Gal. i. 1, 3; Eph. vi. 23; Col. i. 19; 1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Pet. i. 17; 1 John i. 3; 1 John ii. 22, 23, 24; 2 John 3; Rev. ii. 27, iii. 5; Acts viii. 37, and numerous other passages.

The Third Person in the Godhead—the Holy Spirit—although He proceedeth from the Father and the Son, is spoken of as a distinct Being, in the following:—"The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom *the Father* will send in *My* name" (John xiv. 16 26.). "But when the Comforter is come, whom *I* will send unto you *from the Father*, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of *Me*" (John xv. 26). In both of these passages *Three distinct Persons* are spoken of in a manner which can leave no doubt of Their not being One Person in the sense that many believe. The following texts also are unanswerable:—"Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him" (Matt. xii. 32). "Now God anointed Jesus of Nazareth *with the Holy Ghost* and with power" (Acts x. 38). "But Stephen *being full of the Holy Ghost*, looked up steadfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 55). If Christ and God had been in Stephen, he could not have seen Them in Heaven. "Jesus being also baptized and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from Heaven which said, Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased" (Luke iii. 21, 22). "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. xxviii. 19). See also Matt. iii. 16; John vii. 39; 1 Thess. iv. 3; Gal. iv. 6; Mark i. 10; John i. 33, iii. 34; Luke xi. 13; Acts v. 32, ii. 4, 33, xv. 8; Rom. viii. 26, 27.

In Christ's prayer (John xvii.) the mystery of the unity of the Trinity is fully explained: "That they [the believers] all may be one; *as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee*, that they also may be one in Us" (John xvii. 21). Every believer will admit that Jesus had reference here to *oneness in the faith*, in purpose, &c., and not *in Person*, when He prayed thus for His disciples to be *one*; and if this be granted, it is also clear in what manner *the Three Persons in the Godhead are One*, seeing it was in no other manner that Christ desired the unity of His followers. And further to clinch this important truth, He concludes "that they also may be *in Us*." Will anyone dare to contend that he is one with God in any other manner than by being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, and by Whom "we are all baptized

into one body?" Surely this doctrine is plain enough to end all *hnoest* doubts and questions.

God and Christ are not omnipresent in Person—such an idea is preposterous and unscriptural—but are *able* to be everywhere present, to search all things and uphold all things BY THE HOLY SPIRIT—the true representative of the Father and the Son. "Whither shall I go FROM THY SPIRIT?" (Ps. cxxxix. 7-13). "Ye are builded together for *an habitation of God THROUGH THE SPIRIT?*" (Eph. ii. 22). "Thou sendest forth THY SPIRIT, they are created; and Thou renewest the face of the earth" (Ps. civ. 30). "The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father . . . shall testify of Me" (John xv. 26).

When Christ promised, "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20), He certainly meant that He would be with them *by His Spirit*, for He had said—"If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but *if I depart* I will send Him unto you" (John xvi. 7). Again, Christ does not personally dwell in the hearts of His disciples, but He is in them by HIS SPIRIT, as 1 John iv. 13, says, "Hereby know we that we dwell in Him and He in us, because *He hath given us of His Spirit.*" "And hereby we know that He abideth in us, *by the Spirit* which He hath given us" (1 John iii. 24). "That He would grant you according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by HIS SPIRIT IN THE INNER MAN; that Christ may dwell in yours hearts *by faith*" (Eph. iii. 16, 17).

Verily, "Man has sought out many inventions" to make the Lord and His truth mysterious, and is therefore answerable for much of the scepticism which abounds, but the churches taught by the Apostles could say, we "have not so learned Christ." Those who "worship they know not what," and teach others to do so, are not successors of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER X.

### The Ministry.

*They believed in God-chosen Ministers; and these were set apart by the Laying on of Hands with prayer and fasting.*

The ministers of those early churches were not chosen by man, qualified by learning, and sent forth without proper ordination. They were men called by the Holy Ghost, qualified by His indwelling power, sanctioned by the church, and who, having been ordained according to God's order, were sent out under the Holy Spirit's direction.

"As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and *laid their hands on them* they sent them away. So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia" (Acts xiii. 2, 3, 4). "And when they had ordained them Elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord" (Acts xiv. 23). "With the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery (or Elders)" (1 Tim. iv. 14). "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every city *as I had appointed thee*: for a Bishop must be blameless as the steward of God" (Tit. i. 5, 7). "And

when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them [the Deacons]" (Acts vi. 6).

This Scriptural mode of ordination was invariably practised by the early churches.

Since the Apostles' days men have invented many offices and religious titles, which the Scripture does not sanction; such as Popes, Archbishops, Deans, Cardinals, Archdeacons, Canons; Generals and other military titles, Curates, Priests, &c. In the New Testament there is no allusion to anybody being ordained to other than two offices, namely—Bishops, Elders, or Pastors (which are the same, and signify overseers or shepherds) and Deacons, or in English—servants. Evangelist or Gospel preacher, and Teacher were rather terms expressive of the work than of office borne by the workers.

"He sent to Ephesus, and called the Elders of the Church, and when they were come to him, he said unto them . . . Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers [Bishops] to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with His own blood (Acts xx. 17, 28). "They were received of the Church, and of the Apostles and Elders" (Acts xv. 4). "The Apostles and Elders send greeting" (Act xv. 23). "Rebuke not an Elder" (1 Tim. v. 1). "Let him call for the Elders of the Church" (Jas. v. 14). "The Elder [John] unto the elect lady" (2 John 1). "The Elder unto the well beloved Gaius" (3 John 1). "The Elders which are among you I [Peter] exhort, who am also an Elder . . . Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof" (1 Pet. v. 1, 2). "If a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work" (1 Tim. iii. 1-7). "Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. Against an Elder receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses" (1 Tim. v. 17, 19). "To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi with the Bishops and Deacons" (Phil. i. 1). "Likewise must the Deacons be grave . . . and let these be also first proved, then let them use the office of a Deacon being found blameless. Let the Deacon be the husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a Deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. iii. 8, 10, 12, 13).

How is it that every Christian Church in our day does not contain its Scripturally ordained Bishops or Elders, and Deacons, as these churches did? Those which do not, are not successors of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER XI.

### The Law.

*They—whether Jews or Gentiles—were taught to consider themselves free from the Mosaic Law, through Christ Jesus.*

Of course the Law was neither given to, nor concerned the Gentiles (Rom. ii. 15), either before or since Christ's atonement; but it *did* concern the house of Israel, and as the Church of Christ began among the Jews—Christ, according to the flesh being a Jew, and the Apostles and first disciples being Jews also—the Gospel when it was preached among the

Gentiles was, naturally enough, looked upon as being more or less Jewish. Thus the Hebrew saints, not fully understanding that Christ had delivered them from the Law, sought with the Gospel to impose the Jewish Law upon the Gentile converts. But St. Paul and others knew better, and for the instruction of the believers, thoroughly thrashed the matter out, and showed that Christ, having made the Law honourable by fulfilling it, "took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross," thus for ever freeing His Jewish followers from its curse, the Gentiles having never been under it. Still, there are many, even now, who do not comprehend this, or they would not continue to pray, "Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this Law." Others persist in talking about keeping holy the Sabbath day, and yet the real Sabbath—from Friday at sundown to Saturday at the same hour—is their chief working day. But God hath not commanded those whom Christ hath made free, to observe any such law. Let us give one day out of seven specially to God's service by all means, but let us understand that only the love of Christ constraineth us so to do—we are under no law in the matter, and never have been. Sabbath-keeping was as much a part of the Jewish Law as the keeping of fasts and feasts, there being no law of a Sabbath day given, previous to the Exodus; and the sabbath was never enjoined upon Christians, whether Jew or Gentile. St. Paul says, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days" (Col. ii. 16). Sabbatarians would do well to remember that the Sabbath day law forbade even the kindling of a fire (Exod. xxxv. 3), or the making of a journey beyond a mile, even on foot, and that the penalty for breaking the law was death (Exodus xxxv. 2).

St. Peter declared that it was tempting God "to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" (Acts xv. 10). St. Paul says, "God sent forth His Són, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law" (Gal. iv. 4, 5). "For ye are NOT UNDER THE LAW, but under grace" (Rom. vi. 14). "Wherefore my brethren, ye also are become DEAD TO THE LAW by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another . . . but now we are delivered from the Law, THAT BEING DEAD wherein we were held" (Rom. vii. 4, 6). "If ye be led by the Spirit, ye are NOT UNDER LAW" (Gal. v. 18). "For there is verily a DISANNULLING of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the Law made nothing perfect" (Heb. vii. 18, 19). "Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty" (Gal. v. 13). "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men?" (Col. ii. 20, 22). "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage" (Gal. iv. 9). "For He is our peace who hath made both [Jew and Gentile] one, and hath BROKEN DOWN THE MIDDLE WALL OF PARTITION between us; having ABOLISHED in His flesh the enmity, even THE LAW of commandments contained in ordinances" (Eph. ii. 14, 15). "Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made. Wherefore THE LAW WAS OUR SCHOOLMASTER to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are NO LONGER UNDER A SCHOOLMASTER"

(Gal. iii. 19, 24, 25). "FOR CHRIST IS THE END OF THE LAW, for righteousness to everyone that believeth" (Rom. x. 4). The church which clings to the Law, is not a successor of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER XII.

### Christ's Second Advent.

*They believed in the Second Coming of our Lord, and watched for His appearing.*

The Saviour taught them thus :—" Watch therefore : for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come " (Matt. xxiv. 42). " And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you " (John xiv. 3. 18). " This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven " (Acts i. 11). " When the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith on the earth ? " (Luke xviii. 8). " Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come " (1 Cor. iv. 5). " When He shall come to be glorified in His saints and to be admired in all them that believe in that day " (2 Thess. i. 10). " Waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ " (1 Cor. i. 7). " When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory " (Col. iii. 4). " At the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints " (1 Thess. iii. 13). " Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night " (1 Thess. v. 2). " For yet a little while and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry " (Heb. x. 37). " But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night . . . looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God " (2 Peter iii. 10, 12). " Unto them that look for Him, shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation " (Heb. ix. 28) " Be ye also patient ; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh " (Jas. v. 8). " He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly : Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus " (Rev. xxii. 20). See also Jude 14, Tit. ii, 13, 1 Pet. i. 7, 1 John ii. 28, and many other passages.

It is the duty of every believer to watch, and prepare by true holiness of life for the coming of the Lord. The church which does not look, and prepare, for the Second coming of Christ, is not a successor of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### The Resurrection.

*They believed in the Resurrection of the dead—both just and unjust.*

There was firstly the rising of certain saints immediately after the resurrection of Christ. " But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept " (1 Cor. xv. 20). " And the graves were opened, and many BODIES of the saints which slept, AROSE and CAME OUT OF THE GRAVES after His resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many " (Matt. xxvii. 52, 53). But these were only the first-fruits of Christ's resurrecting power. Then there is the Resurrection of the saints at Christ's Second coming, which is called in the Apocalypse—" *The first resurrection.*" " For the Lord Himself

shall descend from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God; and **THE DEAD IN CHRIST SHALL RISE FIRST**. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17). "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by His power" (1 Cor. vi. 14). "*But every man in his own order*; Christ the first fruits; afterwards, **THEY THAT ARE CHRIST'S, AT HIS COMING**" (1 Cor. xv. 23). "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years: but *the rest of the dead lived not again* until the thousand years were finished. This is **THE FIRST RESURRECTION**. *Blessed and holy* is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such, the second death hath no power" (Rev. xx. 4, 5, 6). See Rom. viii. 11, 23; vi. 4, 5; 2 Cor. iv. 14; Philip iii. 10. Lastly there is the final Resurrection, when *all* the dead shall rise. "As in Adam *all die*, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22). Jesus said, "Marvel not at this for the hour is coming in the which **ALL** that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation" (John v. 28, 29). "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body **SHALL THEY ARISE**. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and **THE EARTH SHALL CAST OUT THE DEAD**. The earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain" (Isa. xxvi. 19, 21). "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works" (Rev. xx. 12, 13).

That the righteous will rise immortal, with a glorified body like unto Christ's, is evident from the following:—"Though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in **MY FLESH** shall I see God; Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another" (Job xix. 26, 27). "It is sown a *natural body*, it is **RAISED A SPIRITUAL BODY**. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, **WE SHALL ALSO BEAR THE IMAGE OF THE HEAVENLY**" (1 Cor. xv. 44, 49). "We know that when Christ shall appear we shall be like Him" (1 John iii. 2). "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness" (Psalm xvii. 15). "Who shall **CHANGE OUR VILE BODY**, that it may be fashioned **LIKE UNTO HIS GLORIOUS BODY**" (Philip iii. 21). This doctrine of the Resurrection was taught by Christ—John v. 25, 29; vi. 39-40; Luke xx. 35-38; Matt. xxii. 23-32; Mark xii. 25-28; Heb. vi. 2;—and proclaimed and rejoiced in by the Apostles. See Acts xxiv. 15; xvii. 18; iv. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 13-17. The church which does not believe in, and teach, the doctrine of the Resurrection, is not a successor of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### The Judgment Seat of Christ.

*They believed that all men shall appear before Christ in judgment, when the wicked will be punished, and the righteous rewarded according to their works.*

The Scriptures evidently point to more than one judgment. The first, St. Paul refers to in II. Tim. iv. 1, "The Lord Jesus Christ, who

shall judge the quick and the dead *at His appearing* and His kingdom." This agrees with with the following:—"And behold, I come quickly; and *My reward is with Me*, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. xxii. 12). "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His angels; *and then* shall He reward every man according to His works" (Matt. xvi. 27). "*Behold the Lord cometh*, with ten thousands of His saints, *to execute judgment* upon all" (Jude 14, 15). These passages distinctly state that the Lord will judge the people (then living) "*at His appearing*", but other texts like Rev. xx. 5, 7, 15, without doubt go to prove that *after the Millennium* a final judgment of those who were dead during that period will take place:—"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished . . . And when the thousand years were expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison . . . And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and another book was opened which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Believers are saved by God's grace, through faith in Christ Jesus, and obedience to all His commands; but will be rewarded for their labours in the Lord. "Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour" (1 Cor. iii. 8). "And Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldst give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints and them that fear Thy name, small and great" (Rev. xi. 18). "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. So then everyone of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. xiv. 10, 12). "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel" (Rom. ii. 16). "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10). See also Matt. xxv. 31-46; Col. iii. 24; Acts xvii. 31; Rev. xiv. 7; Heb. ix. 27; Acts xxiv. 25; Joel iii. 11-17; Isa. lxvi. 15. The church which does not believe in the Judgment is not a successor of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER XV.

### The Millennium; and our Heavenly Home.

*They believed in the literal reign of Christ on earth: and that the earth shall become the eternal home of the righteous.*

The Ancient saints looked forward with unwavering faith to the restoration and triumph of Israel, when the Messiah should come, the throne of David be eternally established, and the promise of God to Abraham be literally fulfilled—"And I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, **ALL THE LAND OF CANAAN, FOR AN EVERLASTING POSSESSION**; and I will be their God" (Gen. xvii. 8).

This period—called by us the Millennium—extending for a thousand years and commencing immediately after Christ's second advent, was foretold by nearly all the prophets. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgement and justice in **THE EARTH**. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely : and this is His name whereby He shall be called,—**THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**" (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6). "Sing and rejoice O daughter of Zion : for lo I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day and shall be my people" (Zech. ii. 10, 11). "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts ; behold I will save My people from the east country and from the west country ; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem" (Zech. viii. 7-8). The real land of Palæstine, and city of Jerusalem, are here referred to, and it is the literal seed of Jacob that will be gathered. "Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them **INTO THEIR OWN LAND** : and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children **FOR EVER** : and My servant David shall be their prince **FOR EVER** (Ezek. xxxvii. 21, 25). But the saints of God—the seed of Abraham, through walking "in the steps of His faith" (Rom. iv. 11, 12, 16)—shall also reign with Christ during that blissful Millennium and share in the blessings of Israel. "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. ii. 14). "Upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness ; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. And saviours shall come up on Mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau ; and the kingdom shall be the Lord's" (Obad. 17, 21). "For then will I turn to the people a pure language that they may all call upon the Name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent" (Zeph. iii. 9). "The Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously" (Isa. xxiv. 23). "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth" (Zech. xiv. 9, 11, 20). See also Isa. ii. 2-5 ; iv. 2-6 ; xi. 1-10 ; xii. ; xvi. 1, 5 ; xix. 18-25 ; xxv. 6-8 ; xxvi ; xxx. 18-29 ; xxxiii. 20-24 ; xxxv. ; xl. 9-11 ; xlii. ; xlix. ; liv. ; lv. ; lx. ; lxi. ; lxii ; lxv. 8-10 ; Jer. xxx. 18-22 ; xxxi. ; xxxii. 36-44 ; xxxiii. 7-16 ; l. 19-20 ; Ezek. xi. 17-20 ; xxxiv. 22-31 ; xxxvi. 8-15 ; Hag. ii. 7-9 ; Amos ix. 11-15 ; Joel. ii. 21-27 ; Zeph. iii. 11-20 ; Mic. iv. 1-7 ; Mal. iii. 1-4 ; Zech. iii. 8-10 ; vi. 12-15 ; viii. ; Hos. i. 10 ; ii. 14-23, &c.

"And the angel laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a **A THOUSAND YEARS**, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more, till **THE THOUSAND YEARS** should be fulfilled : and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them . . . And they lived and reigned with Christ **A THOUSAND YEARS**. But the rest of the dead lived not again until **THE THOUSAND YEARS** were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection ; on such the second death hath no power, but they

shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him A THOUSAND YEARS" (Rev. xx. 2-7).

After the Millennium, the righteous shall continue to reign with Christ on the earth, which after being PURIFIED AND RENEWED, shall then become their eternal home. It is strange that people will persist in looking for their heavenly home "Above the bright blue sky," when there is not a single Scriptural warrant for such a fallacy, and everything points to the earth as the eternal abode of "the nations of them which are saved." Even some who believe in the Millennium on earth, contend that at its close the righteous will ascend "Beyond the bounds of time and space," wherever that may be. "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" Search the Scriptures and see what God hath caused to be written about our "everlasting possession." "For behold I create new heavens and a new EARTH: and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be YE glad and REJOICE FOR EVER in that which I create: for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I WILL REJOICE IN JERUSALEM, and joy in my people" (Isa. lxv. 17-25). See also Isa. li. 16; and lxvi. 22. "The kingdoms of THIS WORLD are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for EVER and EVER (Rev. xi. 15). "The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall NEVER be destroyed" (Dan. ii. 44). "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace, THERE SHALL BE NO END, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom to order it and to ESTABLISH IT with judgment and justice from henceforth EVEN FOR EVER" (Isa. ix. 6, 7). "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you *from the foundation of the world*" (Matt. xxv. 34). "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the EARTH" (Matt. v. 5). "And they sang a new song, saying, Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and WE SHALL REIGN ON the earth" (Rev. v. 9-10). "Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. iii. 13). "And I saw a NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, *coming down from God, out of heaven*, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of the city; and the kings of the EARTH do bring their glory and honour into it" (Rev. xxi. 1-3, 24). "And there was given unto Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him; His dominion is AN EVERLASTING DOMINION, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom FOR EVER, EVEN FOR EVER AND EVER. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom *under the whole heaven* shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an EVER LASTING KINGDOM, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him (Dan. vii. 14, 18, 27).

These undeniable arguments need no comment. Let us not spiritualize away the *real* glories which Christ hath gone to prepare for the faithful and which He will come to bestow, when He fulfills His promise, "Where I am, there ye may be also," by reigning in triumph "before His ancients gloriously." The church which does not believe in, and teach, the literal reign of Christ on earth, is not a successor of the Apostolic Churches.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### The Question Answered.

In the Introductory Chapter, the Author stated the fact that the Church which most agrees with, and conforms to the faith and practice of the first Christian Churches is their true successor. Now, having shown what that faith and practice was, the question naturally arises,—*Does any such Church exist?* And it is that query which we propose to answer in this chapter.

THE INTERNATIONAL OLD BAPTIST UNION IS COMPOSED OF SUCH CHURCHES. The Old Baptists formerly known by various names, such as "General Baptists," "Six Principle Baptists," &c., are a continuation of the first and therefore the oldest Baptists in the world; which, as the historian, Dr. Cramp says, may be said to have originated on the day of Pentecost—a people which have stood for ages against error, and neither came from Rome, nor her children, nor her grand-children. But our plea for Apostolical Succession is based solely upon the fact that we are continuing in the very path, and abiding in the self-same truth in which Christ, the Apostles, and the early saints walked,—“The faith once for all delivered unto the saints.” The perversion of truth—more or less—by many religious systems of the present time, and their dis-similarity in doctrine and discipline to the early Christian Churches, has made us unite throughout the world for the propagation and maintenance of Apostolical truth and simplicity, hence the name “INTERNATIONAL OLD BAPTIST UNION.” Our only aim is God’s glory, our only rule of faith God’s Word, and the chief cause of the difference between ourselves and others, is our contention that God and His Word are for ever unchangeable. We maintain that what was truthful, necessary, and good in Apostolical times, is no less so to-day, and we intend to try the teachings of men by the Word of God, and only “hold fast that which is good.”

It is not vain-glory which prompts these utterances, but *God’s* glory. Would that all the Lord’s people obeyed His unadulterated truth, there would then be an end to division, unholy jealousy and strife. This happy time would begin to-day if men would stand by the Bible, and lay aside their vain traditions and God-displeasing opinions. May the light of the Holy Spirit reveal “the truth as it is in Jesus” to every honest enquirer who reads these pages,

