

BIBLE READING  
ON  
METHODISM.

REVISED.

THE METHODIST DOCTRINE IN A NUTSHELL.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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I HAVE for some time felt the necessity of a small, cheap handbook of Methodism. In preparing this little pamphlet I have tried to supply that necessity, and how well I have succeeded I leave the reader to decide. Examine carefully the passages of Scripture quoted on each point of doctrine, and you certainly will admit that the Methodist doctrine is supported by the Word of God. "With malice toward none and charity for all," I send this little book on its mission. The first edition of 3,000 copies having been sold in a short time, I bring out the second of 5,000 copies.

Fraternally yours,

C. G. SHUTT.

## BIBLE READING ON METHODISM.

KIND reader, I shall very briefly in this little pamphlet set forth our claims as Methodists, and just as charitably as I know how, having constantly in view the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. Go with me through this Methodist ship, and let us examine every timber in her with the "spirit-level" of the word of God, and see whether she is built in accordance with the divine plan. Let us read for a text or basis 2 Corinthians iv. 13: "We also believe, and therefore speak."

Yes, the Methodist ship is upon this ecclesiastical sea, and she is out to stay. She makes no pretensions toward being the ship, but then we believe she is as good as ever plunged the ocean of time. We have never tried to keep her covered up from the view of the world, but she is open for inspection, and all are invited to examine for themselves before taking passage. I guess she is all right: there is not a timber in her but what has been scraped a thousand times by ecclesiastical inspectors.

Some have an idea that because we so seldom preach doctrinal sermons we are afraid to keep our doctrine prominent before the people, lest it should not stand the test. Bless you, sir, you are mistaken; we don't consider that the ship is in any danger of sinking, therefore we don't need to be daubing and patching in every sermon we preach, as the manner of some is. But to the text. The patriarchs, prophets, and apostles believed, and therefore spake; all denominations of Christians believe, and therefore

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speaking; and "we also believe, and therefore speak." As there is plenty of room on the wide sea for all the ships that are out, we don't consider that it is our business to break down and destroy other ships, but let them sail on and get out after the perishing. I thank God that we have different denominations of Christians. The world tried one Church once, and the one Church became most terribly corrupt; and such, no doubt, would soon be the condition again if we were all blended into one. I am aware that many are crying, "*Unity, unity*; away with your confessions and creeds, and let us meet on the Bible, and all be one;" but these unity fellows don't seem to understand that *their* belief about the Bible constitutes their oral creed, and they *too* must throw down *their* creed before we can meet on the Bible. You propose to unite with them, and you will find out whether they will throw down their creed or not. You will find that the only terms of unity will be that you believe the Bible just as they believe it, and if you don't believe as they do there will be no unity. That is very much like the cat proposing unity with the mouse, which, on the cat's terms, is very agreeable to him, but not so pleasant to the mouse.

Now if the different denominations ever unite, each one must throw down his pet dogma, and all together decide what we believe the Bible to teach, and get up new rules and regulations for the new Church; and I fear that these fellows that are shouting unity so loud will be about the last to throw down their dogmas. Common sense certainly suggests that it is in order to keep cool about uniting on the Bible, throwing down creeds, etc., until they are willing to throw down their own. But I think the Bible suggests a way by which we may all be one, and still let each one remain in his own Church. The apostles told the Saviour at one time that they found one casting out devils in the

name of Christ, and they forbade him because, said they, "he followed not with us." Christ very promptly disapproved of the course of the disciples, showing that it was all right for any one to cast out devils, whether the disciples all traveled together or not. But here is the Bible plan for unity. ~~X~~Galatians iii. 26-29: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 'For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.'"

Now that kind of unity will work; if he is in Christ Jesus by faith, he is at peace with God, and that is unity and love. And lest any one should think that we are baptized into Christ by water baptism, the apostle makes that very plain in 1 Corinthians xii. 13: ~~X~~"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." ~~X~~

If it be asked what body it is that the apostle refers to in the above scripture, he will explain in Colossians i. 18: "And he is the head of the body, the Church."

Now we have it complete: we are all in this one great spiritual Church of God—all who have been baptized by the Spirit, whether you be Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, or any thing else.

I believe in the doctrine of "living and let live," and here is my hand and heart. I hail you, happy children of the living God. Have you the love of God shed abroad in your soul? Are you on your way to glory? If so, I bid you go on your way rejoicing. I hope to meet you on the eternal shore. Success to every ship on this ecclesiastical sea that is steering toward the port of peace! ~~X~~ Though sev-



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eral little schooners have shot out over this great moral sea claiming to be *the* ship, we hope those on board who are trusting too much in their ship will find out soon that their craft started out several thousand years too late to be entitled to the name, *the* ship, and instead of cruising along trying to injure or sink others, will themselves make straight for the landing, lest they be swallowed up in some great maelstrom of bigotry. It is rather amusing to hear a "landmarker" speaking of apostolic succession, and you ask him to show up his genealogy and he runs back a few years and comes to a broken link, and says: "We will skip over this, and go across the gulf and find a chain to match." Ah! that broken link rings down the centuries, sounding the death-knell of landmarkism and apostolic succession. Stop that foolishness, brethren, and listen to Paul. Titus iii. 9: ~~X~~But avoid foolish questions and genealogies." Or, if you will still contend for your genealogy, show it up. Run right back down the ages, on the same plan of Luke iii., and show up the names one after another to either one of the apostles. Until that is done the religious world will be very shy of the claims of landmarkism. But O me! it is a great day for corners, syndicates, and monopolies. Some have a corner on oil, some a corner on coffee, and they are trying to get a corner on every article of merchandise, and I am not surprised that some try to get a monopoly on heaven; but the principle of the whole affair is hatched out from the nest-egg of the devil, under the mudsills of perdition. Beware of corners. You need not trouble yourself a minute about where to find the Church of God. God's Church is a spiritual Church, and wherever you find a spiritual Church it is the Church of God, it doesn't matter what the name is. Then, my brother, if you want to join God's true Church, don't join that old dead thing that sits around talking genealogies and apostolic suc-

cession, and never has any revivals of its own, but depends on being kept up by gathering in the converts from revivals held by others. If you were to get into such a thing as that, you would die; so be sure to select a spiritual Church.

Let us settle that little quibble about being baptized or not baptized as Paul did the doctrine of circumcision. Philippians iii. 3: "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

Just substitute baptism for circumcision for modern times. Take Romans ii. 28 and 29, and substitute Christian for Jew and baptism for circumcision, and it will fit.

But let us examine this Methodist ship, and see whether she can stand the storm. "We believe, and therefore speak," and preach, and publish to the world what we believe. Our doctrines are set forth in a little book called the Discipline (a very good little book). It only costs twenty-five cents. Published by the Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, Nashville, Tenn. If you have not a copy, you should get one. Don't set up a howl about a creed. Every thing under heaven claiming to be a Church has a creed, and you can't have a Church without a creed, either oral or written. We prefer to have ours written, but have no quarrel to make with any one about his oral creed, as he has as much right to that as we have to ours. As to our name, *Methodist*, that was saddled upon us, and we just carried it along without kicking, and we are contented with it, as we had to have some name to distinguish us from others. But if it can be shown from the Bible where the children of God are commanded to call themselves by any certain name, we will set up a howl that will roll around the globe, and kick, pitch, paw, and scrape, and get the old name off if we can. But, by the way, our neighbors, the Campbellites, have proved to us that trying to kick off a

name that the world gives is a slow business, for they have been kicking for one-half a century with no success whatever, and the name has now become fixed, having gone into histories and cyclopedias, and if the sect should last until Gabriel blows the trumpet, just so long (judging the future by the past) will our good brethren be called Campbellites.

I said we would prove our doctrine by the word of God, so "to the law and to the testimony."

#### DEPRAVITY.

First, we believe in the doctrine of total depravity; and this is a very important doctrine too, for we must first convince a man that he is sick before he will send for a physician. We do not mean by the doctrine of total depravity that man is so wicked that he cannot get any worse, but we mean that he is depraved throughout his whole nature. To illustrate: Suppose we take a glass of water and pour poison into it. There is no particle of the water that is not poisoned, but not so badly poisoned that it cannot be more so. If man is not totally depraved there must be a part of his nature that is pure and innocent, and that part would need no redemption, and that is very absurd. But let the Word speak:

Psalm li. 5: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Psalm lvi. 3: "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."

Ephesians ii. 3: "Among whom also we had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

Romans v. 12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."



Genesis viii. 21: "For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

Isaiah i. 6: "From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores."

Romans iii. 10-17: "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known."

O my! what a dark picture! and it is one of a depraved, unregenerated heart. If the devil does not get such a crowd as the one described above, there is no use to have a devil. I could quote many other scriptures bearing on this subject, but enough. These make it too plain for controversy.

In the last scriptures quoted the apostle is truly showing up men in their original, unregenerated state, for he states in verse seventeen: "And the way of peace have they not known." These fellows described here in Romans iii. 10-17 have never been along the "way of peace;" therefore they are men in their original state. See also Romans v. 18, 19; 1 Corinthians xv. 22. But then it is no use to go farther on this line. I appeal to your own consciousness, and it answers in thunder tones: "Man is totally depraved."

It is ridiculous to see a batch of old sinners with hearts "chuck" full of sin trying to argue depravity out of the Bible. Ah! it is there, and to your original stock you have added actual transgression until it has become a mountain.

Yes, the human heart is a dark place, but, thank God, if we will repent of our sins and trust in Jesus he will turn on the light! O may it now shine like a million suns in your soul, while a bow of promise stands out in splendor!

Isaiah i. 18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

#### SPIRITUAL BIRTH.

Second, we believe in the doctrine of the new birth, spiritual birth.

John iii. 3: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Titus iii. 5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

1 Peter i. 23: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

Some may say: "This being born of God is so mysterious that I cannot understand it." I will admit that it is a mystery, but nevertheless true. Jesus Christ himself, in his conversation with Nicodemus, uses a figure in John iii. 8, which, I suppose, comes as near explaining as it could be explained: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

There is no man so foolish as to deny the power of the wind, though he may not understand all the workings about it.\* Who can doubt the power of the Spirit of God, how he enters the secret chambers of the hearts of men, cutting like a two-edged sword? Ah! sinners, that same

power that made you tremble and quake, and showed you that you were a miserable wretch, poor, blind, and naked, can fill your heart with joy and gladness and peace, and open your eyes that you may read your title clear, and clothe you with a robe of righteousness, and that is what we mean by being born again or getting religion.

When the Spirit of God gets close after a man and is driving the word home to his heart, it is apt to make a fellow move in some way. To illustrate: I heard of a man once who attended Church, and the preacher preached on a man's duty to his neighbor. This man had not been treating his neighbors as a man should, and the truth began to dig about his heart, and he felt awful mean, and it seemed that the preacher was very personal and aiming right at him, and the man got on a big mad and went home and told his wife that his neighbors had been talking about him, and he was satisfied of it from what the preacher had told him about mistreating his neighbors. But the man thought he could stand another dose, so he went back to church the next night, and the preacher preached on a man's duty to his family. Again the Spirit got after him and showed him up in his true light, and the man got on another big mad. This time he was sure he had found out who his accuser was, and he came back and told his wife: "I have found out now who has been talking about me: it is you, and no one else, for that preacher told me things to-night about myself that I am sure no one else knows but you." His wife assured him she had never told any one about his case, so he went back to church again next night. This time he slipped in and hid behind the door, so he was sure the preacher knew not of his whereabouts. The minister went on with his discourse, and had occasion to say something about sinners hiding themselves from the presence of the Lord, and finally, with tremendous emphasis, cried out:

*"Sinner, come from your hiding-place."* The man hurried from behind the door, and cried out: *"Here I am. I see there is no use to hide."* It was God's Spirit that was after the man, though he thought the preacher was very personal, as did the man that was the only auditor at church, and the preacher took for his text, *"Thou art the man."* When he came back from church he said the only objection he had to the sermon was that it was too personal. But, sinner, we must be personal: God means you.

John iii. 7: *"Ye must be born again."* If we can just get men's hearts right, there is no doubt but their lives will be right.

Proverbs iv. 23: *"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."*

#### REPENTANCE.

Third, we believe strongly in the doctrine of repentance.

Luke xiii. 3: *"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."*

And what we mean by repentance is a complete revolution of the life. If a man says he has repented, we shall expect him to have broken off from his former sins—sorry enough for sin to break off from it forever. Not only so, but God requires restitution to be made—that is, that a man undo, so far as in him lies, all the sins that he has ever committed. This doctrine of restitution seems to be clearly taught in the Bible.

As Zacheus entered the kingdom he said: *"The half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold."*

Jacob treated Esau very badly, but his conscience smote him, no doubt, and he comes back to make restitution, bringing two hundred and twenty goats, two hundred

and twenty sheep, sixty camels, and fifty head of other cattle.

There are many low-down scamps in this country that have committed the sin spoken of in Exodus xxii. 16, 17: "And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her, he shall surely endow her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins."

There are hundreds of just such miserable, leperous scums of society that have been guilty of the foregoing sin, and have gone out bragging about the meanness they have done. Such contemptible scoundrels, instead of being called "society fellows," ought to be clothed with sack-cloth, and the words of eternal shame branded with fire upon their dirty lips until they make restitution for their wrongs.

As one of the means of repentance is ardently looking to God through faith and prayer, we believe in a man calling upon God for mercy, whatever his condition may be. Of course we do not believe that his prayers will save him: it is Jesus that saves. But if God hears him, let him pray. What says the word?

Acts x. 4: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."

Mark you, his prayers went up for a memorial before God, and yet he had not been baptized and received into the Church. And if the prayers of Cornelius went up for a memorial before God, why not the prayers of any other sinner? If Christ would hear the prayers of the thief on the cross, and promise him a place with him in paradise, why not hear the prayers of any penitent sinner?

But to the testimony. In Joel ii. 32 it is prophesied: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon

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 11-2-21  
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the name of the Lord shall be delivered." And we find the above prophecy fulfilled in Acts ii. 21: "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

"Whosoever" certainly makes it broad enough. He needs no mediator of man or water, but looking right up by an eye of faith he goes direct to head-quarters and claims salvation. Again, Romans x. 13: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." See also Psalm li. 1, 2.

Who art thou, then, O man, that would ridicule the idea of a penitent sinner calling upon God? Some object to the altar or the mourner's bench, and that, too, right in the face of the fact that Jesus says in Matthew v. 4: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

I should hate to object to any thing that God does not object to. God has honored the altar by his presence, by converting souls there, hence I will never object to a means that the Lord blesses. But why so much objection to the altar? If some of these little fellows that are around claiming to have a patent right on conversion and sneering at altar exercise, crying "dirt and straw crowd," etc., would go straight to a throne of grace and the hearts of the people, and let people get religion wherever they please, they would stand a better chance in the end to hear the Master say: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Sinners, thousands upon thousands of holy men and women will stand up to-day and testify that they were converted at the altar.

Where heaven came down the soul to greet,  
And glory crowned the mercy-seat.

Don't object to the altar.

## JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

Fourth, we believe in the doctrine of justification by faith only. We mean by that that faith is the only thing absolutely necessary on the part of any individual to his salvation. He may have every thing else and have not faith, and he is very far from salvation. While he may come stripped of every thing else but faith in Jesus, and through faith in him he enters the kingdom of heaven. But to the word. We want to weigh every item in the balance of God's eternal truth.

Romans v. 1: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." And that is getting religion, making peace with God. Romans iii. 28: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

John iii. 15: "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

John vi. 47: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

Acts xvi. 31: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Acts x. 43: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

It will be noticed that Jesus after healing any one diseased, or forgiving them, would tell them it was their faith that saved them, and never alluded to any thing else as cutting any figure in their salvation. See Luke vii. 50: "And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Matthew ix. 22: "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Mark x. 52: "And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight."

It is objected by some that it is assuming too much to say

that a man is justified by faith only; that baptism must cut some figure in a man's salvation, and is one of the steps to justification.

Well, I have given you the word of God. Just take it at what it is worth. If it knocks anybody's dogma in the head, let it knock. There is one thing certain, if baptism is a step to justification, Paul jumped over that step in preaching to the Corinthians, and left them in their sins and thanked God for it. 1 Corinthians i. 14-17: "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel."

Now candidly, my brother, you who believe in baptizing for the remission of sins, don't you know that you and Paul differ? If baptism were absolutely necessary to salvation, Paul would certainly have preached it with emphasis.

Another objector will say that works must have something to do with a man's justification, and will quote James ii. 21: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?"

Some may think that this seems to contradict the other passages quoted, but not at all. We have only to notice in what sense Abraham was justified by works, for this certainly does not mean justification from past sins, for Abraham was justified a long time before this event. Genesis xv. 6: "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

Then, he being already a righteous man, he proved his faith by his works, just as any man of God should do. I am glad in my heart that faith is the only thing absolutely necessary on man's part after he has repented of his sins, for if it were any thing else there might be thousands left out.

If it were necessary to observe certain ordinances of the Church, that depended on an administrator, we might be thrown, like the thief on the cross, where an administrator was out of the question. If it required talents, many might be found who had not the mental capacity; if it required riches, many of us poor wretches could never raise the money. But, thank God, when it is by faith all can reach it, even the very thief in the agonies of death, who turned his longing eyes and trusting heart to Jesus, and said: "Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Many other passages of scripture could be quoted to prove the doctrine of justification by faith, but this is sufficient.

#### WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

Fifth, the next item is the witness of the Spirit, or Christian assurance, a doctrine that Methodists have always emphasized. Is it true that we may know that we are accepted with God? Does God's Spirit bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God? What saith the Scriptures? Luke xi. 13: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Then he will certainly give us what we ask. If we ask for bread, he will not give us a stone. Again, Romans viii. 16: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

Some say just so we can say that Jesus is the Son of God it is all sufficient. Well, that is a good doctrine if we understand how we may say that Jesus is the Lord. Turn to 1 Corinthians xii. 3, and get light on the subject: "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."

Job seemed to have understood the doctrine of Christian assurance. He says, in Job xix. 25: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth."

If a man claims to have eternal life abiding in him, he should be able to give a reason for it, and that is what we mean by Christian assurance. See 1 Peter iii. 15: "And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."

Don't give that reason in a boasting, proud way, but with meekness and fear. One may say the doctrine cannot be true, and give as an evidence that he never experienced any thing of the kind. Sir, that is no evidence at all. Suppose, for illustration, here is a spring of water and twelve men standing by, and they come up one at a time and drink of the water, all except one, and he stands off saying: "Gentlemen, you are all mistaken about the water: it is not good." You ask him: "How do you know, sir?" He replies: "Because I never tasted it." There is not a court in the United States that would take such evidence as that. But there are men objecting to the doctrine of Christian assurance who can only say: "I know it is not true, because I have never tasted it." Can't receive his testimony in this court.

#### PERSEVERANCE.

Sixth, we believe in the perseverance of the saints, but we do not believe in the doctrine of unconditional-no-matter-what-you-do-hold-outitiveness. Truly our final reception into glory, even after conversion, depends on our faithfulness. See Matthew xxiv. 13: "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

The doctrine of unconditional perseverance, as I have heard it preached and illustrated by some, is undoubtedly



a dangerous doctrine. I will give an illustration that I heard one of its advocates use from the pulpit. He said: "Suppose I find a bad orphan boy upon the streets, and propose to him to come and be adopted into my family.

"'No,' says the boy, 'I am so bad that I would soon do something to displease you, and you would turn me off.'

"'But,' I say to the boy, 'you come along and be adopted, and "I will in nowise cast you out."' Well, with this understanding the boy comes into my family, and the next day he goes out and cuts down my fine trees and shoots my stock, etc. Now, to be candid with the boy, I am compelled to keep him no matter what he does."

Any one can see at a glance the force of the illustration and the evil tendency of the same.

The above illustration was used by Elder Martin, a traveling evangelist of the Baptist Church. Place, Italy, Tex.; time, July 28, 1887. It is true that Mr. Martin was at the time commenting on John vi. 37: "Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out."

Whether intentional or not I cannot say, but the brother certainly does by his illustration very grossly pervert the passage of scripture above quoted. Where is the chapter and verse in the Bible where Jesus-Christ proposes to adopt a sinner into his kingdom upon the same terms that Mr. Martin makes with his boy in his illustration? I think it a very unfortunate illustration for the cause he is trying to sustain; for the terms upon which we come to Christ are repentance and faith, and when a man repents of sin he certainly gives it up, turns away from it; but Mr. Martin in his illustration brings in the boy and adopts him with all his bad habits. So he has, in trying to sustain unconditional perseverance, given a stunner to the practice of the Baptists of receiving believers only. But "to the law

and to the testimony;" let us examine the whole matter in the light of Scripture and reason.

The Lord, in pronouncing his severe judgments against the people, in Zephaniah i. 6, classes those that have not sought the Lord and those that have turned back together: "And them that are turned back from the Lord; and those that have not sought the Lord, nor inquired for him."

If there is no such thing as falling from grace, how is it that Paul ever thought of such a thing? See Galatians v. 4: "Ye are fallen from grace."

Some have charged Methodists with *believing in* falling from grace; but we believe in no such stuff. There is a great difference between believing in a thing and believing in the possibility of a thing. And I deny that there is any greater falling away from the Methodists than from any other denomination in proportion to the number received.

Yes, there is falling among all denominations. We say they fell, and others say they never had it. Well, if those that fell had held out faithful, they would have had it, you see. So we either have to say they fell, or fall back on the never-had-it plan. But consult the following scriptures: 2 Peter iii. 17: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."

What are you warning us for, Peter, if we cannot fall? Ah! Peter knew what he was writing about, for he had some bitter experience along on that line. See also 2 Peter ii. 22: "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and, The sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

Hebrews iii. 14: "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."

But what if we don't "hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end?" Unconditional perseverance answers: "'We are made partakers of Christ,' whether 'we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end' or not."

I have heard of men saying that there was not an example of apostasy in the Bible. Well, all there is of it, any man that cannot find two examples of it in 1 Timothy i. 20 just will not turn to it and read. Here it is: "Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander."

✓ The nineteenth verse reads: "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck."

It is certainly plain that these men made shipwreck of the faith, and everybody knows what a shipwreck is.

We find so many warnings in the Bible on this subject, the writers of which were inspired, and they certainly were not dealing candidly with the readers if they knew that it was utterly impossible for any one to fall away after being once enlightened by the Holy Spirit. See Hebrews iii. 12: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."

You can't say they never had it, for Paul says "brethren."

X Hebrews x. 38: "The just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

✓ 1 Corinthians ix. 27: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

But hear Christ himself: John xv. 6: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

I cannot believe that Jesus would have given any such

illustration if he knew it was impossible for a branch to get out of him.

Again, Luke viii. 13: "They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for awhile believe, and in time of temptation fall away."

That makes it as plain as it can be put. If they believe for awhile, they were certainly believers, and of course that cannot be a case of never-had-itiveness. Matthew xxiv. 13: "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

But unconditional perseverance says he shall be saved whether he endures unto the end or not. Take the parable of the virgins in Matthew xxv. 8: "For our lamps are gone out."

How could their lamps have gone out had they never been lighted? Or the parable of the talents in the same chapter. How could the one talent be taken away from the unprofitable servant if he had no talent to take away?

Matthew v. 13: "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

How could the salt lose his savor if it never had any savor to lose?

Religion is compared to a robe of righteousness. Revelation xvi. 15: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

But unconditional perseverance has found out a new and better way (?), and says you will keep your garments whether you watch or not. But an objector says every Christian's name is written in the book of God, and God will never blot out his name, for he will not keep a blotted

book. But what saith the Scriptures? See Exodus xxxii. 33: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book."

So our objector differs from the Bible. Unconditional perseverance thinks that John iv. 14 is a stronghold for his theory, which reads: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."

Mark you, it is in the present tense, "*drinketh*;" but suppose he ceaseth to drink, then what? There is a great deal said by "unconditional perseverance" believers about God's "eternal shalls," as in the above scripture, "shall never thirst." But if one of God's shalls is unconditional, why are not all of them unconditional? Then when God says "he that believeth not shall be damned," it will give the sinner no place of repentance, but bind him in hell forever, for there stands one of God's "eternal shalls" barring him out of heaven. You see where such logic will end. Unconditional perseverance flies for comfort to Psalm cxxv. 1, 2: "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever."

But alas for his cause! there stands that condition again: "They that trust in the Lord." Suppose they cease to trust in the Lord? Whenever a man ceases to trust in the Lord he is then in the hands of the devil, and it is then that the tower that has been built around him has been thrown down and the wolves of hell burst in fury upon his soul. As a last resort some quote Romans viii. 38, 39: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."



Well, just such a persuasion every Christian should have. None of these things may separate a man from Christ, and yet he may separate himself. I don't think that God will ever delegate the power to any creature in heaven, earth, or hell to separate a follower of Christ from him, and yet he may separate himself. Christ may never cast him out, but such is the nature of his kingdom that if a man sin and comes not to Jesus Christ as his advocate, his sin casts him out, for it is a great bar between him and Christ.

Reader, I have penned these thoughts and cited you to these scriptures on this subject for your benefit. Though you and I may differ in our views on some things, let us resolve that we will persevere in the name of the living God. If unconditional perseverance is true, then I have nothing to lose, for I intend by the grace of God to persevere. But I close this subject by another admonition from Peter. After giving us that beautiful chain of Christian graces, he adds this in 2 Peter i. 10, 11: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

The Lord grant that may be your happy lot and mine. Amen.

#### A CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

Seventh, we believe that God's ministers are called and commissioned by himself; the proof of which the following scriptures will suffice. Matthew ix. 38: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." Romans x. 15: "And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Acts xx. 28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

These scriptures are very pointed, and will explain themselves. I have known some to make a great deal of sport of the idea of a man being called and sent of God to preach, and some even that pretend to preach the gospel make light of a call to the ministry. Whenever I know of a man passing himself for a preacher and ridiculing this important doctrine, I just set him down as one of that class spoken of in Jeremiah xxiii. 32: "Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord."

You see I just take that man at his word. He says he was never called, and laughs at the idea; therefore, of course, we put him with the above class: "I sent them not, nor commanded them."

But all are not authorized to preach, as some contend, else what shall we do with scriptures like these: 1 Timothy iv. 14; Acts xiii. 3; 1 Timothy v. 22?

#### COMMUNION.

Eighth, as to the communion, it is the Lord's table, and we throw no restrictions around it not authorized in the word of God, therefore we say, like Paul in 1 Corinthians xi. 28: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

Mr. Spurgeon, the eminent Baptist preacher of London, as touching close communion, says: "I think it a sin to refuse to commune with any one who is a member of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. At the Lord's table I always invite all Christians to come and sit down and commune with us."

I think the indications are very favorable that this dog-

ma of close communion will finally come into disuse among Protestants, as it is held only by a few landmarks.

#### CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

Ninth, some object to the Methodist Episcopal form of Church government; but by their fruits ye shall know them. The kind of Church government that we want is the most successful toward spreading scriptural holiness over these lands. And where will you find a plan that has been any more successful than the Methodist itinerant plan? According to this plan every Church has a pastor and every pastor a Church, and the ball is kept rolling. The plan is no longer an experiment, but as evidence of its success just count the millions upon the different parts of the globe who have been brought to Christ through the labors of the itinerant preachers.

#### ELECTION.

Tenth, as to the doctrine of election, we believe that salvation's door stands open wide and invites all mankind. I don't see why any one should stumble over the doctrine of election. See how we are elected in 1 Peter i. 2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit."

Then it is very plain from the above scripture that we are elected "through the sanctification of the Spirit." The question then to settle is: May all be thus elected? Let us see 2 Peter iii. 9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Revelation xxii. 17: "Who-soever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Many other passages I could quote, but this will suffice."

#### SANCTIFICATION.

Eleventh, we believe in the doctrine of the purity of

heart, but some of the brethren seem to be a little divided as to when this takes place. However, we are agreed that all the devil must be knocked out of a fellow before he can get to heaven; and so that work is done I don't suppose it makes any particular difference whether it is done all at once or at two different times. I can't believe that a man is bound to commit a little sin, occasionally, as long as he lives. The word reads differently. See 1 John i. 7: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

God certainly does not require impossibilities of any one, and if it is impossible to live without sin what will we do with Psalm iv. 4? "Stand in awe and sin not." Again, Ephesians iv. 26: "Be ye angry, and sin not."

Some, in order to defend this always sinning business, will quote passages like Psalm xiv. 1: "There is none that doeth good." There is no comfort for their theory in that. It may be that there is not one in all the earth now that does no sin, but that doesn't argue that it is impossible to keep from sinning. If these people who spend so much time in trying to prove from the Bible that a man is bound to sin as long as he lives would spend that time at a throne of grace asking for help divine, it would be much better for all concerned. Trust in the Lord, my brother, and don't doubt his power to keep you from faults. See Jude 24, 25: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

#### BAPTISM.

In some things we leave members coming under our banner to decide for themselves. For instance, the mode of baptism we leave each member to decide for himself, and he has a perfect right to do so; and whether parents have

their children baptized or not is optional with them. We have been charged by exclusive immersionists with teaching three baptisms, as we give members their choice as to mode, but the fact is that the Church teaches no mode of baptism at all. Somehow we have never considered the *mode* of baptism of enough importance to take action on it in our General Conference; and I hope that it will always remain as it is, for why should *any* Church stress any *mode* of baptism? The trouble is that some people are in the habit of taking the mode for the thing itself. To illustrate, take the position of the body in prayer. One may pray kneeling, another standing, another may prostrate his body upon the ground. You see at once that one of these may send up an earnest prayer just as much as the other, and the position of the body is of no importance. So it is about the mode of baptism. One may receive it in one mode and one in another, and still each receive scriptural baptism. If I did not think immersion was scriptural, I would not baptize by immersion; and if I did not think that pouring or sprinkling was scriptural, I would not baptize in that way; but I think that either one is scriptural, because God has never given us any direct command in regard to mode. Though the weight of argument from scripture is clearly in favor of *pouring* or *sprinkling*, the law-makers of our Church have wisely declined to decide any particular mode for the Church, lest we might attach more importance to *mode* than the Scripture will warrant. I said that the weight of argument was in favor of pouring or sprinkling. Let us see. I find that the word "pour" is found in the Bible forty-two times, and the word "sprinkle" nine times; but I find no such word as "immerse" there. One may ask, then, why we immerse at all if the word is not found in the Bible. Well, if mode was of any particular importance, we would not.

*Pour  
sprinkle*



Our exclusive immersion brethren teach that immersion is the *only* mode, and they had an awful difficulty staring them in the face, as they found not the word "immersion" in the Bible, and they considered among themselves what to do; and they finally decided to get up a Bible of their own, and they did, and where the word "baptize" was found they made it read "immerse." But the thing didn't take with the masses worth a cent, and they were compelled to come back to the good old King James version.

If we Methodists taught that pouring was the mode and the only mode, and then couldn't find "pouring" in the Bible, I suppose we would have to look about for a revision. But to the word for testimony. Let us have a few scriptures on the subject. 1 Corinthians x. 1, 2: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea."

Now that either was or was not baptism. Paul says, "They were all baptized," and that settles the question as to whether it was baptism or not.

Now what about the mode? Let us see. In Exodus xiv. 29 we read as follows: "But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea."

That doesn't sound to me much like immersion. If it was it was dry-land immersion, for they came out dry-shod, and we don't have that kind these days, you know. If there was any immersion connected with that affair, the Egyptians, who came in afterward, got it, for we read in Exodus xiv. 28: "And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the hosts of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them."

*They got wet all over, sure.* But I think we can find

out from another passage just how the children of Israel were baptized. The Psalmist was undoubtedly referring to that same event in the seventy-seventh Psalm, for he says in the twentieth verse: "Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." In verse 17 of the same Psalm we read: "The clouds poured out water." It seems from the scriptures that the water was applied to the subject. See the following scripture, Matthew iii. 11: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance," which certainly means application of the water to the subject. John i. 26: "John answered them, saying, I baptize with water." Mark i. 8: "I indeed have baptized you with water." See also John i. 33, Acts xi. 16, i. 5, where the word "*with*" is used. Suppose it had read "*in* water." Do you reckon our immersion brethren would have considered it of small importance?

Some say that as Christ went down *into* the water and was baptized in the river Jordan that settles the mode for all time to come. But that says nothing about the mode at all. I baptized a man once by pouring, yet he was *in* the water when baptized. So you see a man may be baptized *with* water, and yet be *in* the water.

There is a hint in prophecy as to mode. The prophet Isaiah, speaking of the coming of Christ, says, in Isaiah lii. 15: "So shall he sprinkle many nations." Suppose it had read: "So shall he *immerse* many nations?" O my! we would just have to surrender to our immersion brethren.

As water baptism is a type of baptism of the Holy Ghost, if we can get some light as to how the Holy Spirit baptism, the *antitype*, was administered, that should give us some information as to the *type*, how water baptism should be administered. See the following scriptures: Acts i. 8: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

Acts x. 44: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word."

Acts xi. 15: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning."

Acts ii. 17: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh."

\* You will notice that in all these passages the Holy Ghost was administered to them, was shed forth. Psalm lxxii. 6: "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth."

Ezekiel xxxvi. 25: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean."

As drowning men will grab at straws, some will go to Acts ii. 2, and argue from that that they must have been immersed in the Holy Ghost: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting."

Alas for that theory! it was sound that filled the house. Anybody that knows any thing about grammar can see at once that the pronoun *it* refers to *sound* for its antecedent. Some contend very earnestly that baptism represents a burial, and it must be done by immersion to make the figure good. Well, if the mode of baptism represents the burial and resurrection of Christ, in order to make the figure good it seems that it would be necessary for the subject to remain under the water for three days, and then let him be raised by the power of God; and he would certainly need the power of God to raise him after staying under the water three days. We all know that baptism represents the birth of the Spirit, and is it not strange that it should represent a birth and burial too, two things so far removed and so unlike each other. Reader, be sure that you are baptized by the Holy Spirit, and don't attach too much importance to mode.

## INFANT BAPTISM.

As to infant baptism, it is left with parents to decide whether they have their children baptized or not. But as the Church is liberal enough to leave this with parents, I don't think they should abuse *their* privileges and deny their children *Church* privileges. If any one says that children are not fit subjects for Church-membership, it is his business to give his Scripture for it; for it is certainly right that the burden of proof should fall on him. Children were members of the Church and entitled to its rites before the coming of Christ, and if they were disfranchised when Christ came, the objector to infant Church-membership should prove it. But the following doesn't sound like disfranchisement. Matthew xix. 14: "But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Hear what Christ says in Matthew xviii. 5: "And who-so shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."

Our way as Methodists of receiving a little child in the name of Christ is to receive it by holy baptism into the Church of God, and candidly we know of no better way. You that object to infant Church-membership and try to tear it down, should try to give us something in lieu of it, and show us a better way of receiving a child in the name of Christ. Jesus is called the great Shepherd of the sheep. Suppose you employ a shepherd to take care of your sheep, and you go out some cold evening and find your shepherd has all the old sheep safely housed in the barn, but standing at the door keeping the lambs back. You ask him what in the world he is keeping the lambs out for? He replies: "Well, if the little scamps were to get into this nice barn, they wouldn't know what they were doing, and besides, you said nothing about the lambs; you only gave

directions concerning the sheep." I guess you would turn that shepherd off and not hire him over again either; you would think that he ought to know that the lambs were included when you told him to care for the sheep. But read John xxi. 15: "He saith unto him, Feed my lambs."

You see here Christ gave express directions concerning the lambs, and that too before the sheep were mentioned. Let no one try to dodge the issue by saying we have a right to feed the children on the bread of life, but no right to shelter them. If one is right, so is the other. Gather them into the fold. What said the prophets in regard to the gospel being preached unto the Gentiles? Of course it was understood that the children of a Jew were Church-members, but the question is: Should the Gentiles bring theirs in too? Let us see Isaiah xlix. 22: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders."

That means Gentiles, for it says so, and it must mean little children, for they were to be carried in their arms. Just think of lugging in great big twelve or fifteen year old boys and girls in their arms! Where would be the need of it? Peter undoubtedly understood that the Gentile children were to come in just as the children of the Jews, for he says, in Acts ii. 39: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children."

One may say Peter meant the children after they grew up. I don't think that will do. Peter didn't know they would ever grow up. Just as well take it as it stands. The pronoun *you* stands for grown-up folks, and *children* stands for *children*.

There is no use to talk about this new Church business until we can find out when and where it was organized.

There certainly was a Church away back in the wilderness in the days of Moses, for we read in Acts vii. 38: "This is he, that was in the Church in the wilderness."

This Church was called by different names, such as Vineyard, Kingdom, Church of the First-born, Zion, Olive-tree, etc., and you will find every time that the name in the Old Testament corresponds with that in the New Testament. It is called a vineyard in Isaiah v. 1, also called a vineyard in Matthew xxi. 33. But, mark you, the Lord of the vineyard did not destroy it, but turned the rascals out and let it to others. No new Church there, brethren. When the gospel was turned over to the Gentiles it was not a new kingdom set up, but the old one handed over to them. Matthew xxi. 43: "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

Mark you, that verse comes in just at the close of the parable on the vineyard. No comfort for the new Church theory there.

It is called Zion both in the Old and New. See Psalms lxix. 35, and Revelation xiv. 1.

It is called an olive-tree both in the Old and New. See Jeremiah xi. 16, and Romans xi. 17 and 24.

The apostle shows in the last reference how the Gentiles were grafted into the old olive-tree. Turn to the eleventh chapter of Romans and read it, and you will find no comfort for the new Church theory there.

It is called "Church of the First-born" both in the Old and New. See Exodus iv. 22, and Hebrews xii. 22 and 23.

Then it must be the same Church, and if the children had a right to come in in Old Testament times they certainly have a right to come in these days, as we fail to find any thing in the New Testament barring them out.



Some will say let them grow up and choose for themselves; but suppose they grow up and then choose infant baptism, how can they ever get it then? The only way to give them their choice is to baptize them when they are babies. Take my case for instance: I was not baptized when I was a baby, and I wish I had been. How can I ever have my choice? You see, baptize them when they are babies, and after they grow up if they wish baptism in any other way they can get it.

I close this little pamphlet by giving some statistics of Methodism.

According to the latest statistics, carefully prepared by Dr. Dorchester, of New York, there are in the United States 59,559 ministers of the different branches of the M. E.-Church, and 4,081,558 members, besides many thousand members of smaller branches, so that the number of Methodists in the United States, actual communicants, is about 5,000,000; but Methodism is a unit the world over.

Our Ecumenical Conference was held in the City Road Chapel, London, Eng., April, 1881, and represented twenty-eight different denominations of Methodists, who preach and hear the gospel in thirty different languages. They came from England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Africa, India, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Polynesia, and from the United States, Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, South America, and West Indies. "Behold, what hath God wrought!" About one hundred years ago Methodism was in its incipency, few and despised; now millions from her communion stand upon the sea of glass shouting: "Deliverance has come."