pure doctrines of the gospel—the doctrines of the Confession of Faith? The preacher replied, we intend to bring them on by degrees."

T———.

"Every christian must be deeply solicitous to form just apprehensions of the character of Jesus; neither to ascribe to him attributes which he would himself have disclaimed; nor to derogate from that transcendant dignity, which belongs to him. We acknowledge with the great apostle, that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God."

☞ My Agents and Patrons, it is hoped, will exert themselves to collect and send me the ballance of money for the first volume. They will recollect that the money for the second volume is now due. My printer and paper maker cannot work without wages. For the past favors of my agents they have my sincere thanks. Some money sent by mail has been lost, yet if private conveyances cannot be had, let them send by mail. The loss is mine. EDITOR.

☞ Post Masters will please to return immediately to the Post Office, Georgetown, Ky. all the Nos. of the Christian Messenger not taken by subscribers out of their offices.

EDITOR.

☞ *To the Publishers of Papers and Periodical Works, throughout the United States.*—It is intended before, or certainly by the 1st of May next, in a pamphlet with other statistical matters, to notice all the Newspapers and Periodicals in the United States, and the city or town where published, &c. A copy containing the above shall be faithfully forwarded to each of you who will insert this notice once and forward a copy of the work you publish to Philadelphia, directed to "THE TRAVELLER."

Philadelphia, Feb. 22.

☞ THE "CHRISTIAN MESSENGER" is published monthly, at the "*American Sentinel*" office, Georgetown, Ky. at ONE DOLLAR a year, or for twelve numbers. Any one, obtaining ten subscribers, and will collect and send the money, shall have one volume *gratis*.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY BARTON W. STONE,

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

"Prove all things: hold fast that which is good."—PAUL.

VOL. II.] GEORGETOWN, KY. MAY 1828. [No. 7.

THE SPIRIT OF ORTHODOXY.

No. II.

This is a time of great religious excitement: and with it rages the spirit of partyism, to an alarming extent. Never probably, have we seen, in our country, such vigorous efforts made and making, as at present, to support clerical domination; and to put down all persons and things that stand opposed to its reign.

The most of the various sects seem willing, for the time being, to make friends; and unite their *mighty forces* and *mighty energies* against the sons of *religious liberty*, and the cause of *religious freedom*. The odds indeed is fearful, in favor of ecclesiastical tyranny. But the war between the parties is declared, and the battle is begun. Behold, the armies in the field!

On the one hand you see an almost innumerable host of veterans, and new recruits, who have been trained in the schools of sectarianism; and are panoplied with learning—with eloquence—with great moral influence—with Creeds and Confessions of Faith—with the authority of great names—of Councils and of the Church; and are spurred on to mighty exertion by interest and the love of Power. On the other hand you see a mere handful—a stripling band, with comparatively but little of the wisdom of this world—but little eloquence—but little moral influence—with no human Creeds—the authority of no popular Church, and no popular names to plead in behalf of their cause; nor have they any earthly interests to stimulate them to action. There is a mighty name, however, which they claim, which to them outweighs all their names, and all other considerations; and that is, the *name of Jesus*. There is also an interest, which, to them, is a thousand times dearer than all others; and that is, the eternal salvation of their souls, and the progress of Gospel truth.

While, therefore, their enemies are triumphing and rejoicing in their anticipations of victory, in consequence of their superior physical, moral and intelectual strength, and are approaching the onset, with all the self-confidence of Goliah of Gath; the sons of Gospel liberty, with all humility, and all the confidence of faith, and all the armour of God, are approaching to meet them, no less confident of victory, than was David, when he went forth to meet the uncircumcised Philistine. For greater is he who is for them, than all who can be against them. Though their enemies bring to bear upon them all their artillery, as well as their small arms; yet safely lodged within the impervious walls of salvation and truth, they remain secure; and see their enemies consuming their strength, and wasting their ammunition to little purpose. For their cause is the Lord's, and must prevail.

But it may be asked, in relation to them, 'What evil have they done,' that they should be so opposed—that they should be charged with *idolatry* and *blasphemy*—as *agents of hell*, as *disorganizers*, &c.? Ay, that is the grand question; the solution of which, speaks a volume upon the spirit of orthodoxy. To the question then, 'What evil have they done?' Why, they have taught, that Jesus Christ is *God's own son*—that the controversies, which, for fifteen hundred years past, have agitated the Christian world, in relation to the character of the Saviour, have only confused the minds and alienated the affections of, and promoted strife and divisions among, the children of God, contrary to the doctrine that Paul, and Paul's Master taught.—That they are willing and anxious to see all controversy, upon this subject, forever die; and to meet the christian world upon the language which the Holy Spirit teaches, unconnected with any opinions or speculations upon the subject.—That the differences of opinion among christians upon this point are unimportant; because all agree that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world—that all power is given unto him in heaven and earth; and that he is able to save to the uttermost, all those that come to God by him.—That this grand fact, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and Saviour of men, is the foundation on which the Saviour has built his Church—that the belief of this one fact with the heart, is the only prerequisite to Christian baptism and Church membership—and that upon this glorious foundation, which God has laid, all christians, (though now divided into numerous sects,) will ultimately settle and unite, according to the prayer of the great Head of the Church.—That therefore, they feel it their duty to do their utmost, to promote the unity, purity and peace of the people of God. They do not, however, believe that the Church ever can unite, upon any one of the almost numberless systems of faith and manners, which men have drawn up. Nor do they desire to see such a union; because it would not be *that union* upon the word of truth, for which the Saviour prayed; and therefore, could not be permanent. They do, therefore, with all their hearts, oppose all human authoritative Creeds and Disciplines, whether written or not written, as unwarrantable encroachments upon the liberties of the children of God; and unauthorized by the head of the Church. They can heartily adopt the language of A. CAMPBELL, in his Christian Baptist, Vol. 5, No. 1, page 16, in these words: "I do attribute to creeds, in the proper acceptation of the term, all the divisions and strifes, partyism and sectarian feeling, of the present day; all the persecutions and proscription, all the havoc of human life, and all the horrors of the inquisition, in the cause of religion, during many centuries before we were born. I attribute to them, and the councils which gave birth to them, the greater part of the ignorance and superstition, the enthusiasm and debates, and even the schisms and divisions of which you lament in the present day." Yes, indeed, they believe and teach that creeds, and the spirit which gave them birth, and which yet keeps them in being, assume the throne of God, and say in the impervious language of the Almighty, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther;"—"beyond the bounds here prescribed for you, you must not go, in any of your investigations of truth, upon pain of excommunication from the privileges of the house of God."

Now, they do believe and teach, that if this sentiment be not the very *life's blood* of the *man of sin*, then they have yet to learn, what are the first principles of the oracles of God. They teach, moreover, that there is but *one body*, or Church, but *one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all.*—That all sectarian Churches, built upon sectarian foundations, are unauthorized, and must fall with Babylon the Great!—That their *law-book*, the New Testament, does not recognise, nor allow the existence, of a Roman Catholic Church, an Episcopalian Church, a Methodist Church, a Presbyterian

Church, a Baptist Church, &c.; for this were to allow, that Christ has various sorts of Churches, whose interests are distinct and even opposite; and that Christ is therefore divided, and at war with himself.

But they do believe, that the name *Christian*, which was, by divine appointment, given to the disciples at Antioch, is the appellative, which all the pious should exclusively bear; and that finally *this name* will swallow up all others. They do believe and teach, that "the peace, the harmony, the union, and love of Christians, the purity and joy of the household of faith, can only be promoted by a devout, spiritual, and unwearied attention to the lively oracles;"—That "no dry bones, no lifeless skeleton, no abstract miniature of doctrine, no cold *formula* of discipline, ever promoted peace with God, conversion to God, harmony, union, and love amongst christians."

But I must break off abruptly. This then, is a brief general outline of what the opposers of religious bondage believe, teach and practise. Why then, we ask again, all this opposition to them, from all the sects? The answer is easy. If *they* and *their principles* prevail, sectarianism must fall, like Dagon before the Ark of God; and those who have made merchandise of the people, and have filled offices, created by themselves for their own argrandisement, will fall from their mighty eminence, and great will be their fall.

No wonder, therefore, that they exclaim, as the Jews did, in relation to our Saviour. "What do we? if we let this man alone, all the world will go after him, and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation." O Lord, stand by thy people, plead thine own cause, and let thy righteousness go forth as brightness, and thy salvatien as a lamp that burneth!

TIMOTHY.

TO ——— ———,

A PRESBYTERIAN PREACHER.

Dear Sir,—Since our last friendly interview at ———, I have thought much on the subject of our conversation. Two propositions you made to me, to which I cordially consented, and with which I have since complied. The propositions were, that we would pray for each other, and that I would with prayer re-examine my opinions, as stated in the books I had published, which opinions you judged to be very erroneous. Your conclusions respecting them was that

either you were an idolater or I was a blasphemer. Yet you admitted that I was honest, and that I had erred without design. I also requested you to re-examine what you called the essentials of religion, and see whether they were to be found in the Bible. Whether you have complied with this request, is known to yourself.

I first proceed to re-examine those opinions I had formed respecting the system of Calvinism, and my reasons for rejecting it. The result of which examination I will candidly state to my worthy friend.

1st. I have concluded without the shadow of a doubt, that if your system of religion as taught in your Confession of faith, be right, I cannot be wrong. For that book states that God for his own glory did from all eternity freely and unchangeably ordain and foreordain whatsoever comes to pass—that some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death—that "These men and angels thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished—Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved, but the elect only, &c.—Conf. Chap. 3. 1, 3, 4. Short Cat. Quest. 7.

That book also states that God executes his own decrees—that he executes them in the works of creation and providence—that in his providence he, the great Creator of all things doth uphold, direct, dispose and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least—that this providence of God extends itself to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing of them in a manifold dispensation, to his own holy ends," &c. Con. Chap. 5.

Now, Sir, if this system be correct and true, our lots are fixed, unalterably fixed, from eternity—how can I be any other than I am? Should I be of the elect number, I am as safe in error as in truth; as safe as those already in heaven. But if not of that number, you need not be uneasy for me, or those whom you think I have led astray; all your uneasiness, your efforts and prayers for us must be unavailing—indeed, Sir, they betray a want of faith in the system.

N—N

My reasons for rejecting this system are in my view good—so good that all doubt is precluded from my mind.

1. A man is a free agent, as the scriptures every where represent. But this scheme represents God by a secret providence, *directing, disposing, and governing all his creatures and actions from the least to the greatest.* B commits murder. Was he free in this act? No: It came to pass, and was therefore decreed from eternity; and God executed this decree by *directing* B to the act—further he *disposed* him to do the act—and *governed* him and the act, and so powerfully *bounded* him that the act was nececessarily done. Who will say that B was free? Who will say that he committed sin, more than a dagger in the hand of the assassin? If it was sin, to whom can it be imputed? No man with his eyes open would hesitate one moment to say that to God himself it must be imputed; for who could resist his power?

2. I believe that God will judge the world in righteousness by his Son. But if this system be true, such a judgment would be a mere farce. How could he judge the world, when all will be found as having perfectly fulfilled his decrees respecting them?

This system I believed firmly would cut the very nerves of activity—would fill the mind with horror, and obscure the lovely character of God from view. If it be right I have no guilt in being wrong; but if it be wrong, I have acted wisely in rejecting it; and surely my friend would act wisely in rejecting it too.

I must believe, Sir, that you are honest in receiving and advocating the book which contains this system; but I must think that you and the revivalists among the Presbyterian and regular Baptist preachers act very inconsistently with your system when you preach the gospel to every creature, and urge all to repentance and faith—offering salvation, grace, eternal life, &c. to every creature. These doctrines arrest the attention of the sinner, and arouse him to action. Hence the revivals among you and those who preach thus. But do these appear where the soul chilling doctrines of Calvin are preached? and do they not decline when these doctrines are introduced?

I was glad to hear you in our last conversation, acknowledge the Methodists among the *orthodox.* Hence I concluded that the five points were no longer considered as a part of orthodoxy. Time and circumstances have effected

great changes. When I was young the five points formed the system of orthodoxy, and the Methodists who denied them were called heretics; but now, though they still deny them, they are called orthodox. Why? Because they have become numerous and respectable, and join with the prevailing sects in advocating the doctrine of trinity, and the vicarious sufferings of the Son of God. Every one it seems, who professes to believe these two doctrines are now enlisted in the ranks of orthodoxy, however discordant may be their notions; and every one who rejects them is considered a heretic, however holy he may be in his conversation.

These, I presume, are the doctrines my friend wishes me to re-examine with fervant prayer for direction. For many years have I thus examined and re-examined them; and the result has always been that my mind has rested satisfied in their correctness *in the general.* The whole truth on these points I may not have known, and in some things may have erred; but aware of my fallibilty my mind is ever open to conviction. But, Sir, the methods pursued by your brethren and others, to effectuate this end, have been vain, and must forever be vain to intelligent minds and feeling hearts. You have assumed too high ground for fallibility to occupy. From this eminence you have spoken as the orthodox dictators of the world. Your language, instead of the meekness of wisdom, has savoured much of the bitterness of folly—instead of convincing argument, it too generally was declamation and invective—instead of fair representations of our views of truth, we were often offended with misrepresentations. Indeed, Sir, our minds have been continually impressed from reading and hearing the severe opposition against us, that your object was to crush and destroy us, not to convince and save us. Such a spirit we were persuaded was not that of a christian, and therefore we could not readily receive its dictates. Some preachers have all kinds of sense but common sense; and this is more necessary than all the theological school sense ever learned. This can only be acquired by the study of the Bible and of self.

The result of my re-examination of the two points, trinity and atonement, I shall state to you in subsequent numbers.

EDITOR.

Extract of a letter from OBADIAH SEWARD. *Rushville, Ic.*

"In your Messenger, Vol. 3. you communicated some

ideas on baptism, as that it was a means of salvation, and that it was God's plan of saving sinners. If this be correct, I cannot see how you can avoid making baptism a term of communion, as no one can be saved short of God's plan. I am not alone in this difficulty. You are therefore, requested to give us in your Messenger, an answer to the following query—"What does baptism represent."

—

REPLY.

Dear Brother: We are glad that you have stated to us your difficulties on the subject of baptism. We hasten to endeavor a solution of your query. That baptism is ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ, we presume is admitted by you; but that it was ordained as a means, through which God communicates his grace to the salvation of the believer baptized, you cannot admit. Our Lord commissioned his Apostles to go into all the world and to preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned. Mark, 16. Will any one deny that faith in the gospel is ordained as the means of salvation? Not one. How then can any deny that baptism is also a means of salvation, seeing it stands immediately connected with faith? Peter in the day of Pentecost was explicit in his answer to those enquiring what they should do to be saved. He says, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for (in order to) the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," &c. This direction was of divine authority, and must therefore be correct. Remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit were promised, and were to be received through baptism; for these Jews had already believed that Jesus was the Messiah whom they had crucified. This direction by Peter was in perfect accordance with the commission given to the Apostles.

The words of Ananias to Saul confirm the same truth.—"And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."—Acts xxii. 16. His sins were yet cleaving to him, not washed away, not forgiven, or remitted. This was to be effect through the means of baptism.

That baptism was ordained a means of salvation, is farther evident from 1 Pet. iii. 21: "The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ; (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.") Baptism saves us and washes away our sins, in the same manner that the waters of Jordan washed away Naaman's leprosy, by his dipping himself in them. None are so ignorant as to think that the literal water washed away his leprosy; but that it was Naaman's obedience to the divine order. So in baptism, none are so ignorant as to imagine that water washes away sins or saves; but it is the grace of God through obedience to his ordinance. Baptism saves by the resurrection of Jesus Christ—for it has a particular reference to that event; as Christ was buried and rose from the dead, so believers are buried and risen with him by baptism. Baptism is the very *answer*, *representation*, or *image* of this event; as the broken bread and wine are of the passion and death of Christ.

That baptism was ordained as a means of receiving salvation and of the Holy Ghost, is farther evident from facts stated in the New Testament. In Acts viii, we have an account of Philip preaching to the Samaritans; "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women." For as yet he (the Holy Ghost) was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Philip with the Apostles, did not wait or tell the people to wait till they had received the Holy Spirit—until they were saved, and had their sins forgiven, or until they could give in a good experience of grace: No: as soon as they believed in the name of the Lord Jesus he baptized them. So he acted in the same chapter with the eunuch. He preached to him Jesus and the way of salvation; baptism was included. The eunuch believed; and as he had learned from Philip that baptism was ordained by the Lord, having come to a certain water, he said, see, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. On this profession Philip baptized him; and then the eunuch received the Holy Spirit, for he went on his way rejoicing.

In but one instance in all the acts of the apostles do we read of a departure from this rule; and we at once see the necessity of this from a very little attention to the case. In Acts 10 we find it. Peter was preaching to the Gentiles at

the house of Cornelius; and while he spake the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word. This confirmed Peter's mind that God had received the Gentiles, and had granted to them the same grace that he had to the Jewish believers. He, therefore commanded them to be baptized. Had not God granted this blessing to the Gentiles, Peter could not have baptized them, nor could the Church at Jerusalem have received them.

Obj: But the church may be imposed upon by baptizing such as only profess faith, and obedience to the Lord Jesus.

Ans. This is true; for Simon the sorcerer, professed faith in Christ, and was baptized by Philip; yet he was in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. Acts 8. But shall we neglect an ordinance of the Lord, because it may be abused? If so, where shall we stop? But has not the church as often been imposed upon by those who give long accounts of their experience? This we know to be the fact. I have been at the reception of thousands into the church. Some have told us long experiences, and others had but little to say. The latter class have more generally adorned their profession. Such is the depravity of man, that pride or vanity may prompt us to tell a great and long experience, and candor will confess it.

Obj: If you be correct, can any be saved who are not baptized?

Ans. This was the opinion of many of the early fathers, and therefore to save infants from sin and damnation they baptized them. So we are informed. Those fathers with the churches of Rome and England call baptism, *regeneration*. By this they must mean that it is a means of regeneration to the believer. Joh. III. 5. Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, &c. I have before proved that God did save the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius prior to their being baptized. This proves that he has not bound himself to a plan from which he cannot depart. He yet condescends to the ignorance of man, and saves many out of his instituted plan. Yet though he has winked at this ignorance, he now commands all men every where to repent, and obey his ordinances.

Obj: If you are correct, Should not baptism be made a term of christian communion?

Ans. No more than it should be of salvation. If God in pity to the ignorance of his creatures grants them salvation

and the gift of the Holy Spirit, What are we that we should withstand God? If God communes with them, let us be followers (imitators) of God, as dear children.

Your brother in the Lord, EDITOR.

Flour Creek, *Pendleton county, Ky. 5th April*, 1828.

Brother Stone,—In Sept. 1826, we were constituted on the Faith of a Christian Church—taking the Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice—with ten members. The Lord, we hope, has blest his word among us, notwithstanding the opposition we have met with. Our number, at present, is upwards of fifty. Our situation is remote from the most of the Christian Churches, and we are not known in the Conference, so that our preaching brethren very seldom visit us. We have hitherto been blessed with the labors of our brother, George Fisher. We have agreed that our Communion meetings shall be, annually, on the second Sabbath, and Saturday before, in June and October.

Our earnest request and anxious desire is, that our situation be made known, and that as many of our ministering brethren should visit us, and as often as convenient—and especially, at our June and October meetings.

Very lately the Baptist Society, in Falmouth, under the care of Blackston Abernathia, excluded a worthy sister because she could not believe Jesus Christ to be the Supreme God. It is fully my opinion, that if a warm, affectionate, unprejudiced preacher, could attend that place the people would rejoice, and a good Society might be there constituted on Gospel principles.

I am your unknown and unworthy friend, &c.

ROBT. TAYLOR.

Extract of a letter from S—— H——.

Indianapolis, Indiana, *April 4th*, 1828.

Dear Friend,—I should like to write you a little concerning our preacher, Mr. Bush, a Presbyterian, but have not now time, nor room on this half sheet. However, the amount of it is, he has turned *Christian*, and is for destroying the works of men—that the divisions among christians, are so many sinful rendings of Christ's one body. The session have had him under dealing for some time, and ordered him to quit his wickedness. He would not. They then called the church, and voted to dispense with his further services.

and would have sent him off, but for us of the congregation, who were interested in the house, and had a right to vote in the election of trustees. We thought a little more religion would not hurt either the church or session, and voted them down; but Dr. C. a Presbyterian, has gone to Presbytry to have Mr. Bush silenced: and should he succeed, I can tell him he may have difficulty in supporting a clergyman of his procuring. S. H.

BLOOMINGTON, *Monroe county*, Ia. *March 3d*, 1828.

QUERIES.

BROTHER STONE,—As there is much said respecting coming out of Babylon;

Q. 1st. Where is the road which leads out?

Q. 2d. How must the church proceed, in order to get out?

Q. 3d. How shall we know when we are out?

Q. 4th. If Babylon be destroyed before the saints get out, what will become of them?

Q. 5th. Who are the craftsmen of whom we read in Rev. 18, 22; and

Q. What is the mill-stone? ELIJAH GOODWIN.

Answers to the above Queries.

1st. Ans. In the New Testament it is plainly marked out; *the way of holiness.*

2ly. Ans. By turning to, and walking in the way of holiness—which is love to God and man, and union and fellowship with all saints.

3ly. Ans. By walking in the light. "For if we walk in the light, even as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another—and our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son Jesus Christ.

4ly. Ans. Old Jerusalem was not destroyed before the saints, attending to the admonitions of the Lord escaped. So we think of those in Babylon. But should they not obey the voice of God and come out of her, they must be partakers of her sins, and plagues. Rev. 18, 16.

5ly. Ans. The craftsmen may be those who are engaged in building up and supporting human systems of religion. This craft has long been taught and learned, and by it many get their living.

6ly. Ans. I might guess as a Yankee, and guess wrong. You can do the same. EDITOR.

The following communication was unanimously adopted by the Church of Christ at Antioch.*

The Church of Christ at Antioch, Clinton County, Ohio, to the Editor of the Christian Messenger, sendeth greeting.

Brother Stone—We have received your remarks on the Communication of brother Joshua Irvin. We thank you for them, and as we have no doubt but you were actuated by the purest motives in writing them, we feel it our indispensable duty to give you all the satisfaction in our power, relative to the course pursued by us as a church. All the dissatisfactions you express as to our church, all the objections you make to it, appear to centre in one point, to-wit: our views of *ordination.* The word ordain occurs in the New Testament a number of times, and always appears to have one invariable meaning. As nothing would be better calculated to mislead the enquirer after truth, than the indiscriminate use of the same word to convey different ideas, we cannot believe that this word, when used by the inspired penmen, is applied in that loose, unguarded, ambiguous manner in which it is applied in the present day. We have thought that this word, when used by the inspired writers, simply means *to choose, appoint, elect* or *set apart by a decree.* Jesus ordained twelve, Mark III. 14.—Jesus choose twelve, Luke VI. 13.—Wherefore of these men, &c. must one be ordained, Acts I. 21, 22.—and they gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles, verse 26. Tradition says that all these were ordained by the laying on of hands, but the New Testament says nothing about it. The eleven were ordained or chosen by Jesus himself. Matthias was ordained by lot or election: "Whereunto I am ordained a preacher and an apostle," 1st. Timothy II. 7. For I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, &c. Acts XXVI. 16.—But the Lord said unto him go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel, Acts IX. 15. Tradition says Paul was ordained at Antioch, but on this subject the New Testament is silent. Paul says I am ordained, &c. The Lord Jesus says I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness.—Again, Jesus

* Since the adoption of the foregoing communication one of the Elders has expressed doubts as to the correctness of the sentiments contained in regard to ordination.

says he is a chosen vessel, &c. From which it is plain that Paul was chosen or ordained by Jesus himself, and not by the laying on of the hands of any body. But as the ordination of elders or bishops (and not of apostles) is that which concerns us most in the present day, we will pay some attention to the subject. The apostle is very particular in describing the qualifications of a bishop, by pointing out what his character must be and what it must not be. The man that fills the character is eligible to the office. All but the Roman Catholic Church and a few of her degenerate daughters, admit that every congregation has a right to choose its own teachers or overseers, but the elders must ordain them by the laying on of their hands. Ordination is ordination, choosing is choosing, whether an apostle or an elder the act is the same; and as we have seen that the apostles were ordained in a manner very different from that commonly practised in the present day, so we contend that bishops should be. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, &c. Acts xiv. 23. (and when they had, by the lifting up of the hand, chosen them elders, &c. See the margin of M. Carey's large bible.) For this cause left I thee in Crete that thou shouldst set in order things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city, Titus i. 5. Nothing is said in these places about laying on of hands, and as we have before seen that the import of the term is to choose, &c. so we must understand it in the present case; and as the churches of Crete and those among which the apostle Paul travelled were better acquainted with the qualifications of their own members than a mere itinerant teacher could be, we are fully of opinion that they were not idle spectators of what so deeply interested them, but were active in giving their voices in the selection of their elders or bishops. When we consider that the churches in that day (which were but in their infancy) were ignorant of the necessity of elders or bishops until taught by the apostles; we cannot see the impropriety of the apostles and evangelists superintending the election of them. The history of the church, for the first three hundred years, abundantly confirms the fact, that the assembly of the people chose thereof teachers, and of this we know that brother Stone is not ignorant. 1st Tim. v. 22. is produced to prove that ordination was performed by the laying on of hands. In reading the first Epistle to Timothy, we find in the iii. chapter the bishops office treated of at large, and the bishops qualifications distinctly stated. In the fourth is contained a prophecy of some things that should take place in the latter day, as also some directions to Timothy on several subjects. In the fifth chapter these directions are continued; and neither in the fourth or fifth chapter is the subject of the qualifications or ordination of a bishop hinted at. In the v. chap. from the 19th to 21st verse, some directions are given to Timothy how to proceed against an elder, in case of his offending; he is charged solemnly "to observe these things without prefering one before another;" then follows, "lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins, keep thyself pure." From the connexion in which these words stand, we are not a little astonished that they have been tortured to prove ordination by the laying on of hands. Acts v. 18. would be equally as much to the point. When we construe the meaning of 1st Timothy v. 22. by the context, we view this expression as a figure of speech, borrowed by the apostle from what was then, and still is, a universal practice, to-wit: to lay hands on an offender, and deliver him to justice. In this way Timothy is cautioned against taking up a charge against any without sufficient ground for so doing; he is likewise cautioned against partaking of other men's sins by too much forbearance. If we read the New Testament through, we cannot find one instance where laying on of hands is called ordination; and we wish to follow "original apostolic practice" as nearly as we can. When we leave this ground we are like the bark on the ocean without compass or pilot, therefore we wish "not to be too hasty in drawing conclusions in opposition to plain facts." By this time you may wish to know what ends we conceive were answered by laying on of hands: We answer some spiritual gift was communicated, or some miracle wrought. All agree that "Jesus, by the imposition of his hands, healed the sick, and performed wonders." But it is with the apostolic and first teachers of the doctrine of Christ, that our business is more particularly at present.

In Eph. iv. 11, the apostle makes an enumeration of spiritual gifts—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. These gifts were given for a certain purpose, to wit: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." They were given for a specified time, to wit: "Till we all come to the unity

of the faith and the knowledge of the son of God," &c.—When the end was answered for which these gifts were given, they were as perfectly out of use as the first covenant, after the kingdom of Christ was established on earth. See Gal. III. 19th.

This end was answered, or from what did the Churches apostatise? In 1 Cor. XII. 8 to 10, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, and the interpretration of tongues, are said to be given by the spirit, and are called spiritual gifts, verse 1. On the day of Pentecost, the spirit was poured out upon the disciples; at the house of Cornelius the same thing was transacted. These are the only instances recorded in the New Testament of the outpouring of the spirit. The consequence was, they prophesied, they spoke with new tongues, they healed the sick. Peter could discern the spirit of Ananias and Sapphira; they received the word of wisdom and knowledge, by which they were enabled to understand and explain the prophecies, which speak of the kingdom of Christ; they were enabled to teach infallibly the doctrine of Christ, &c. Afterwards these spiritual gifts were communicated by the laying on of hands.—Acts VIII. 17: XIX. 6: Rom. I. 11. The apostle Paul was not a subject of the outpouring of the spirit, either on the day of Pentecost, or at the house of Cornelius; but was *as one born out of due time;* and although he was called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, we hear nothing of his having spoken with new tongues, or of having performed miracles, until the hands of the prophets and teachers were laid upon him at Antioch. Then at his word dimness covered the eyes of Elimas the sorcerer, the impotent man at Lystra arose and walked; handkerchiefs or aprons, carried from his body to the sick, healed them, and by the laying on of his hand the fever left the father of Publius, and the disease of all in the Island of Melita left them. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of Presbytery. 1 Tim. IV. 14. Stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. 2 Tim. I. 6. Do the work of an evangelist. 2 Tim. IV. 5. The gift of an evangelist is one of these spiritual gifts communicated by the apostle.—Eph. IV. 11. This gift was communicated to Timothy by the laying on of hands. This matter is as plain as that twice four are eight. "But the seven were ordained to the office of serving tables by the laying of the apostles' hands." If this was stated in the New Testament, we would not feel disposed to controvert the assertion; but as it is not, we cannot receive it at present. They were chosen by the church; they were appointed to the business of serving tables by the apostles. But the question is, did they possess any spiritual gift? Working of miracles is a spiritual gift. 1 Cor. XII. 10. And Stephen, full of faith and power, wrought great miracles. Acts VI. 8. Philip wrought miracles—VIII. 6, 13. Before the hands of the apostle were laid on these persons, we hear of no miracle wrought by them, therefore we conclude that by the laying on of the apostles' hands this gift was communicated to them. But of one thing we are certain, that the New Testament does not afford an instance of any on whom hands were laid, but such as were thereby cured of some infirmity, or invested with some spiritual gift, except five of the seven last mentioned; and the last thing we hear of them in any way is that the apostles laid hands on them. And as they were all of the same character (full of the Holy Ghost) before, we have not much doubt but they were possessed of like gifts with Philip and Stephen. We are of opinion that the doctrine of Christ is fully taught in the New Testament; where we do not feel ourselves justified in either proving or disproving any of the institutions of the Lord's house, from any thing praciced under the first covenant. At any rate we do not feel ourselves justified in drawing conclusions from Jewish customs, in opposition to plain facts stated in the New Testament. We wish you to give this communication a place in the Christian Messenger, and that you or some of your correspondents, who will give their real names, will make such remarks upon it as either you or they may think proper. The truth is what we desire; it is what we are searching after; it is what we wish to pursue, untrammelled by the sordid, selfish views of any sect or party. Wishing you grace, mercy and peace, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, we subscribe ourselves yours in the bonds of the Gospel.

—

REPLY.

DEAR BRETHREN: With much interest I have attended to your communication, and thank your for it. We may differ in our opinion on the subject of your address; but we rejoice that the long disputed point is reduced to fact, that Chris-

tians can live together in harmony and peace, and yet think differently.

At your request I will make a few remarks on the particular subjects of your address.

1. You define ordination to mean simply and *solely*, if I understand you, *to choose, appoint, elect*, or to *set apart*. We agree that this is always essential in the ordination of an elder, or bishop. But you think that if a church choose, or appoint any one member among themselves to this office, there is nothing more necessary; that person is to all intents ordained according to the New Testament plan, and has a divine warrant to teach and administer the ordinances of the Lord's house. We have thought that besides the election or appointment of a person to office, the will of God was that the imposition of the hands of the eldership should be added. This you deny.

The proof for your position appears to be entirely negative—nothing positive can I find advanced by you. You say that Christ chose or ordained his 12 apostles; but nothing is said of the laying on of hands; hence you conclude that the elders or bishops are ordained without the laying on of hands. If indeed there was no mention in the New Testament of the laying on of hands in the act of ordination, your argument would be good; we should indeed have no need of argument on the subject. But the reverse of this is true.

We have relied much for proof of our position on 1 Tim. v. 22: "Lay hands suddenly on no man." This you explain, "to lay hands on an offender and deliver him to justice," as Acts v. 18. "And they laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison." I wish my brethren to examine the Greek Testament. They will find that the words *epitithei cheiras* (lay hands on) are invariably expressed in all the cases where our Lord or his ministers are said to lay hands on any one, whether for the purpose of communicating any spiritual blessing or gift, or in the act of ordination to office. To a few, of many, I will refer you: Matt. ix. 18; xix. 15. Mark v. 23; vi. 5; xvi. 18. Luke iv. 40; xiii. 13. Acts vi. 6; viii. 17, 19; xiii. 3; xix. 6; xxviii. 8. 1 Tim. v. 22; iv. 14. 2 Tim. i. 6, &c. Although the words "to lay hands on" frequently occur in King James' translation, in the sense you stated in Acts v. 18, yet in not one instance are the words *epitithei cheiras* used; but other words, of very different signification, as *epiballo* and *krateo*.

Luke xx. 19. Matt. xviii. 28, &c. With these last words violence is always attached; but with that used in 1 Tim. v. 22, violence is never connected. Your exposition of 1 Tim. v. 22 cannot be correct.

You contend that bishops or elders were ordained by election or vote, and adduce Acts xiv. 23, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church," or "when they had, by the lifting up of the hand, chosen them elders in every church," Cary's Marg: This text does not well comport with your views of the congregation electing or appointing their own bishop without the aid of the eldership; for here Paul and Barnabas alone acted in ordaining, choosing and lifting up the hand in every church. You cannot think that Paul and Barnabas lifted up their hands, as expressive of their vote for elders among the churches—The word signifies either to lift up the hand, or to stretch it out. It may represent the act of praying, or of laying hands on the elder, or of giving him the right hand of fellowship, as in Gal. ii. 9.

You contend that laying on of hands always designed some spiritual gift to be communicated to the person. Let this be granted, will it therefore follow that it must be now laid aside? Timothy had the gift of an evangelist conferred on him, you acknowledge, by the laying on the hands of the eldership; is the gift of an evangelist no longer needed? If it is, how shall it be conferred, if we depart from apostolic practice. Paul and Barnabas were separated for the same work by the prophets and teachers at Antioch; and this by the laying on of their hands. Till we all come to the unity of the faith, all those spiritual gifts may be needed, and who is bold enough to say God will never restore them? Who will say that God will not confer spiritual gifts and aid through the laying on of hands now? Have faith in God.

Your servant in the gospel of Christ, EDITOR.

OF THE FIRST COVENANT.

The first covenant includes the whole law given by ... ses in all its parts, moral, judicial and ceremonial. The ... commandments, called by theologians, the moral law, is emphatically denominated the covenant; the other parts are mere appendages of this covenant. Exod. xxxiv. 28, "And he (Moses) was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights—and he wrote upon the table the words of the covenant, *the ten commandments*. Deut. iv. 13, "And he declar-

ed unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even the ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone." Deut. v. 2. "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." Deut. ix. 9, "When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant, which the Lord made with you." Paul, the inspired expounder of Moses, calls this the *first* covenant, which the Lord made with their fathers in the day when he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. Heb. viii. 7–9. By the introduction of the new covenant, the same apostle teaches, that the first covenant is waxed old and vanished away. Heb. viii. 13. To the Corinthians he writes: "But if the ministration of death written and engraven in stones, was glorious—which glory was to be done away—For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious;" referring to the old and new covenants—"And not as Moses, who put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that (the law) which is abolished." 2 Cor. iii.

In Rom. vii. the apostle, to prove the abolition of the first covenant, or law, represents it by the relation of a husband, and the Jews as the wife. As the husband has dominion over the wife as long as he lives—so the law has dominion over the Jews as long as it (not he) lives. The wife cannot be legally married to another man, whilst her first husband is living; so the Jews, wedded to the law, could not be married to another (the new covenant) till the first husband, the law, died *by the body of Christ*, who was the end of the law, having taken it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. Rom. x. 4. This law is declared by Paul to be dead, wherein the Jews were held and bound; and this law he plainly teaches was the ten commandments; for when he declared the death of the law by the body of Christ, the Jew replies, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Nay (says Paul) I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, thou shall not covet." 7 verse. This is the tenth commandment.

From these and similar passages it is too plain to admit of doubt, that the first covenant, or the ten commandments, with all its appendages, or the law written and engraved in

stones, and delivered to Moses in Horeb, is abolished. The Jew is no longer under obligations to it, more than a wife is under obligation to a dead husband. The Gentiles were never under it, for it was not made with them. They not having the law, are not to be judged, nor cursed by it, 1 Cor. ix. 21: Rom. ii. 13.

Obj: We grant that we are not under the law as a covenant; but certainly we are, as a rule of life.

Ans: The Gentiles were not under it before the coming of Christ, and it cannot be proved that this yoke was ever by his authority put on the necks of his disciples since. I grant that all the holy precepts of the law, or first covenant, are incorporated in the gospel or second covenant, as, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself, &c. and are therefore binding on all. As an illustration of the subject, I will introduce a familiar fact. The Commonwealth of Kentucky, when it began its existence as a State, formed a constitution. By this every member of the Commonwealth was bound as long as that constitution existed, and no longer. After a lapse of time the commonwealth formed a second constitution, in which they incorporated all the good articles of the first. When this second constitution was adopted, the first was done away or annulled. No one was under obligation to it—no one would appeal to it to determine what was constitutional and what was not. To own allegiance to *that* would be rebellion against the government. The application is easy. The first covenant by Moses, is done away, and abolished by the adoption of the second. All the approved articles of the first are incorporated in the second, and from this we are to learn the will of God concerning us, and our duty to him—what is right and what is wrong. To own allegiance to the first is rebellion against the divine government, established in the second, called the New Testament or New Covenant.

If then the law is done away, it is evident that the transgression of it is also done away; for "where there is no law there is no transgression." Rom. iv. 15. "And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death for the redemption of transgressions that were under the first Testament, they who are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Heb. ix. 15. Now we have before proved that by means of the death of Christ the law died, and was taken out of the way; therefore, of course the transgression of it has ceased.

If the law be abolished, its curse, as well as the transgression, is also removed. "For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse, as it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us, (for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree) that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles by Jesus Christ."—Gall. III. 10—14.

Many professing to be sent by the Lord to preach the gospel, seem to have forgotten their commission; for instead of preaching the gospel, and teaching alone what he has commanded them, they preach Moses every Sabbath day, and labor to convince us, who are Gentiles, that we are under the law and its curses. We are led to Sinai to hear its terrific thunders roll, and not to Mount Zion to hear the melting voice of Jesus. The thunders of Sinai never broke a hard heart—the cross of Jesus can only do this. The terrors of Sinai are appalling to the guilty; but compared with the terrors of Mount Zion, against the rejectors of the Son of God, they are tolerable. The one denounces death temporal; the other, everlasting punishment. EDITOR.

A worthy brother of Virginia, has favored us with a very lengthy dissertation on the subject of Feet-washing, elicited from his reading a few remarks on the subject in the 2 No. of this Vol: We should gladly insert the whole; but think it inexpedient at this time, especially as he has given us his views *in epitome*, which comprehend all the important ideas on the subject. He says,

"1st. It is a fact, that the washing of feet and eating, are uniformly connected in the examples given by the scriptures; and 2d. Washing always preceded eating.

I will now attend to the testimony in support of the above facts.

1. Abraham entertained three men. Gen. 18. 4, 5. They washed before they ate.

2. The angels whom Lot entertained, washed before they ate of the feast he made for them. Gen. 19. 2.

3. There was water given to wash the feet of Abraham's servant and the men that were with him, before they ate. Gen. 24. 32.

4. Joseph's brethren washed their feet, before they ate bread in the house of Joseph.

5. The language of our Lord to Simon in Luke 7. 44, shews it was customary to wash, before eating in that day.

I shall now produce certain facts from the 13th ch. of Jno. to shew that Jesus did not depart from this *mode*, when he washed his disciples' feet, and gave commandment, that they should also wash one another's feet.

1. It is a fact, that Jesus washed all the disciples, Judas not excepted—veres 10, 11.

2. It is a fact, that at the time they washed, it was unknown among the disciples which it was of them, that should betray their Lord—verses 21, 22. Now if we wash after supper (as is the common practice,) our practice goes directly to deny these two facts.

3. It is a fact, that the sop was given Judas, by our Lord, after he had washed the disciples' feet, and before supper was ended. For the 27th verse declares, after the sop Satin entered into his heart, and the 2d verse declares when the devil had taken this possession, supper was ended, and not before.

4. It is a fact, that the prophetic language expressed by Jesus in the 19th verse, was used after washing, and before supper was ended. Hence, washing did not follow, but preceeded eating. But if we wash after eating, this fact is also denied by our works.

5. It is also a fact, that the trouble of spirit, under which Jesus labored, and his direct declaration of treachery in one of them (the disciples) followed washing and was expressed before supper was ended—verse 21.

LANDON DUNCAN.

REVIVALS.

Extract of a letter to the Editors of the Gospel Luminary, from Elder James M'Vay, dated at Steubenville, Ohio, March 17, 1828.

My Dear Brethren.—It pleased God to cast my lot in Harford county, Md. in September 1825. At that time none of the Christian preachers had ever been in this section of the country. When I commenced preaching here, the sectarian denominations, raised a host of opposition against me and the doctrine I preached; they also united their influence to crush the infant cause; but the Lord stood by me and gave success to his word. About three hundred and fifty souls have been converted to God, the greater part of whom I

have baptized. The prospect is still good in this section of the country. We are anxious to have assistance from some of our preaching brethren. It is requested, that if any of our brethren in the ministry can feel it duty that they would come and help us.

In the city of Baltimore the church is in a more prosperous state at present, than for some months past. Three young men of piety and talents have been recently ordained to the work of the ministry, all of this church. Their names are William G. Proctor, Wm. Hays, and John Smith. The officiating elders who set them apart to the work of the ministry by fasting, prayer, and laying on of hands, were B. Allton J. M'Vay, D. Long, and J. Waters.

I have just returned from Baltimore to this state. I find great inquiries for truth. God is shaking the foundation of sectarianism, and confounding the language of the Babel-builders. They are crying Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and her merchant-men are raging for fear of their loss. O! may God spread the light of his knowledge over the broad face of the earth, that his name may be known from the rising of the sun, to the going down of the same.

A Christian Church has been, a few months ago, constituted in Cynthiana, Ky. At first it was composed of not more than five or six, it now consists of about 40 members, chiefly new converts. The work progresses through much opposition.

We constituted another church, lately, at Mount Tabor, 4 miles East from Lexington. The number which united together was 18, chiefly new converts. The work there is glorious; as also at the Republican, 6 miles South from Lexington. Large additions are made at every meeting.

We promised in our last number to give the result of the Synod of Ulster, in Ireland, on the subject of Creeds. We have been disappointed in receiving the official account from a correspondent, who promised to send it. As soon as it shall be received, we will give it. This much we have learned, that after a long and warm debate, the vote was taken whether the Confession of Faith should be dispensed with or retained; of eigthty-five members of the Synod 45 voted that it be dispensed with, and 40 that it be retained. We rejoice at the progress and power of truth.

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

BY BARTON W. STONE,
AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

"*Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.*"—PAUL.

VOL. II.] GEORGETOWN, KY. JUNE 1828. [No. 8.

As there is at present, great excitement in the nation, on the subject of the *American Sunday School Union*, we have thought it necessary to give our readers correct information respecting it. This we cannot do, in a more satisfactory manner, than giving the speech of Mr. POWELL, in the Senate of the Pennsylvania Legislature, on the application of the *American Sunday School Union*, for an act of incorporation. We are glad to find that the proposed amalgamation of the five principal *orthodox* sects has failed. The design of this union was, to govern all the elections in the Union, from the civil magistrate to the president of the United States, so as to keep out of every civil office in government, all not orthodox, as Unitarians, Arians, Socinians, Deists, and such as deny the supreme deity of Jesus Christ; and to elect such only as are orthodox, to fill these offices. We are glad to find that the numerous and respectable body of Methodists, are in opposition to such measures. This we learn from the *Christian Advocate*, published by them in New-York. From this paper, we give their remarks, with Mr. POWELL's speech. p. 126, vol. 2. EDITOR.

AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

We have before expressed our views respecting *religious national institutions*. The facility with which they seem to be multiplying in our country, and the zeal with which plans are executing, convince us more and more of the propriety, if not the indispensable duty of opposing them. They are of dangerous tendency. And whatever may be said by their advocates to relieve these *national institutions* from the suspicion of sectarian influence, they *are sectarian*. One denomination of Christians only has a preponderating influence in their councils, and just enough from among other denominations are introduced among the dominant sect to save appearances, and to form a zest for the song of *union*, and to give a