THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

"I will Build my Church,"

St. Matt. XVI. 18.

BY

DANIEL M. BATES, JR.,

St. John's Missionary College, Shanghai, China.

SHANGHAI.

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NOTE.

The idea of this tract is very simple—Christ promised to build a church, gave the Apostles commandment concerning it, and they, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, constructed it.

Our plan is to observe in the historical and epistolary writings of the New Testament, what the Apostles *did* build. The Church built by the Apostles either was, or was not the Church promised by Christ. If it was the promised Church, then it was His workmanship, and because it was built by *Him*, we are bound, if it exist to-day to adhere to it. If it was not the Church promised by Christ, then His promise has failed. No one can dare hesitate a moment which alternative to take. Whether that identical Church *does* exist to-day is a question which we do not here take up, as our present purpose is the study of the Apostolic Church. But we can rest assured that it does exist, for Christ has promised that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

We wish to call attention to another point—The Book of Acts, it must be remembered, is a *history* of what had been done, written *after* the Church had been already founded. It is not a book of directions about what *is to be done*. Hence we must not look for specific direction; but we must observe what was done,—we must study what was the character of the Church which grew up under the inspired care of the Apostles, and we must remember that this Church comes to us with the same binding authority as the New Testament itself, *because* it is the Church which Christ promised to build, just as that was the Revelation which He promised, even less definitely, should be given.

Many well meaning persons ask, "Why, if Christ intended His Church to have a definite organization, do we not find specific directions for it somewhere recorded?"

But such persons forget that no inspired book of the New Testament was written until several years after the Church was founded. In these years the organization of the Church was com-

pleted. The Acts is a record of what *had been* accomplished. The various Epistles were written to the Church *already existing* in different cities, or countries. There is no book of the New Testament which was written before the establishment of the Church. What we *are* to look for, however, is that any Church claiming to be that built by Christ shall harmonize with whatever notices of the Church exist in the New Testament. If the New Testament is a Divine Record, written soon after the Church was set up by the Apostles, then whatever allusions to the Church are found in it, must be regarded as the *test* by which the claims of any Church supposed to be Apostolic must be tried. We find the Apostolic Church in the New Testament. The principles of its organization are there apparent. Hence the New Testament may be the *test* of a Church, but it cannot be the *basis* of a Church;—at least of Christ's Church, because *that* was built before the New Testament was written, and like the New Testament itself is based upon the oral instructions of Christ, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Let an objector to this consider where his logic would lead him. The observance of the First Day of the week as the Lord's Day is nowhere directed, or commanded in the New Testament. The *fact* of such observance may be found there, and the New Testament may be the *test* of such observance; but that is all.

The same is true of Creeds, the Baptism of Infants, Christian Worship itself—indeed of almost any of the externals of Christianity. But on this account are the latter of no binding force? No. If the Bible itself is binding, so, too, is the Church. Our Lord promised both. Both were produced by the same Holy Spirit, and such as the one was originally built and the other written, so are they coördinately binding upon us.

The line of thought in the following pages having already aided some groping in the dark respecting the Church, it was suggested to the writer that a printed statement of it might prove useful to others similarly situated, which it is hoped may be the case.

Shanghai, China, October, 1879.

THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

"Walk about Sion, and go round about her; and tell the towers thereof. Mark well her bulwarks, set up her houses, that ye may tell them that come after," Psalm XLVIII. 11, 12.

I.

CHRIST PROMISES TO BUILD IT.

Our Lord's statement is clear and distinct. He says, "*I will build* my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." No amount of doubt, no amount of explanation can affect the plain force of these words. Christ Himself is the Author of the Church whose origin and growth are depicted in the Acts and Epistles. He was just as truly the source from which the Apostolic Church sprung, as He was the source from which we receive the Apostolic Scriptures. He "built" the one through His Holy Apostles, inspiring them with the Holy Ghost, just as He wrote the other through His Holy Apostles, inspiring them with the Holy Ghost. No Scriptural basis can be produced for any other assumption.

II.

CHRIST SPEAKS TO HIS APOSTLES FORTY DAYS ABOUT THIS CHURCH.

"Being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God," Acts I. 3. Here again there is no doubtful statement. Our Lord having before promised to "build His Church," now immediately after the Resurrection, that is upon the completion of His immediate and direct work upon earth, proceeds to the fulfilment of His promise to build His Church by tarrying on earth forty days, "speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God," i.e. the Church, both in its inner spirit and and in its outer, visible organization and growth. This identity of the Kingdom with the Church is taught in St. Matt. XIII, in which our Lord describes, by a series of parables, this Kingdom of God, that Daniel had prophesied God would set up (Dan. II. 44). What is here described is not alone something inward and spiritual,

but also something outward and visible. The idea conveyed is that of the *body* of the faithful, among whom tares have sprung up; not an *in*visible Church composed of the holy alone. Nor can the tares be interpreted to mean the world outside of the Church, in the midst of which the Church is planted. *After* the seed has been sown in the field, i.e., the new dispensation planted in the world, the tares are *then* sown in the midst of the good seed, and to *the product* of this the Kingdom of Heaven is likened. But *that product* can only be the visible Church with its visible organization, for by an invisible spirit faithful believers can be united with the faithful only,—any mingling with the tares can be only in the *visible* Church. Hence the Kingdom of God can mean only the Church, regarded from within, and from without also—the one Spirit, and the one Body (Eph. IV. 4).

The same is taught more forcibly if possibly by the parable of the net, in which the Kingdom is likened to a "net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which when it was full they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." The net, containing good and bad, can be no other then the *visible* Church; but to this net the Kingdom is likened. How wonderfully does the picture we have of the visible Apostolic Church tally with this. We meet with the "tares" and the "bad fish" in the cases of Ananias and his wife (Acts V. 1–11); Simon Magus (Acts VIII. 22–24); the incestuous Corinthian (1 Cor. I. 1, 2. 2 Cor. II. 5–10); Demas (Col. IV. 14 &. Philem. 24, cf. 2 Tim. IV. 10); Hymenaeus, Philetus and Alexander the coppersmith (1 Tim. I. 20. 2 Tim. II. 17, IV. 14), Phygellus, and Hermogenes (2 Tim. I. 15).

Hence we see that our Lord speaks forty days with the apostles about the Church which He had promised to build.

III.

CHRIST ALSO GIVES HIS APOSTLES COMMANDMENT.

The scheme is evolved by our Lord in its natural sequence. First we have His promise, then we find Him instructing the

apostles, and accompanying the instructions are the commands. What they have to do is made clear to their minds, as well as the command to do it.

These three points are preliminary to our examination in the Book of Acts and the Epistles, of the representation of the actually existing Church as found in them. Before studying what the Church *was* as organized by the apostles, we have seen that our Lord promised to "build" it, instructed the apostles concerning it, and gave them commandment. He also referred to it as having the power of excommunication (St Matt. XVIII. 17, 18).

Fixing in mind these facts, and the principles which they involve, viz;—the Divine Authorship of the Church, and that it was built in accordance with the Divine direction, and that it alone has, on this account, the Divine sanction, we proceed to study what is laid before us in the New Testament as the actual being of the Church.

IV.

ORGANIZATION AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH.

The Day of Pentecost. The Church begins with 120 *individuals, divided into two classes. The addition of* 3,000. *How membership was maintained. The Church's growth. Two Enemies appear—Persecution without—Apostacy within. First recorded Prayer. Appointment of Deacons. Character of the Office, and Form of Appointment. Laying on of Hands. Admission of Gentiles to the Church. First Notice of Elders. Addition of Paul and Barnabas to the Apostolate. St. Paul's First Missionary Journey. How the Church came into Being in various Towns and Countries. St. Paul's Second Missionary Journey. Addition of Silvanus and Timothy to the Apostolate. Position of Elders. Council of Jerusalem. James the Head of the Jerusalem Church, and his Witness to the Resurrection. Character of the Church as thus seen in Its external working.*

The Day of Pentecost has always been called the "Birthday of the Church," because it was then that the Holy Ghost descended and animated into a living Body those called Apostles and Brethren whom our Lord left behind Him.

On that day we have before us a society, or body of men and women, numbering one hundred and twenty (Acts I. 15). These one hundred and twenty individuals are divided into two strongly marked classes,—Apostles and Brethren. Twelve are Apostles, one hundred and eight, Brethren. The whole number (Acts II. 4) are so affected by the Holy Ghost that they "speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance," thus fulfilling our Lord's promise (St. Mark XVI. 17), which was to the Brethren—"them that believe" (St. Mark XVI. 17), as well as to the Apostles. But at this point St. Peter and the other eleven Apostles stand forth, and he, as the mouth-piece of the twelve, addresses the multitude. As a result of this, the multitude are "pricked in their heart," and ask "Peter and the rest of the Apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said unto them, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' 'Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added bout three thousand souls" (Acts II. 38, 41). The scene now presents itself thus;—A society composed of twelve Apostles and "about three thousand," one hundred and eight Brethren. This society has been established by our Lord's having gathered twelve Apostles, and one hundred and eight Brethren, the mere visible Body, and by the Holy Ghost's descending upon it and animating it, so that it was no longer a "mere visible Body," but a *living*, visible Body, whose life is the Holy Ghost. To these have been added by Baptism (Acts II. 41, 1 Cor. XII. 13, Gal. III. 27), "about three thousand."

The following verse tells us how they maintained their membership in this society. "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' teaching, or doctrine, and fellowship, (or communion as the word is translated 1 Cor. X. 16, 2 Cor. XIII, 14), and the breaking of the bread, which is the expression used in the New Testament for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and in the prayers" (Acts II, 42)—evidently from the use of the definite article "the," some specific prayers—not indefinite praying. In the 47th vesr, it is stated that "the Lord added daily those being saved,"

(Gr.) so that we see that the society daily grows in its numbers, and later on (IV. 4), five thousand more were added in a body, while in V. 14 & XI. 24, "multitudes" are spoken of as being added, and in VI. 7, the accession of a "great company of priests" is reported. In V. 11, the society is called "the Church" the name by which it is henceforth commonly known.

We have now, as we have thus far studied it, the following picture presented to us. The Church is a growing society, or body of men, composed of two classes, Apostles and Brethren, to which men are admitted by Baptism (Acts II. 41, 1 Cor. XII. 13, Gal. III. 27), and whose membership is maintained by their adherance to the Apostles' Doctrine and Communion, and participation in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (See also 1 Cor. X. 16), and the Prayers.

The rapid growth of the Church excites the alarm of the Jewish rulers, and persecution at once ensues (IV, V, VI, VII, &c). This is the *outward* enemy which assailed the Church. We have in the instances of Ananias and others before mentioned, the complementary *inward* enemy by which her strength is to be undermined, viz;—Apostacy. Both enemies were foretold by our Lord—the Persecution, St. Matt. X. 17, et. seq. St. Luke. XXI. 12,—the Apostacy in the parables of the wheat and tares, and of the net full of good and bad fish, St. Matt. XIII. 37–42, 47–50, as well as in St. Matt. XXIV. 12.

The persecution falls first upon St. Peter and St. John (IV. 3). When they are released they return to "their own company," and report what has happened to them. Then follows a prayer in which all unite with one common voice. That they should do this, there must have been either a common inspiration of the Holy Ghost, or else this form of prayer must have been beforehand prepared and set forth. It is the first of the many prayers given in the history of the Apostolic Church, and is both in accordance with the definiteness which seems to be the characteristic of "the prayers" spoken of in Acts II. 42, and also points to the use of common united prayer in which all joined. Another persecution follows which embraces all the Apostles (V. 16, 29).

A new phase is now presented to us. Thus far we have seen the Church composed of two classes, Apostles, whose work later on is designated as that of the "Ministry"—(2 Cor. v. 18, &c.)., and themselves as "Ministers" (1 Cor. iii. 5, &c.)—and the second class, Brethren.

In Acts vi. a new class is set apart, with a view to relieving the Apostolate of the more secular part of their duties. They are chosen by the "whole multitude" (vers. 3. 5); but their appointment to their office is expressly stated to be made by the Apostles themselves (verse 3) by means of the imposition of hands (verse 5), accompanied by prayer (verse 6). We find the Deacons working miracles (verse 8, viii. 13), preaching (verse 10, viii. 5, 12, 35, 40, xxi. 8), baptizing (viii. 12, 13, 38). In their working of miracles our Lord's promise (St. Mark xvi. 17, 18,) was fulfilled. But it must not be supposed that the working of miracles was confined to the Clergy, or Ministerial Class, whether Apostles or Deacons. The promise was to "*them that believe*" (St. Mark xvi. 17). Preaching also was not confined to the clergy; although the authoritative proclamation of the Word seems to have belonged to them, for we find in them the setters forth of the truth. Still, the simple proclamation of the Gospel in one way or another belongs to the Brethren as well as the Ministry. The power to baptize was originally given to the Appostles alone (St. Matt. xxviii. 16, 19). But we find this power imparted by them to the Deacons. At this stage of its growth the Church is thus represented,

$$A.\ \text{Clergy} = \begin{cases} 12\ \text{Apostles.} \\ 7\ \text{Deacons.} \end{cases}$$

$$B.\ \text{Laity} = \text{Brethren.}$$

The Apostles were appointed by Christ; the Deacons, by the Apostles. The Brethren became members of the Church by Baptism.

At this point we come into contact with another feature of the Church. When the Samaritan converts had been baptized by Philip, the Deacon, and intelligence of it had been received by the

Apostles, two of their number, Peter and John are sent by them to Samaria. These lay their hands upon the heads of the baptized converts and the gift of the Holy Ghost is imparted (Acts VIII. 17, see also XIX. 6, Heb. VI. 2). Hence it appears that while a Deacon might baptize, only an Apostle might lay on hands.

The next important event is the admission of the Gentiles to the Church, when the Holy Ghost descends upon Cornelius and his friends, who are thereupon baptized by St. Peter (Acts X).

In the following chapter (vers. 30), we have an incidental notice of still another class who are called Elders. The word is here first mentioned, but the character of the office does not yet appear.

In Acts XIII. we see that there has been an addition of two more to the Apostolic office, Barnabas and Paul. They have been mentioned in the Acts before, but nowhere previously as Apostles. By comparing XIII. 2, 3, with XIV. 26, it will be seen that these two men did not receive their appointment to the Apostolate at this time. The Holy Ghost says, "separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (XIII. 2). Accordingly they are "separated," and the Church at Antioch "when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them," *i.e.*, "recommended them to the grace of God, " (XIV. 26), let them go—*not* as translated, "sent them away." This "work" was the First Missionary journey of Barnabas and Paul, as appears from XIV. 26, "which work they fulfilled," as is stated in the same verse. Moreover that this (XIII. 2, 3,) was not St. Paul's appointment to the Apostolate, appears from Gal. I. 1, where he declares it to be from Christ directly, and not by man, nor through man as the mere agent of God; and from Acts XXVI. 16, 17, where God's appearance to him is described to be for the purpose of setting him apart for the Apostolate, and appointing him to it.

But although the account of Acts XIII. 2, 3, is not of their appointment to the Apostolate, each is nevertheless an Apostle. Paul is repeatedly called so, and Barnabas is so designated three times (Acts XIV. 4, 14, 1 Cor. IX. 5, 6).

In this Missionary journey, as well as in those which follow, the way in which the Apostolic Church came into being in various towns and countries is made clear to us. The Apostles Barnabas and Paul ("and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them"—"the Jews," Acts xvii. 1, 2,) would preach to the Jews, in their synagogues, "reasoning with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen from the dead" (xvii. 2, 3). The result was that some would reject the message, while others would cleave to the Apostles. The latter class formed a nucleus, and became the centre of the work among the heathen, and this was true to so great an extent as to cause the early Church to be called a sect of the Jews by the surrounding pagans. These newly formed Churches in the various cities were under the charge of the Apostles. They were gathered together by the Apostles, and it was the Apostles who appointed their ministers over them. Barnabas and Paul on the first Missionary journey organize the Church in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch of Pisidia, and *they*, not the congregations, appoint Elders in each city. Later on another visit of supervision and oversight is proposed to Barnabas by Paul, but as they cannot agree upon the question of taking John Mark, they divide the field. Barnabas proceeds to supervise the work in Cyprus, while Paul having chosen Silas (=Silvanus*),

* Silas=Silvanus.

Paul, Silas and Timothy went from Asia to Philippi, where Paul and Silas were persecuted, and then went on to Thessalonica (Acts xvi. 19, xvii. 1). From there they went on to Berea. While Paul continued his journey to Athens, Silas and Timothy remained at Berea. Upon Paul's arrival at Athens, he sends for them, and they join him at Corinth (xvii. 10, 14, 15, xviii. 5). In the first Epistle to the Thessalonians (ii. 2) St. Paul speaks of their "Entrance in unto" them (*i.e.*, of Paul, *Silvanus* and Timothy, Cf. i. 1.) after having suffered at Philippi. But the *special* sufferers were Paul and Silas, so that Silas seems here to be identified with Silvanus. This becomes clearer as we compare "Paul, *Silas* and Timothy," who were following out the route of travel given above after leaving Philippi, with "Paul, *Silvanus* and Timothy" following out the same route. In the Acts, and again in the Epistles, in the same journey is described as made by St. Paul and Timothy with a third person. In the Acts he is called Silas, in the Epistles, Silvanus. Philippi, Cf. Acts xvi, 1 Thes. ii. 3; Thessalonica Acts xvii. 1, 4, 10, 1 Thes. ii. passim; Corinth, Acts xviii. 5, 2 Cor. i. 19. This third person, called Silas in the one place, Silvanus in the other, must have been the same individual.

after "being recommended by the brethren to the grace of God" (xv. 36–41), as he and Barnabas had been "recommended" before starting upon the first Missionary journey, he and Silas set forth upon a tour of supervision through Syria and Cilicia (xv. 41).

While going over their ground, Timothy is met (xvi. 1–3) and he is chosen by St. Paul as a co-worker. Whether Silas and Timothy were at this time made Apostles, does not appear; but the statement is plain that they were Apostles; "when *we* might have used authority, as the *Apostles* of Christ" (Greek, 1 Thes. ii. 6, Cf. i. 1).

Throughout the Second Missionary journey Paul and Silas oversee the Churches, and deliver to them "the decrees for to keep which were ordained of the Apostles and Elders which were at Jerusalem." From this the Churches are seen not merely to be subject to the supervision of the special Apostle who planted them, but also to the decrees issued by the collective decision of the whole Apostolic Church. But the Apostles Paul, Silas and Timothy not only visited the scene of the labors of the two Apostles Barnabas and Paul; in addition to this work new ground is broken, and the Gospel seed is first sown in Europe. The Second Missionary journey includes Greece, and in it we have the same picture presented as in the first. Wherever they go and plant Churches, their own authority is maintained. It is around the Apostles, that is the ministry, or clergy, that the nucleus is formed from which the Church in each place grows (*e.g.* Acts xvii. 4). There is no instance given of believers springing up apart from the ministry, and associating themselves together, and appointing a ministry of their own.* It is the Apostles again who send authoritative Epistles to these Churches—"Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus unto the Church of the Thessalonians," &c. 1 & 2 Thes. i. 1.

This Missionary journey was ended by St. Paul's return to

* Acts xi. 19–21, could not be suggested as an instance, as Barnabas—one of the Ministry—was at once sent forth by the Apostles, and he with St. Paul had charge of the Church in those regions.

Antioch (XVIII. 22). He "spent some time" there and then set forth upon another tour of oversight of the Churches of Galatia and Phrygia "in order" (XVIII.23). When he reached Ephesus, he remained there three years, until the time when the uproar against Christianity was made at the instigation of Demetrius. At this time, or later, he set Timothy as his successor over the Ephesian Church (XX. 1, 1 Tim. I. 3), while he himself went into Macedonia. Soon he returned to Asia Minor, and it was then that he exhorted the Elders of Ephesus.

At this point it is further intructive to observe what now becomes clearer concerning this class. Their great function appears to have been "to feed the Church of God," to be instrumental in making the Ephesian Christians partakers of Christ, feeding upon Him, and one with Him. In whatever way this feeding was to be done, whether by the Word or the Sacraments, that was the special function belonging to them. Nothing beyond this apparently appertained to them, except a share in the general government of the Church. This latter function is clearly represented in the account of the Council of Jerusalem (Acts XV), where the subject under discussion is referred to the "Apostles and Elders" (verse 2). Paul and Barnabas are received by the Apostles and Elders as well as the whole Church (verse 4), the Apostles and Elders being strongly marked as a class separate from the rest of the Church. The Apostles and Elders "come together for to consider of this matter" (verse 6). First St. Peter addresses the Council. He is followed by Paul and Barnabas. Then James, who appears to preside over the Council, sums up what has been said, and gives the decision, "Wherefore I decide" &c, (Greek verse 19). This is adopted by the whole Council, in which the Brethren, or Laity also had a voice (verse 22), and the letter goes forth in the name of the "Apostles, Elders and Brethren" (verse 23), as a decision inspired by the Holy Ghost (verse 28). Yet while the Brethren had a voice in the Council, it appears to have been of small weight with the inspired writer for a little later he speaks of these "decrees" as laid down by the "apostles and elders."

We would here notice that James is at the head of the Church in Jerusalem. When St. Peter is released from prison, he directs his friends to announce the fact to "James and to the Brethren." Then as we have just seen, it was James who presided in the Council of Jerusalem, and gave its decision. When St. Paul arrives at Jerusalem just before he is taken prisoner, he goes to James (Acts xxi. 18). Again, in the first part of the Epistle to the Galatians, St. Paul in speaking of his visits to Jerusalem, brings out fully the headship of James over the Church there. St. Paul first goes up for the purpose of a conference with Peter. The only other Apostle whom he saw was "James the Lord's brother" (Gal. 1. 19). The second time he was there his dealings were with "James, Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars," where James' name heads the list of the three. Again, when certain Judaizing Christians come down to Antioch from Jerusalem, they are said to "come from James." This Apostle is not one of the original twelve, for he is specially designated as the "Lord's brother," while James the brother of John had been put to death before this one is spoken of (Acts xii. 2), and James the less was the son of Alphaeus. Turning to St. Matt. xiii. 55, or St. Mark vi. 3, we find the people objecting to Christ and saying, "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of *James*, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" The brethren we understand from St. John were unbelievers in Christ (vii. 5). Yet after the ascension of our Lord we find them among the believers (Acts i. 14). There appears to have been a special appearance of our Lord to James after His Resurrection, so that James, who was the first at the head of the Jerusalem Church is also interesting as being an instance of one who, an unbeliever of Christ before His Death, became a witness to His Resurrection; and being His brother, and educated with Christ, he had the fullest acquaintance with Him and ability to recognize Him. We have in James one hostile to our Lord, not believing in Him before His Death, yet compelled to believe the Resurrection, and then,

becoming a disciple; he is later at the head of the Church in Jerusalem. (Cf. St. Matt. XIII. 55, St. Mark VI. 3, St. John VII. 5, 1 Cor. XV. 7, Acts I. 14, XII. 17, XV. 19, XXI. 18, Gal. I. 19, II. 9, 12).

To sum up the ground over which we have thus far passed in simply observing what picture is presented to us in the Acts, of the Church which Christ promised to build, we have the following representation.

The Church is a society composed of two classes,

A. Clergy, = { 1. Apostles. 2. Elders, or Bishops. 3. Deacons.

B. Laity,

Apostles.

The original eleven.

12. Matthias.
13. Paul.
14. Barnabas.
15. Silvanus = Silas.
16. Timothy.
17. James the Lord's Brother.

There are also others who are called Apostles; but inasmuch as the word is supposed by some to bear in their case its original etymological sense of "Messenger," we do not add their names to the above list. The men here given can have been called Apostles only in the official sense in which the word is applied to St. Paul and the other Apostles, for they have it applied to them at the same time with these others and they are represented as fulfilling precisely the same official relations in the Church. The successive addition of the other Apostles to the original twelve of the Day of Pentecost, as need for them arose, shows that the Apostolate, or Apostolic order was to be a perpetual one, and not to die out with the original twelve. This we shall also presently see necessarily follows from the character, or essence of the Apostolate itself.

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE MINISTERIAL ORDER.

They were to proclaim the Gospel, and to bring men into, and then maintain them in, a covenant relation with God (St. Matt. XXVIII. 19, 20, St. Mark XVI. 15, 16, St. Luke XXIV. 47). The first preaching of the Gospel might also be summed up as testifying to the Resurrection of Christ as our Living Lord, now in Heaven, for our Lord seemed to identify the two (St. Luke XXIV. 46, 48,) and an attentive study of the discourses of the ministers of the Apostolic Church, as recorded in the Acts, will show that the Resurrection was their great theme. It is upon this that St. Paul lays his whole stress, where he says, "If Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain," &c., (1 Cor. XV. 14–19). The essence of the Gospel to be preached is that Christ is risen and is now living and saving men from their sins. But this is not the whole of the commission. The ministry stands in the *visible* stead of our Lord to mankind (As my Father hath sent Me, *even so* send I you, St. John, XXI. 21) to bring men into a covenant relation with God, and then to maintain them in it. These are the general functions of the Ministry as a whole. We turn now, to examine the special functions of each Order.

FIRST, THE APOSTLES.

They are best described as the full Ministry of the Church *i.e.*, those who embraced in their Order the whole ministerial function. This was the *essence* of their office. The essence of being an Apostle (*a.*) was not to have been appointed by our Lord. In the first place St. Paul's declaration that *he* was not an Apostle appointed by or through man, suggests the fact that there *were* such (Gal. I. 1). But passing this by, the Apostleship of Barnabas, Silas, Timothy and James, the Lord's Brother, stares us in the face, and their appointment was not made visibly by our Lord. (*b*). But it was not inspiration which was the mark of the Apostolate. St. Luke and St. Mark were not among the original

twelve Apostles, yet they produced one half of the Gospel narratives; while the speaking with tongues was bestowed on believers and Apostles alike (St. Mark xvi. 17. Acts ii. 4). *(c.)*—It was not the working of miracles. That was a gift which our Lord promised should be the mark of the believer (St. Mark xvi. 17, 18), while St. Stephen who was not an Apostle is described as working miracles (Acts vi. 8). *(d.)*—Nor was witnessing to the Resurrection the distinguishing mark. St. Paul clearly shows this in 1 Cor. xv. 5-8. He is arguing that Christ rose, and he summons as witnesses whom? The twelve Apostles? Yes; but others too.

1. "He was seen of Cephas"—an Apostle,

2. "Then of the Twelve"—Apostles;

3. "He was seen of Five Hundred Brethren"—*not* Apostles—"at once. Of whom the greater part remain alive unto this present, but some are fallen asleep." St. Paul in bringing out this latter fact seems to imply that if any still doubted the Resurrection, the majority of the Five Hundred might be appealed to. But the latter were not Apostles.

The preaching of the Gospel was the witness to Christ's Resurrection. That was the fact and ground on which all that was preached was rested, and as the Apostles were especially those who preached the Gospel, and its authoritative proclaimers whose life was given to the ministry of the word, *they* were the special, authoritative witnesses of the Resurrection, and it was necessary that any Apostle who took part in the *first* founding of the Church should be such an eye witness, for their *eye-witness of the fact of the Resurrection* was made the ground of their first proclamation of the Gospel (Acts ii. 32, iii. 15, iv. 2, 20, 33, v. 32). Hence when Matthias was chosen in the place of Judas (Acts i. 26,) it was necessary that he should be an eye-witness. But it was not *the being an eye-witness which constituted him an Apostle*, for he was an eye-witness *before* he was so chosen. The whole number of the One Hundred and Twenty (Acts i. 15,) of the Five Hundred (1 Cor.

xv. 6,) were eye-witnesses, but not Apostles. Indeed it was a mark of all the first believers, whether Apostles or Brethren, that they were eye-witnesses. All the One Hundred and Twenty on the Day of Pentecost bore witness to the Resurrection of Christ (Acts II. 3, 4, 11,) and St. Peter himself calls them all witnesses (verse 32). The Apostles were authoritatively so, but all nevertheless reaerlly so, and therefore the *essence* of the Apostolic Office was not to have been a witness to our Lord's Resurrection.

The sum of it is this;

The *dispensation* in which the Church was founded was marked by special characteristics, and these distinctive marks of the *age* it has been erroneously common to call the marks of the Apostolic office alone.

Thus,

1. To have seen the Lord.
2. To have been called *by the Lord* to be either His Apostle, or follower as the case might be.
3. To be inspired.
4. To work miracles.
5. To bear witness to the Resurrection.

These five privileges were the gifts of *all*. They are what distinguished, *not* the Apostles from the Brethren, but the Apostolic from all subsequent ages. The *entire Church, Clergy and Laity*, are *as a whole* distinguished by special gifts and characteristics from the Church of subsequent ages; but the Apostles, Elders and Deacons *as such, i.e., in the essence* of their office are no otherwise different from the three Orders who have been and are still their successors, than the Brethren described in the New Testament are different from the Brethren of after times.

Therefore we must return to the positive side of the question, and having cleared the ground by showing what the *essence* of the Apostolic office was *not*, we must consider what it *was*.

It was the embracing of the whole ministerial function. What was that?

Since our Lord has said, "As My Father hath sent Me, *even so* send I you," and the Apostles consequently stand as His representatives before men, we can only rightly answer the question how the Apostles were sent, by pressing it a little farther back, and asking, How was Christ sent?

The relation between Christ and His Apostles, and of His Ministry to their's has been so well set forth by another writer that we will quote what he has said, although we might wish to alter one or two expressions as somewhat liable to misinterpret the writer's meaning.

"Now, in the first place, as we all know, Christ chose twelve out of His disciples, whom He called Apostles, to be His representatives even during His own Ministry. And He gave them the power of doing the wonderful works which He did Himself. Of course I do not say He gave them equal power (God forbid!); but He gave them a certain sufficient portion of His power. 'He gave them power' says St. Luke 'and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases; and He sent them to preach the Kingdom of God, and to heal the sick' (St. Luke IX. 1,2). And He expressly made them His substitutes to the world at large; so that to receive them was to receive Himself. 'He that receiveth you, receiveth me' (St. Matt. x. 40). Such was their principal power before His passion, similar to that which He principally exercised, *viz.* the commission to preach and to perform bodily cures. But when He had wrought out the Atonement for human sin upon the Cross, and purchased for man the gift of the Holy Ghost, then He gave them a higher commission; and still, be it observed, parallel to that which He Himself then assumed. '*As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*' And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained' (St. John xx. 21–23). Here, then, the Apostles became Christ's representatives in the power of His Spirit for the remission of sins, as before they were His representatives as regards miraculous cures, and preaching His Kingdom.

"The following texts supply additional evidence that the Apostles were commissioned in Christ's stead, and inform us likewise in detail, of some of the particular offices included in their commission. 'Let a man so account of us, as of the *Ministers* of Christ, and *stewards of the Mysteries* of God!' 'Ye received me as an *Angel* or heavenly messenger of God, even *as Christ Jesus*.' 'We *are Ambassadors* for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you *in Christ's stead*, be ye reconciled to God' (1 Cor. iv. 1, Gal. iv. 14, 2 Cor. v. 20)."

"The Apostles then, standing in Christ's place, were consequently exalted by office far above any divine messengers before them. We come to the same conclusion from considering the sacred treasures committed to their custody, which (not to mention their miraculous powers, which is beside our present purpose) were those peculiar spiritual blessings which flow from Christ as a Saviour, as a Prophet, Priest, and King."

"These blessings are commonly designated in Scripture as the Spirit; or the gift of the Holy Ghost. John the Baptist said of himself and Christ; 'I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire' (St. Matt. iii. 11). In this respect Christ's ministrations were above all that had ever been before Him, in bringing with them the gift of the Holy Ghost, that one gift, one, yet multiform, sevenfold in its operation, in which all spiritual blessedness is included. Accordingly, our Lord was solemnly anointed with the Holy Ghost Himself, as an initiation into His Ministerial office. He was manifested as receiving, that He might be believed on as giving. He was thus commissioned, according to the prophet, 'to preach good tidings,' 'to heal the broken-hearted,' 'to give the oil of joy for mourning.' Therefore, in like manner, the Apostles also were anointed with the same heavenly gift for the same Ministerial office. 'He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' Such as was the consecration of the Master, such was that of the Disciples; and such as His, were the offices to which they were thereby admitted.

"Christ is a Prophet, as authoritatively revealing the will of God and the Gospel of Grace. So also were the Apostles; 'He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me;' 'He that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us His Holy Spirit.' (St. Luke. x. 16, 1 Thes iv. 8).

"Christ is a Priest, as forgiving sin, and imparting other needful divine gifts. The Apostles, too, had this power; 'Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosesoever sins ye retain, the are retained.' 'Let a man so account of us as * * * Stewards of the Mysteries of God.'

"Christ is a King, as ruling the Church; and the Apostles rule it in His stead. 'I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (St. Luke xxi. 29, 30).

"The gift, or office, cannot be named, which belongs to our Lord as the Christ, which He did not in its degree transfer to His Apostles by the communication of that Spirit, through which He Himself wrought; one of course excepted, the one great work, which none else in the whole world could sustain, of being the Atoning Sacrifice for all mankind. So far no one can take His place, and "His glory He does not give to another." His Death upon the cross is the sole Meritorious Cause, the sole Source of spiritual blessing to our guilty race; but as to those offices and gifts which flow from this Atonement preaching, teaching, reconciling, absolving, censuring, dispensing grace, ruling, ordaining, these all are included in the Apostolic Commission, which is instrumental and representative in His absence. 'As my Father hath sent me, so send I you.' His gifts are not confined to Himself. 'The whole house is filled with the odor of the ointment.'"

"By a Priest, in a Christian sense, is meant an appointed channel by which the peculiar Gospel blessings are conveyed to mankind, one who has power to apply to individuals those gifts

which Christ has promised us generally as the fruit of His mediation. This power was possessed by the Apostles."

This quotation answers the two questions asked.

Christ came as the Atoning Sacrifice for all mankind. That Sacrifice could be fulfilled by Him alone. But there is another part of His work, which is the application of the effects of His Sacrifice to mankind, which part is three fold, Prophetic, Priestly and Royal, and the Apostles as our Lord's Representatives and Ambassadors, sent by Him as He was sent by His Father, have a Prophetic, Priestly and Royal mission. The possession of this Mission, together with *all* its details was the *essence* of their office. That was the *whole* ministerial function which they possessed.

To embrace *all* ministerial functions was *the mark* of the Apostolate.

Let us now examine individually these several functions.

a. *Prophetic.*

Under this head we have the defining of what the Faith was, and its proclamation. The Faith taught was a definite one and not loose speculation, and for it St. Jude bids us "earnestly contend" (verse 3).

b. *Priestly.*

Under this head we have the exercise of the means of grace through which men are to be brought into, and then maintained in a living union with God. It would include the administration of the Sacraments, the exercise of discipline in cutting off from the communion of the Church, the laying on of hands, and the transmission of the ministry by ordination.

c. *Royal.*

Under this head is included the rule and government of the Church.

It will at once be seen that these offices are not of a transient nature, but that so long as the Church should exist, they must co-exist with it.

But it is well here to point out one class of duties which we might almost say would devolve upon the first Apostles only, *i.e.*,

those involved in the first organization of the Church itself. Yet these were rather characteristic of the *time* than of the *Apostolic office*, and to a certain extent are again developed when the Church is planted anew in a heathen country.

The case of the Apostle Timothy who was left by St. Paul in the oversight of the Ephesian Church may be taken as illustrative of the office in its three leading phases.

a. *Prophetic.*

He was to guard and give heed to the doctrine (1 Tim. I. 3, IV. 13, 16, 2 Tim. I. 13, II. 2, 15, III. 14). He was to preach (2 Tim. IV. 2).

b. *Priestly.*

Here we find the exercise of discipline, and it is especially shown to inhere in his office from St. Paul's directing him to "let no man despise his youth." (1 Tim. IV. 12, V. 19, 20, 2 Tim. IV. 2). Also the laying on of hands (1 Tim. V. 22). Also ordination (1 Tim. II. passim). Here St. Paul states the qualifications of the two orders which we have seen to be below the Apostolate, viz., the Presbyterate and Diaconate.

c. *Royal.*

A perusal of the two Epistles to Timothy shows that the government of the Church at Ephesus was committed to his care.

In the same way the oversight of the Cretan Church was committed to Titus, the "partner and fellow-helper" of St. Paul (II Cor. VIII. 23), and the same office belongs to him.

a. *Prophetic.*

He is to care for "sound doctrine" (Tit. II. 1), and also to preach (II. 15).

b. *Priestly.*

He is to "rebuke with all authority, letting no man despise his youth" (I. 13, II. 15, III. 10). Ordination is specified, with the qualifications of an Elder (I. 3, 6–9).

c. *Royal.*

As in the case of Timothy at Ephesus, so here in that of Titus, a perusal of St. Paul's Epistle to him will show that the government of the Cretan Church was committed to his charge.

We must now consider the character of that class which we have seen to be immediately subordinate to the Apostolate. They share nearly all the Apostolic functions.

a. *Prophetic.*

"Apt to teach" (1Tim. III. 2), Tit. I. 9, see also Acts XV. 2, XVI. 4).

b. *Priestly.*

There is no direct statement of the Elders administering the Sacraments, but we are not aware of the fact ever having been questioned, and it is necessarily implied in St. Paul's stating to the Ephesian Elders that they had been set over the Church there to "feed it," which could only be understood as meaning,—to supply the constantly recurring spiritual wants of the individual Christians in it.

Ordination did *not* belong to their office. It cannot be urged that although no command is given them to ordain, just as none is given to administer the Lord's Supper, yet it is a legitimate supposition that they *did* ordain, as well as administer the Lord's Supper. The cases are not parallel. There is, it is true, no recorded command for them to do either; but there is *no* indication that they did not administer the Lord's Supper, while there is the clearest proof that they did not ordain.

It is this.

First, the ordaining of any is seen always to have been by an Apostle—of the Deacons (Acts VI. 6, 1 Tim. III. 8–13,)—of the Elders (Acts XIV. 23, 1 Tim. III. 2–7, Tit. I. 5),—of an Apostle, (2 Tim. I. 6).*

* It has been argued that 1 Tim. IV. 14, "neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery," indicates that Elders ordained. But no such interpretation of the text is admissible for the simple reason that nothing of the kind is stated or implied. Compared with 2 Tim. I. 6, the reverse is implied for the word *with* (μετὰ) here used, cannot signify the *means by which* "the gift in" Timothy was imparted, but merely that the laying on of the hands of the Elders accompained the impartation of "the gift" "which," St. Paul later on expressly states, "is in thee *by*

But secondly. Not only are all cases of ordination which are mentioned seen to have been by an Apostle, but we see also how it *could not* have been a part of the Elder's office.

When St. Paul went from Ephesus after his three years continuous residence there, *before* Timothy had been placed there as his substitute, he left Elders over the Church (Acts xx. 17). Timothy is set over the Church when he goes away. If then the Elders *could* ordain, and *were* ordaining, why was the whole matter of ordination committed to Timothy? (See 1 Tim. III *passim*). The entire charge of ordination is entrusted to him, and such a confining of it to him is utterly inconsistent with the supposition, that the Elders (who were already there and could have ordained had it been a part of their office to do so) ordained at all.

The same is true in the case of Titus, although it does not appear, as is clear in the case of Timothy, that there were already Elders in Crete before Titus went there. But it *is* clear that *to him alone* the whole matter of ordination was entrusted (Tit. 1. 5).

c. *Royal.*

From the very nature of the Elder's office in being set over an individual Church and congregation, the element of government entered into his office while in Acts xv *passim*, his order is seen to share in the government of the whole Church with the Apostolate.

We have already noticed the duties of the Diaconate in describing the appointment of the Deacons, but we may with advantage again advert briefly to them here.

The Deacons preached (Acts VI. 10, VIII. 5, 12, 35, 40, XXI. 8), and baptized (Acts VIII. 12, 13, 38). These are the only clerical functions which appear to have been bestowed upon the Deacons. Nor should we naturally expect to find them engaged in the exercise of other functions, for their office was designed to relieve the higher Ministry of the more secular part of their labors (Acts VI. 2–4).

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the putting on of *my* hands" (2 Tim. I. 6). There the word employed, "by" (*διὰ*) indicates the *means by which*, and is the word always used by St. Paul to express his own appointment *by* the will of God, or *by* Christ (1 Cor. I. 1, 2 Cor. I. 1, Gal. I. 1, Eph. I. 1, Col. I. 1, 2 Tim. I. 1).

It is to be observed with reference to the whole Ministry that it was *descending* in its character, and *not ascending*. There is no instance of the Brethren appointing a Minister upon their own authority. The authority to execute any office always came from a source higher than the one appointed. This is seen throughout the New Testament. First, our Lord is sent by His Father. As He is sent, even so He sends the Apostles, and *they* then send others.

To Elders a certain portion of the Ministry is committed, as well as to Deacons; but the Apostolate alone is the entire Ministry with all its functions.

As we have noticed the picture of the Church in its actual working, we have seen it to be a society composed of

a. Clergy,

b. Laity.

The clergy comprehend three orders,

1. Apostles,
2. Elders,
3. Deacons.

The distinguishing mark of (1.) the Apostolate is to be endowed with *all* functions of the Ministry; of (2.) the Presbyterate, to be endowed with all save those of the "laying on of hands," and ordination; of (3.) the Diaconate, to possess the power of authoritatively proclaiming the word and baptizing.

The last glimpse which the New Testament gives us of the Church is in the Revelation of St. John, where the Church of the various localities addressed is under the charge of *one* individual called an Angel, a word whose original meaning is synonymous with Apostle, and to him the letter is written, and he is responsible for the Church's welfare.

Finally, the end for which the Society, called the Church, was established is to bring "every creature" into a living union with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and when this union of the individual with God has been effected, to maintain it.

IV.

HOW THE CHURCH IS REPRESENTED BY NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS.

We have seen how various parts of the Church are represented in their practical working, as we have traced the life and growth of the Society itself. It now remains for us to read what description of the whole body is given by New Testament writers. It is described in two ways, as a Kingdom, and as the Body of Christ.

The first aspect has already come before our view in showing the identity of the Kingdom of Heaven with the Church. It is therefore only necessary for us to dwell upon the second.

When we call the Church, the Body of Christ, we have no intention of asserting that a *literal* Body is meant. We have no desire to strain the figure. But it must be recollected that a figure represents to the mind something just as real as the figure itself is. Hence when we say we would not assert that a literal Body is necessarily implied, we do not for a moment say that something *just as real* is not implied. When the Church is called the Body of Christ, it is meant that the Church is something which sustains just the same, just as real a relation to Christ, as the body of a man does to his soul, and just as our corporal nature is called our body, the Church is called Christ's Body. Just as a man's soul and body are one, so are Christ and the Church one. Just as when the soul is withdrawn the body and all its members die, so if Christ be withdrawn from His Body, the Church, it dies; or, from any member of it, he dies.

Every department of nature is searched for metaphors to describe this relation of Christ to His Church, and each metaphor brings into light some special characteristic of the Church, and of Christ's Union with it; As "I am the vine, ye are the branches,"

&c., expresses the oneness and the fact of the Church deriving its life from Christ.

The Church as the spouse of Christ. As that human relation creates physical life, so too is Christ's Union with His Bride, the Church, the source of spiritual life.

The figure of the head and the members again indicates the Church's oneness with Christ and dependence upon Him.

We will examine more closely this representation of the Church as it is found in various passages.

First of all we call attention to the identity of the Church and Body of Christ. St. Paul writes, that God gave Christ to be "the Head over all things to the *Church*, which is *His Body*, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. I. 23). He declares that he suffers for the sake of Christ's "Body which is the Church" (Col. I. 24). Again, "He is the Head of the Body, the Church" (Col. I. 18).

In the third place it is by Baptism that men are grafted into this Body. "By one Spirit are we all Baptized into one Body" (1 Cor. XII. 13,) and parallel to this is the expression, "As many of you as have been Baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. III. 27).

In the fourth place it is nourished through the Holy Communion. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion,"—more correctly,—participation—"of the Blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the participation of the Body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one Body; for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor. X. 16, 17). So fully is the Communion identified with Christ's Body and Blood, that those eating and drinking unworthily expose themselves to judgment, because they "*fail to discern the* LORD'S BODY" (1 Cor. XI. 29). To state this more fully:—The divine life communicated by means of the Communion to believers who are members of Christ's mystical Body—the Church—is called His body and His

blood. This life sustains the souls of believers, "for then," as it has been beautifully expressed, "we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink His blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us."

Again it is *one* Body, just as there is *one* Spirit (Eph. IV. 4, Rom. XII. 5, 1 Cor. XII. 13, Col. III. 15). The Church is thus qualified in numbers of instances, and this fact ought effectually to silence the idea that the Church is a collection of various bodies. The idea of an "invisible Church" is nowhere found in the Scriptures, and if we adopt speculations which are not in harmony with their teachings, we enter a tangled maze of useless theories. The idea of the Church which we *do* find is that of the *one Body* of Christ, composed of all saints, who are admitted to it by Baptism, nourished by the Holy Communion, as St. Paul says, "holding the Head, from which all the Body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. II. 19). Here its regular and orderly growth is depicted. There are indeed "many members," "diversities of operations,"—but "there is *one* Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, and through all and in you all." And the "many members" and the "diversities of operations" are not so many limbs torn apart; but the various means of grace,—such as, the Ministry, the Word and the Sacraments,—which hold together and nourish Christ's Body, in which each has its own appointed work.

This is the picture which St. Paul draws of the Church;—A perfectly developed Body, of which Christ our Lord is the living Head, and against any division of it, or in it, St. Paul protests in most solemn terms, while he expresses our duty of adhering to it by stating that we are called to the peace of God "IN ONE BODY (Col. III. 15)."

This concludes our review of the subject of the Apostolic Church as represented in the New Testament.

Can we better close than with the words of the

"PRAYER FOR UNITY."

"O GOD, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace; give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great danger the Church is in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly Union and Concord; that as there is but one Body, and one Spirit, and one Hope of our Calling, one Lord, one Faith one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may henceforth be all of one heart and one soul, united in one holy bond of Truth and Peace, of Faith and Charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN."

PRINTED AT THE

AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN MISSION PRESS,

SHANGHAI.