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COMMENTARIES

COMMENTARY ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT, VOL 3

1 Timothy

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COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT

VOL III EPHESIANS-PHILEMON

PAUL, THE CHAMPION THEOLOGIAN

BY

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1 TIMOTHY

PROLOGUE

We now reach a department of the Pauline Scriptures in some respects by far the most important of all; *i.e.*, in the fact that while the others have been addressed to the membership, these are directed to the preachers. While they constitute an awful admonition and a solemn warning to the backslidden pastors of the fallen Churches, they turn a flood-tide of holy inspiration on the grand army of preachers, male and female, whom God is raising up—*i.e.*, the holiness movement—to carry the gospel into every nation, call out the elect of every tribe, and thus get the Bride ready for the return of her Divine Spouse. Paul arrived at Rome during his first imprisonment, in February, A.D. 61. Having preached two years in his hired house, we find him in the barracks guarded by the soldiers and preaching daily to the Praetorian army, February, A.D. 63. As there were no charges against him criminal in Roman law, having been acquitted on trial, he resumes his evangelistic peregrinations, returning to Asia, and preaching to the different Churches till about 65. Do not forget that your post-scripts in E.V. following these epistles are all utterly spurious, not a single one of them appearing in the original. The one following this epistle says it was written at Laodicea, an Asiatic city not far from Ephesus; whereas, along with Dean Alford and other eminent critics, I am satisfied it was written in Europe.

CHAPTER 1

2. *“To Timothy, a beloved child in the faith.”* Mark the parental tenderness of Paul; instead of calling him his son, he designates him a beloved child.
3. *“As I call thee to abide in Ephesus, going into Macedonia.”* I am satisfied Paul never wrote this letter when over in Asia while Timothy was with him, as he left him there; but after crossing the Aegan Sea, and landing in Europe, he dictated it to Luke while stopping and preaching in some of those Macedonian Churches; *i.e.*, Philippi, Thessalonica, or Berea. *“In order that you may command certain ones not to teach heterodoxy.”*

Orthodoxy is the simple, unsophisticated Word of God. Everything else is heterodox. These words have been awfully abused by unspiritual preachers, and frequently given even a reverse interpretation. The preachers who confine themselves to the pure and unadulterated Word are this day like angels' visits.

ARGUMENT 1

FABLES AND SUCCESSION

4. *“And not to give heed to fables.”* These “fables” include all human creeds and uninspired authorities. Of course, all books harmonical with the Bible and expository of it, are perfectly right in their place. They claim nothing new and no authority, but simply refer you to the Word of God, the only authority in the universe. Hence, all talk about human authority is heterodoxical and nonsensical, as there is no such thing in the universe. Hence, Paul warns us all to give no heed to fables: *i.e.*, uninspired authorities, human creeds as such independently of God's plain and simple Word, and endless genealogies. Fallen Judaism set great store on genealogies. Every priest must trace his lineage back to Aaron, before he has a right to officiate. Roman Catholics and many Protestant Churches hang their claims to orthodoxy on apostolical, patriarchal, episcopal, or baptismal succession. Millions of people have been humbugged on those lines, and proselyted to Romanism or some other pretentious

ecclesiasticism. It is a trick of Satan from beginning to end to detract attention from Christ to humanisms, and drag you into hell. Suppose Romanism can trace organic succession back to Peter and Paul, and it turns out God had the organization then, and Satan has it now. Look in the New Testament, and see if you can find a trace of the pompous and ponderous organization of Romanism at the present day. You know you can not. This whole problem is a human conceit, fabricated by the enemy to sidetrack and ruin souls. I heard much more preaching on it during my unregenerate life than on salvation. Whole communities were revolutionized and humbugged in this way. There is simply nothing in it. The Divine Ecclesia is the Church of God, and the only one. It simply means the “called out,” and consists of the people who have heard the call of the Holy Ghost, come out of the world, and separated themselves unto God, to live and die for him alone. Hence, there is but one fact to be settled in the solution of all this vexed Church question, Are you a child of God? Have you been born from above? Does the Spirit himself bear witness that you are a child of God? Are you walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless? If all this is true, you are regenerated and sanctified. Hence, you need not trouble yourself about the generations of bygone centuries. Every tub stands on its own bottom. You need not go on a wild-goose chase to Rome and Constantinople. You need not trouble the graveyards, and disturb the tombs of the patriarchs, ransacking the archives of the Middle Ages, to see that no link is missing in the chain of your apostolic succession. There is but one link in the chain, and that doesn’t reach back, but straight up to heaven. It identifies you with your Heavenly Father, and confirms your adoption into the family of God, which is the only true Church in earth and heaven. No wonder Paul gave this rigid admonition to Timothy and all other preachers, *“not to give heed to fables and genealogies, which present controversies rather than the economy of God, which is in faith.”* How Satan has employed millions of demons manufacturing these silly sophistries in hell, and running up great trainloads over the black valley railroad to supply the preachers in this world since the great apostasy fifteen hundred years!

ARGUMENT 2

THE WHOLE BIBLE IN A NUTSHELL

5. *“The end of the commandment is Divine love out of a clean heart, and a good conscience and faith free from hypocrisy.”* This verse is a wonderful convenience to all candid inquirers after truth, as it focalizes all the commandments in the Bible, and con substantiates them in this abbreviated statement, which all are competent to receive and remember. This *agape*, Divine love, is the essence of the Divine nature (1 John 4:18), indigenous only in the heart of God, and exotic in all other beings and dependent solely on Divine intervention for its existence. The Holy Ghost, who is none other than very and eternal God, pours it out into truly penitent and believing hearts. (Romans 5:5.) As our hearts are depraved by the fall, we must have a subsequent purgation, which we receive in the great work of entire sanctification wrought by the Holy Ghost. This is indispensable to the perpetuity and purity of that heavenly stream poured into our hearts in regeneration. Not only must this Divine love, as here revealed, flow out of a clean heart but a “good conscience.” Paul said he lived in all good conscience before he was converted. Yet his conscience was not a correct guide, because he had not received the Divine love and a Clean heart. In Romans 9:1, he testifies, “My conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.” Hence, we see that this noble God-given faculty, the voice of God in the soul, must be corroborated by the Holy Ghost, in order to be a correct guide. But not only is this Divine love to flow out of a “clean heart and a good conscience, but faith free from hypocrisy;” *i.e.*, an unhypocritical faith, rendering our lives and conduct perfectly transparent under all circumstances. The Grecian god Momus said the creation of man was a great failure, as there should by all means be a mirror in his breast, so you could look in and see his thoughts.
6. *“From which some, having deflected, have gone away into empty talking.”* All speaking without the solid truth of God and the Holy Ghost is empty. Hence, when you preach anything except the *“love of God flowing out of a clean heart, and a good conscience and unhypocritical faith,”* you are simply indulging in empty talk. O the empty little talks

ringing from the pulpits at the present day, neither freighted with solid saving truth nor the dynamite of the Holy Ghost!

7. *“Wishing to be teachers of the law, not knowing either what things they say, nor concerning what they affirm.”* No wonder our Savior forbade his own apostles to go and preach the sanctified gospel till they received the pentecostal experience. He knew they could not preach successfully that they had never experienced. That is our great trouble, “the blind leading the blind, and all falling into the ditch together;” millions, like signboards, pointing out road they never travel.

9. *“Knowing this, that the law is not for a righteous man, but for the lawless, the disorderly, the ungodly, the sinners, the unholy, the profane, patricides matricides, homicides,*

10. *“Fornicators, Sodomites, kidnapers, liars, perjurers, and if there is anything else contrary to hygienic teaching,*

11. *“According to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.”* What a black catalogue! Patricide is a murderer of a father, and matricide of a mother. O the thousands of fathers and mothers who are murdered by the wicked lives of their children, thus killing them with sorrow and bringing down their prematurely gray hairs to an untimely grave! Homicide is the murder of a man. John says, “He that hateth his brother is a murderer.” Hatred is the spirit of murder. If you have it in your heart, you are a murderer in the sight of God. The Sodomites were accused of gross brutality, too dark to mention. Kidnappers have depopulated poor Africa for ages indefinite, carrying away her people, and selling them into slavery, thus retarding her progress, baffling her civilization, and making her significantly the Dark Continent. “If there is anything else contrary to hygienic teaching,” or, as E.V. beautifully says, “sound doctrine;” the Greek word “hygienic” is very significant in this passage, since holiness has a hygienic meaning; *i.e.*, soul soundness. In regeneration your dead soul receives the life of God. In sanctification your soul is healed of all hereditary ailments. Children must be born before they can be treated for hereditary diseases. So you must be born of God before you can be sanctified, as this glorious grace is only for God’s children. What a wonderful contrast between the New Testament and the popular creeds; the Pauline preaching and the metropolitan pulpits

of the present day! I was brought up in a country rent and torn by sectarian wars. I would hear an announcement, “Pastor A— will preach a doctrinal sermon. We crowd his house, and listen two to four hours while he thoroughly ventilates and defends his creed; simultaneously so entrenching upon Pastor B— that he must appoint a day for a doctrinal sermon. Then Pastors C— and D— are both bleeding from controversial bullet-holes, and must each in turn likewise give us a big doctrinal sermon. With all this the Pauline truth, “*Divine love out of a clean heart, good conscience, and unhyprocritical faith*” had neither part nor lot. Now you see plainly from this Scripture that nothing but sin antagonizes the saving grace of God. So, when Paul tells us what is “contrary to sound doctrine,” he simply gives us this long black catalogue of soul-destroying vices. In your “Holy Bible” there is but one doctrine focalized from alpha to omega, and that doctrine is holiness. Nothing but sin antagonizes holiness. What a jubilee the devils in the pandemonium enjoyed at the expense of those four pastors I heard in my childhood, wearing themselves out and distracting the people over their doctrinal controversies, which had no more to do with salvation than the old dead issues between the Pharisees and Sadducees. There is but one issue in the Bible; that is personal salvation, which is antagonized by nothing but sin.

ARGUMENT 3

PAUL THE CHIEF OF SINNERS

12. “*I give thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ, who fills me up with dynamite.*”

The Greek here is *endunamosanti*. *En* means with, *dunamis*, dynamite. It is the verb form of the word and in aorist tense, which reveals an instantaneous action. Hence, Paul certifies that Christ filled him up with dynamite in a moment. No wonder he was always loaded, and ready to shoot on a moment’s notification. The same Omnipotent Christ is ready to load up you and me, and prepare us every moment to fire on the devil. “*Because he considered me faithful, putting me in the ministry,*

13. “*Formerly being an evil speaker, a persecutor, and an insulter; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorant in unbelief.*” Honesty was the saving trait in Paul’s character. Fortified by the greatest human learning,

the most consummate ecclesiastical bigotry, and official power, he could only be convinced by a miraculous intervention. If you are perfectly honest, though literally blinded by the devil and led captive at his will, God will deliver you, if he has to work a miracle, as in case of the proud, obdurate, persecuting Saul of Tarsus.

14. Here he certifies that the grace, along with faith and love in Christ Jesus, abounded in his case. In the Scriptures we constantly see the superlative preeminence of faith and love, the one Constituting the human, and the other the Divine hemisphere, in the glorious plan of salvation.

15. “—*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first;*

16. “*But on this account I obtained mercy, in order that in me the first Jesus Christ may show forth all long suffering, for an example of those about to believe on him unto eternal life.*” Paul was first in official position, leadership, learning, and influence in his day. Many have stumbled over this statement, but I see no good reason. Cognomens and epithets survive changes of character in all human circles. In my peregrination I preach side by side with saloonkeepers, drunkards, infidels, thieves, and gamblers, with a number of whose names I am perfectly familiar. We all know them, and frequently designate them by these dark epithets. While all this is true, it is equally true that they are wonderfully saved, gloriously sanctified, filled with the Spirit, and preaching the gospel like messengers from heaven, God everywhere setting his seal on their labors of love. Paul is this day the same chief of sinners, playing on his golden harp among the angels. We will never be angels. Through all eternity we will be nothing but sinners saved by grace. In conversion you are a justified sinner; in sanctification, a purified sinner; and in heaven, a glorified sinner. We must be jealous of our sinnership, as this is the basis of our claim on Christ, since he saves none but sinners. So long as we are in this world, we need him not only to save us, but to keep us saved. If we should forfeit our sinnership, we would forfeit our salvation, as Christ is the Savior of sinners only. Yet it is diabolical foolery to say we must keep on sinning. Neighbor John is well known as a painter; though he has not painted a house since he got rich twenty years ago. Neighbor Samuel is a sailor, so born, reared, and educated; but he has not sailed in twelve years. At the

time of this writing Paul was the chief of sinners, yet, as he says himself in the same sentence, gloriously saved, and consequently a great encouragement to *“those who shall believe on Him unto eternal life.”*

18. The gifts of prophecy laid down in Paul’s catalogue (⁽⁴⁰¹⁾1 Corinthians 12) constitute the enduements of the Holy Ghost, necessary qualifications to preach the gospel. Timothy had received these with his call to the ministry. *“That you may war a good warfare in the same.”* These extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost constitute the Christian’s panoply, with which he wages an exterminating war against sin and Satan; the Spirit serving as armor-bearer, putting in his hand the implement needed in every emergency.

19. *“Having faith and a good conscience, which certain ones having cast away have made shipwreck concerning the faith.”* A true faith always bears the heavenly fruit of good works. Faith and works are the two oars of the salvation boat, in which you sail across this probationary ocean, plowed with a thousand cyclones, to the bright golden shore of a blessed immortality. When your faith fails, your works are no longer in harmony with the Divine administration. Then it is impossible to have a good conscience.

20. *“Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to speak evil.”* Among the many fallen Christians on all sides breaking Paul’s heart, here are two preachers so far deflected from the faith once delivered to the saints that Paul finds it necessary to turn them out of the Church; *i.e.*, excommunicate them from the New Testament Ecclesia, turning them over to Satan. Regeneration takes you out of the world, and sanctification takes the world out of you. So the *bona fide* Christian is doubly divorced from the world. God calls the devil the “God of this world.” (⁽⁴⁰⁰⁾2 Corinthians 4:4.) Hence, the world and the Church are utterly separate and distinct, having no fellowship either with other, the devil ruling the one, and God the other. Hence, to turn people out of the New Testament Church is to surrender them to Satan. Excommunication is the last and most powerful remedy. It will convict sinning Church members when nothing else will. Ejection from the kingdom of grace is but preliminary to their rejection from the kingdom of glory. Hence, it is calculated to alarm, convict, and bring to repentance

when everything else has failed. We see here that Paul does it for their good, “*that they learn not to speak evil.*” When the devil gets them in his black clutches, and the Holy Ghost shows them an open hell and the seething billows rolling at their feet, Paul hopes they will take alarm and repent.

CHAPTER 2

ARGUMENT 4

PRAYER

1. *“First of all, I exhort you that prayers, supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men.”* We do not pray enough. We do not hold on long enough to get in touch with God and prevail. James v says: *“Elijah prayed with prayer;”* i.e., with the prayer which God gave him. He lived so close to God as to receive his prayers from him. In that case God always answers them. The English translators, evidently not knowing the spiritual meaning, do not render it literally but prayed earnestly instead of *“prayed with prayer;”* i.e., the prayer which God gave him. The Greek also says the inward-working prayer availeth much: by the prayer wrought in you by the Holy Ghost. Here Paul enjoins upon us four distinct species of prayers; i.e., prayers in the ordinary sense—supplications; i.e., the importunate holding on to God, like wrestling Jacob, all night; intercessions, like Moses when descending from the mount of God, and finding Israel fallen and gone back to Egyptian idolatry. God proposing to cut them all off, and verify the Abrahamic covenant with Moses, he throws himself into the breach, and pleads, “Lord, blot me out of thy book, but save this people.” Thus all Israel is saved by the intercessory prayers of Moses. God help us, like Jesus, to intercede for our lost loved ones! Thanksgiving is another species of prayer here commanded. We do not thank God enough. Get a brokenhearted, despairing penitent seeking at the altar to break out in thanks to God for convicting him, and soon he will be up shouting aloud.

3. In answer to our prayers God puts his hand on the kings of the earth, and turns them as he turns the rivers of water. How wonderfully he turned about Ahasuerus in the case of Mordecai and Esther!

4. *“—Who wishes all men to be saved, and come to a perfect knowledge of the truth.”* God is so anxious to save all men, he gives his Son to make it

lawful to save them. He also comes in the loving person of the Holy Ghost, warns and entreats every one to come and let him save them. What more could he do than he has done, and is doing? Yet the wicked blame him for their damnation. You go to hell because the devil takes you there, which he is certain to do if you die in his kingdom. God wills that all be saved, and come to a perfect knowledge of the truth—*i.e.*, get sanctified; *i.e.*, reach experimental certainty.

5. There is only one God revealed in three persons. I am a preacher, a book editor, and a teacher. Hence, a human trinity in your humble servant.

7. “—*A teacher of the Gentiles in faith and in truth;*” *i.e.*, faithfully and truly.

ARGUMENT 5

DOMESTIC GOVERNMENT

8. “*Therefore I wish the husbands to pray in every place, holding up holy hands without wrath and doubt.*” This is a high standing in domestic life required of the husband. Perfect love is the only salvation from the malevolent affections, and perfect faith the only antidote for doubt.

“*Nothing but entire sanctification can give us perfect faith and love, and enable us to hold up holy hands.*” The hand moves responsive to the heart. Hence, the only way to have holy hands is to make the heart holy; *i.e.*, get sanctified wholly. So you see this husband, on whom God confers the supremacy of the home, is sanctified wholly, and will certainly do to trust. As we read repeatedly in the Pauline epistles, these things are in the Lord.

9. “*Likewise, ye wives, in comely apparel adorn yourselves, with modesty and prudence; not with braided hair, gold, or jewelry, or costly clothing;*

10. “*But that which becometh women, professing godliness through good works.*” Our money all belongs to God. Hence, we have no right to prodigalize it in dress or any other way. We should avoid all unnecessary expenditure of the Lord’s money, lest we prove unfaithful stewards. Hence, we see gold positively forbidden as a personal adornment. God says, “The gold is mine and the silver is mine.” He needs it as a circulating

medium. We have no right to take it out and appropriate it to feed our pride. That is the cause of all of our present financial trouble, which, it has been feared, will wreck our Government. If the people will take the gold off their persons, and the silver out of their cupboards, and turn them back into the circulating medium, we will have plenty of money.

11. “*Let the wife learn in silence, in all subordination.*” She can well afford to be subordinate to the sanctified husband described in the eighth verse.

12. “*But I do not permit a wife to dictate nor usurp authority over her husband, but to be in quietude.*” The Greek dictionary gives teach, direct, and dictate, as meanings of *didaskein*. It is here homogeneous with *authenthein*, usurp. Hence, I translate “dictate.” The same word is translated “masters” in E. V. (³¹¹James 3:1.) The apostle is expounding domestic government, which, like all others, must have a head. God, in his wisdom, has appointed man to the head ship of the home government. But you see here (verse 8) the man is to pray in every place, holding up holy hands, without wrath and doubt. That kind of a husband will do to rule the home. If the husband is where God commands, the wife will never feel the weight of a feather under his rule, because it will be the reign of perfect love.

13,14. Do we not find here a Divine retribution on the woman for her leadership in the transgression in consequence of which she is subordinated in the home? If so, like labor and physical death, it has been so triumphantly redeemed as to be turned into a blessing in Christ. (³¹²Romans 5:20; 8:28.)

15. “*But she shall be saved through childbearing;*” not as in E. V., “in childbearing.” In this way our Savior came into the world. Hence, we here have a terse allusion to Christ, who, as above written, has saved woman even from the Divine retribution consequent upon her precedence in sin. So, in the wonderful redemption of Christ, in whose incarnation woman was instrumental, she is even saved from the curse of subordination, because the grace of God in Christ through sanctification of the husband, makes his supremacy a blessing to his sanctified wife. “*If they may abide in faith, Divine love, and sanctification with prudence.*” This, with the plural form of the word, takes in all, husband, wife, and everybody. If your faith is all right, you receive the Divine *agapee* in regeneration. This

love —the Divine nature—is poured out (☞ Romans 5:5) in a heart corrupt by the fall. Like the delicious fruit-trees of the Holy Land, brought here to California and planted, the soil must be subsequently purified of indigenous filth, fertilized, and irrigated, or the valuable tree of the Orient will droop and die. So your heart-soil must be expurgated, fertilized, and irrigated, if the tree of paradise, panted in regeneration, would prove a success. Not only must you be sanctified; but here it says, “*in sanctification with prudence*” (E.V., sobriety). This prudence, enjoined by the Holy Ghost, is a guaranty against fanaticism. You must stick to the main trunk line of holiness to the Lord, and suffer nothing to deflect, sidetrack, or ditch you. Follow your Holy Bible, and let your battle-cry ever go up, “Holiness to the Lord.” Divine healing is all right, but do not make it a hobby. The Lord’s coming is all right, but do not make it your hobby. Shall I have any hobby? Yes. The Bible makes holiness a hobby from alpha to omega. All of the prophets, apostles, and martyrs made it their hobby. Keep your eye on Jesus, and he will keep his hand on you. Stick to the great trunk to the New Jerusalem, which is holiness to the Lord.

CHAPTER 3

ARGUMENT 6

THE NEW TESTAMENT EPISCOPACY

The New Testament knows nothing about the modern bishopric, such as prevailed in the dead national Churches of the Old World, a separate and distinct ecclesiastical order. It was the fatal point of departure from apostolic simplicity, developing into priestcraft, progressing into prelacy, and culminating in the papacy. These high ministerial orders, unknown in the New Testament, are awful temptations to ambition, and enemies to sanctification; as you can not be sanctified in a candidacy for anything but heaven. Well does the Methodist simply apply the term superintendent, recognizing the so-called episcopacy as no separate order from the eldership. Good Lord, fortify Methodism against the Oriental episcopacy! So when you read about the bishop in the New Testament, understand the meaning is simply the leader of those little houseless, moneyless, and persecuted holiness bands, by the Holy Ghost denominated Ecclesia; *i.e.*, the people called out of this wicked world and separated unto God, *“to await his Son from heaven,”* thus representing the ascended Lord during his absence, hated, despised, and maltreated by the world as he was. Bishop is the Greek *episcopos*, from *epi*, over, and *skopeo*, to see. Hence, it means a shepherd overseeing his flock. The Latin translation is pastor, which has been adopted into the English language, and is now correctly used as a translation of the Greek *episcopos*. Hence, bishop in the Pauline epistles, as well as throughout the New Testament, simply means the pastor of the church, or circuit, or district. Hence, the New Testament episcopacy is simply the pastorate.

1. *“It is a faithful saying, If any one desires the episcopacy, he is seeking after a beautiful work.”* It is perfectly laudable and right in the sight of God and man to desire and seek after the pastorate as a laudable work, in which to save souls and glorify God. Aspiration to the modern episcopacy would be ambitious and condemnatory in the sight of God and man.

2. “*Therefore it behooveth a bishop to be blameless.*” The code of Lycurgus, the great Spartan lawgiver, remained in force fourteen hundred years, thus surviving every other human code in the world’s history. When out in life’s evening, he secured a pledge from the people that they would obey his laws, at least till they heard of his death. Then he went into lonely exile, never seen nor heard of again, leaving the people thus obligated to obey his laws forever. Prominent in the Lycurgian code was the law that no man could be senator till he had passed his sixtieth year, and sustained an irreproachable character. (Under that law, I fear, we would have to import our senators.) Here we see the Holy Ghost requires an irreproachable character, appertaining to every pastor. “*The husband of one wife;*” *i.e.*, polygamy prohibited. “*Watchful.*” The faithful shepherd must stand on his watchtower, and see that none of his flock go astray, and neither wild beast nor robber purloin nor slay. “*Prudent.*” The pastor is to have a well rounded Christian character, amply fortified against fanaticism, carnal oddities, and eccentricities. “*Orderly.*” He is to be a man of order; having everything in its right place, prompt in all of his duties, and a good organizer. “*Hospitable.*” His habitation is the retreat of the homeless, widows, orphans, and all in distress. “*Competent to teach.*” The pastor is *ex-officio* the teacher of his Church, the school of Christ. Hence, he is to be so cultured by the Holy Ghost as to be competent to teach his people the Holy Scriptures. O what an awful delinquency on this important line of pastoral duty this day! How few Churches are really the school of Christ! “*Not given to wine!*” At that time Satan had never taught the people how to manufacture alcoholic wine. Coffee had not been discovered and brought into use. The people used wine on their tables, like coffee and tea at the present day. The ordinary sweet wine was harmless, nutritious, and reviving; simply the expressed juice of the grape. (^{41B3}Acts 2:13.) E.V., “*These men are drunk on new wine,*” is erroneously translated, the Greek being *gleukous*, fermented wine, the only sort that would make them drunk. “*Not a controversialist.*” An old schoolmaster in the administration of discipline to his fighting pupils made it a rule to hit the one who struck the second blow twice as many licks as the aggressor who struck the first, alleging that it was not the first lick that caused the fight, but the second; for if a boy gets mad and strikes another, and he does not strike back, the aggressor gets ashamed, and strikes no more. Hence, there is no fight. So it is the second lick, retaliatory of the offense given,

that really brings up the fight. The meaning of this Scripture is, that the pastor is not to strike back, but meekly to bear assaults and insults for Jesus' sake. If he preaches the truth, the ecclesiastical pugilist can not overthrow it. If he should preach error, it will be a great blessing to him and to others to have it overthrown. Hence, like his Master, meek and lowly, he is to retaliate nothing. "*Gentle.*" A good case of salvation invariably makes you a model gentleman. You need not read Chesterfield nor go into the society of the world to learn politeness. At the feet of Jesus, taught by the Holy Ghost, you soon become a model gentleman. "*Peaceable.*" The pastor of the Church must not only have the peace of God in his own heart, but God wants to honor him as a peacemaker throughout his bailiwick. "*Free from the love of money.*" This is a deadener on the money loving and salary-seeking pastors of the present age. They have all missed their calling. God does not want them in the pastoral charge of his Churches. They ought to read ³⁴⁰Ezekiel 44 and ⁴⁰⁰1 Peter 5, consider the irreconcilable disharmony of their attitude with God's Word, and either wallow in the straw till God sanctifies out of them every vestige of money love, or go out of the pastorate forever.

4. "*Ruling their own family in the beauty of holiness, having their children in subordination with all gravity.*"

5. ("*But if any one does not know how to rule his own family, how will he take care of the Church of God?*") These two verses sweep many a metropolitan pastor out of his stilted pulpit. The Bible is a plain book, and, with candor and honesty, easily understood. If a man can not save his own home, he is incompetent to fill the office of pastor; from the simple fact that the wicked example of his own ungodly family will rear a Popocatepetl between him and his people. Despite all he can do, they will stumble over the profligate example of the pastor's family headlong into hell. Let such a man labor as an evangelist, seeking his field beyond the influence of his own incorrigible and ungodly family. Remember the Bible makes no mistakes. Hence, it is the inalienable duty of God's people to enforce all of these restrictions, and see that the pastor is in full harmony with the laws of God regulating his ministry.

6. "*Not a novice*" (Greek, a new shoot). The old Methodists strictly obeyed this injunction, never committing a pastoral charge to a young

preacher but always sending him out as the junior of a senior pastor. In these times, in which we sadly see the rapid apostasy of the Churches on all sides, so fearfully fulfilling the latter-day prophecies, the fallen worldly Churches are everywhere clamorous for juvenile pastors, whose inexperience and worldliness will be to them a guarantee of loose administration and carnal pleasures. Good Lord, help us back to first principles lest, having been puffed up, we may fall into the condemnation of the devil. “What is so calculated to inflate a boy preacher with vanity, foster egotism, inflame carnal passions of lust and covetousness, and expose him to Satan’s lasso, as to promote him to the pastorate, thus giving him authority over people old enough to be his grandparents, and exposing him to the attractions of the giggling girls and carnal youths who constitute the devil’s choir! Though he does not fall into public scandal, he simply apostatizes from God;” thus falling into the condemnation of the devil, becoming a cultured, popular pastor, but shorn of his spiritual locks, he spends his life grinding in the mills of Dagon.

7. *“It behooveth him to have a good report from outsiders, lest he may fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”* Satan’s people have more sense than we give them credit for. In a revival where many were getting saved, I finally got a hard rowdy in the rear of the audience down on his knees, and prayed for him. When he consented for me to go to the altar, and bring a preacher back there to pray for him (as this occurred in my boyhood), I said, “Which one?” “Bring old Thompson, for he has got more religion than all the balance.” Depend on it, the outsiders measure up every pastor in your town; they don’t miss the mark; if you are money-loving, worldly, cold, formal, and unspiritual, they find it out. What a deplorable pity that every Church on the globe does not enforce the laws of God relative to the pastorate! If it had been done, the world would have been conquered long ago, and our glorified Lord, in the splendors of his millennial glory, reigning from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof. The holiness movement is God’s relief train, sent to the Churches wrecked by the world, the flesh, and the devil. God help us to be true and stick pertinaciously to the letter of the law! Do that, and you will come out right every time. The enforcement of the positive law of heaven here revealed would de-episcopate the great majority of the Churches in all lands. But God would raise up pastors in harmony with his Word to

supply them all. The Protestant Churches have really gone into the wildest fanaticism on the subject of pastoral education. If a man has a collegiate diploma, and passes through the prescribed theological course, he is admitted with a clamorous welcome, though he be radically deficient in the qualifications here laid down by the Holy Ghost through the apostle Paul. The truth of it is, they will admit him and promote him to a metropolitan pulpit without so much as having investigated this inspired catalogue of indispensable pastoral graces. God help you all to study, appropriate, and do your utmost, by the grace of God, to confer them on every candidate for the pastorate!

ARGUMENT 7

THE DIACONATE

The organization of the New Testament Church is wonderful for its simplicity. The greatest mistake of the ages has been the departure of the Church from that beautiful original. O that all would come back to it! Human institutions, alien from the inspired original, have built mountains on the visible Church too heavy to be borne. Hence, they weight her down to carnality and diabolism. The Gospel Church has but two offices in her organization; *i.e.*, the pastorate, Conservatory of her spiritual interest; and the diaconate, the temporal. The union of these two offices in the same person is out of harmony with the original economy. It is all right for the deacon to preach with the evangelistic fire and vehemence of Philip in Samaria, and Stephen amid the stony shower, as God wants to fill us all with the Holy Ghost, giving us tongues of fire and turning us loose against the devil. But the deacon is the official custodian of the local institution, whose duty it is to look after every temporal interest—the house, the finances, the pastor, the widows, the orphans, the poor, the meetings, etc. The Alma Mater Church at Jerusalem had seven deacons; of course, little organizations would frequently need but one. The diaconate is an office of most vital importance, involving the very existence of the local Church. Fortunately, we here have a graphic delineation of the qualifications required by the Holy Ghost in the deacon of a Gospel Church. While we deplore the departure of our predecessors from the New Testament

organization, God help the holiness people in all lands to profit by the mistakes of our predecessors, and ever stick pertinaciously to primitive simplicity! The moment you create a human office, you open a door and invite carnality to walk in. Then the devil always comes in uninvited. In Methodism the deacons, in Bible phraseology, are called stewards, the diaconate having been transferred to the pastorate. The Baptist economy is Scriptural at this point.

8. *“Likewise let the deacons be grave;”* i.e., sober, sedate, not given to hilarity, jocosity, or frivolity, or trivial things grievous to the Holy Ghost. The deacon should be filled with the Holy Ghost, who will not stay with people if they indulge in vanity and folly. *“Not double-tongued”*—Greek, double-worded; i.e., having two kinds of language to suit his company. When with the worldly he speaks the language of Ashdod; but with the saints, the language of Canaan. The tongue is the exponent of the soul, which goes out at the end of the tongue, visits the world, and comes back the same way. Paul’s double-tongued man is identical with James’s double-souled man (E.V., double-minded). The sinner has but one soul, and that is a bad one. The sanctified man has but one soul, and that is a good one. The double-souled and double-tongued are the unsanctified Christians, having the two natures in them belligerent with each other. Hence, we see that the New Testament deacon must be sanctified wholly, thoroughly expurgated from the carnal mind, and having only the mind of Christ. Then he will no longer speak the language of Ashdod, but that of Canaan only, having but one mind and one language. *“Not given to much wine.”* The grape-juice in the Holy Land is exceedingly delicious and nutritious; though ordinarily innocent, the temptation to a farmer in the “land of corn and wine” to partake excessively justifies timely admonition. *“Not fond of disgraceful gains”*—E.V., *“greedy of filthy lucre.”* All accumulation out of harmony with perfect honesty is disgraceful in the sight of God and all good men. Here is an unanswerable argument in favor of the entire sanctification of the deacon, as this is the only grace that perfectly saves him from filthy lucre. O how we need such men to officer the Church of God!

9. *“Having the testimony of faith in a clean conscience.”* The Holy Ghost is here powerfully explicit for the sanctification of all the deacons, knowing that this is the only way to keep the Church loyal to God. If

once the deacons are caught by the devil, it will be very hard to keep him from lassoing the Church, as he has sadly done in myriads of cases. The soul, heart, or spirit (as these terms are used interchangeably in pulpit and pew), consists in the conscience, will, and affections. The conscience is the only spiritual element that survived the fall, thus constituting a medium through which God can speak to the soul. Without this survival of the Edenic original, man would be hopeless as a devil. Through the conscience God speaks, convicting the sinner. The will is the king of humanity ingeniously subordinated, manipulated, and utilized by the devil in human damnation. In conversion, the will is wrested out of Satan's hands, and turned over to God, who subsequently rules the man through his will. Still a terrible civil war rages in the deep regions of the affections, till everything disharmonious with the Divine will, and heterogeneous to the character of God, is extirpated by the cleansing blood, and exterminated by the consuming fire of the Holy Ghost in entire sanctification. Here it is enjoined upon the deacon to have a clean conscience, and witness to it. The conscience is a constituency of the heart, the specific for the generic, involving the unequivocal conclusion that the deacon must have a clean heart; *i.e.*, be sanctified wholly.

10. *“But let them first be proven, then let them exercise the office of a deacon, being irreproachable.”* As the deacon is the custodian of the local Church, there is a great risk in his office, lest he let the devil in. Hence, no one is to be entrusted with the office of deacon till he has been thoroughly tested on all lines of these specified qualifications. After he has given ample proof, then he shall he solemnly consecrated to the office of deacon with fasting, prayer, and the imposition of hands.

11. *“Likewise let the women be grave, not tattlers, vigilant, faithful in all things.”* This verse describes the qualifications of the women, who shall be entrusted with the office of deacon. You see they are substantially identical with the preceding already described, with the single exception of “tattling.” As women are much about houses and in company, and thus exposed to extraordinary temptations in the direction of loquacity, perhaps the additional warning is given to avoid all gossip, talking only for Jesus.

12. *“Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses in the beauty of holiness.”* Here we see the same restriction laid on the deacon as on the pastor. If a man’s family are not an example and an inspiration to the Church, and thus an auxiliary to the deacon or the pastor in his momentous and responsible leadership of souls, such a one shall not be trusted with either of these responsible offices. They must be content to work for the Lord without thus jeopardizing the spiritual interest of the Church. Bear in mind that the Holy Ghost, through his servant Paul, emphatically specified this prohibition in case of both pastor and deacon, the only officers of the New Testament Church, that their families, the inmates of their houses, must be faithful examples for the members of their Churches, cooperative with them in their responsible work as officers representing the Church of the living God.

13. *“For those who have administered the office of a deacon in the beauty of holiness, appropriate to themselves, beautiful progress, and much boldness in the faith, which is in Christ Jesus.”* Certainly the person enjoying all the graces here required in the experience of a deacon, augmented constantly by the wonderful means of grace incident to the faithful performance of official duties, will make rapid progress in the Divine life, growing into spiritual gianthood, and becoming a tower of strength in the Lord’s war. What can we do to bring the Churches back to the glory, simplicity, beauty, and victory of the New Testament organization, disencumbering her of the unscriptural human institutions which weight her to death? If she would only return to first principles, the earth would tremble and quake with pentecostal revivals.

ARGUMENT 8

THE CHURCH, GOD’S FAMILY

15. *“I write these things to thee, hoping to come to thee more speedily.”* Evidently Paul’s plan was to spend the oncoming winter at Nicopolis in Southern Macedonia, and return to Asia the ensuing spring. This he never did; but saw Timothy no more till they met in bright glory. Instead of spending the winter at Nicopolis, he was arrested, carried to Rome, and

incarcerated in that filthy old Mamertine prison; out of which he was led to Nero's bar, and thence to the executioner's block. "*But if I delay, in order that you may know how to deport yourself in the family of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.*"

The Greek, *oikos*, so frequently in the New Testament translated "household," is the regular word for family. It is used constantly in reference to Abraham, who never owned a house, but spent his life in a movable tent; "house of Abraham," simply meaning his family. The apostolic Churches had no houses, and never built any till A.D. 150. Since the devil turned on the Church such a flood of idolatry—*i.e.*, ecclesiolatry; *i.e.*, Church worship—I sometimes think it would have been better if the Church never had built a house. Let the edifice burn down, and the pastor defraud the bank and run off, the whole congregation feel they have no religion, and surrender to the devil. Here it says "at the house of God;" *i.e.*, the family of God, not the building—for they had entrusted none—the Church of the living God. So, if you want to know whether you are in the true succession of the apostolic Church, you have but one question to settle: Does the Spirit himself bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God? If you can answer this question solidly in the affirmative, you can shout down all the pretentious hierarchies and ecclesiastical tyrants in all the ages intervening between you and Paul's sermon on the Areopagus. Here we see positively revealed the identity of the apostolic Church with God's family. We also have the affirmation that the Divine Ecclesia—*i.e.*, the New Testament Church—is the "pillar and support of the truth." Hence, we see the immeasurable responsibility, the illimitable enterprise, and the ineffable glory of the holiness people, as the only true and faithful custodians of the truth in all the world, on whom God can depend to preach it unequivocally and unreservedly, fearlessly of men and devils. We can not depend on the creed-bound and priest-ridden Churches to do this work, so grand and noble that the archangels would vacate their thrones to enjoy the privilege. The holiness people, though identified more or less with all of the various Churches, are the only people in the world who take the Bible as their only authority in all matters appertaining to the kingdom of grace and glory, unencumbered by human creeds and uninspired authorities. Let any others go out preaching, and they will mix up their creeds and humanisms with the gospel. Hence, the latitudinous and longitudinal opportunities and responsibilities of the holiness

movement. The Churches became so corrupt that God could no longer rely on them to proclaim his unadulterated truth to all the world. Hence, he called out, and is still calling, his true and humble saints of all nationalities, sects, and races, and separating them unto himself, that he may make them the faithful custodians of his truth revealed in the Bible, and send them out to preach it to every nation. Consequently he is raising up great armies of evangelists in every land and nation, to carry this gospel to the ends of the earth. We have this glorious heavenly treasure in these frail earthen vessels. The available material is so scarce, in proportion to the demand, that God will take you without regard to age, sex, or race, if you will only meet the conditions; *i.e.*, come out of the world and separate yourself unto him, so he can manage you in his own way.

16. *“Confessedly great is the mystery of godliness.”* It is certainly great, for that mystery is none other than the Incarnate God-man, who came in the lowly manger, and was nailed to the cruel cross to redeem you and me from sin, death, and hell, and is coming again in glory unspeakable to redeem the world, taking the devil out of it, judging the wicked, and inaugurate his glorious millennial kingdom. *“Who was manifested in the flesh.”* The incarnation of Christ in his first advent is the great centralizing event of the world’s history the last six thousand years, fulfilling the old dispensation, and inaugurating the new. *“Was justified in the Spirit.”* Christ needed no justification from sin, but he was abundantly justified in the sense of approval by the Holy Ghost, who descended on him in the form of a heavenly dove when John at the Jordan consecrated him to his official Messiahship, speaking aloud, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” thus filling him for the great work of preaching his gospel to the world. *“Was seen of angels.”* They called the shepherds from the fields of Bethlehem to recognize him in the manger; meanwhile hovering over him, they sang their song of triumph. They ministered to him after the devil’s temptations, accompanying him in all his earthly life, one hundred and twenty thousand gathering over Mount Calvary, administering comfort and anxious to interpose in his rescue. *“He was preached among the Gentiles.”* Christ was truly the herald of the gospel to all nations during his first advent, verifying all the types and shadows of Levitical restriction, and unfurling the banner of his redeeming love to all the nations of the earth. *“Was believed on in the world.”* While haughty Jew and warlike

Roman alike rejected the incarnate Christ, diabolically uniting in his crucifixion, he was not left without witnesses, many true hearts having believed on him in his peregrinations through Galilee and Judea. “*Was received up in glory;*” not into glory as R.V. reads, as if he had to go up to heaven to receive his glory. But the Greek says, He received it right there on Mount Olivet when his body was transfigured, eliminating mortality, and rising, ascending triumphantly into heaven amid the contemplative multitude. The moment his feet vacated the summit of Olivet, he entered the glorious transformation, then and there receiving again the glory which he had with his Father before the world began. Thus invested with his transfiguration glory, leaving the world, he ascended up to heaven.

CHAPTER 4

ARGUMENT 9

DEMONIACAL POSSESSIONS OF THE PREACHERS IN THE LAST DAYS

1. *“The Spirit positively says, that in the last time certain ones will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and the teachings of demons,*
2. *“Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having been cauterized as to their own conscience”.* Multiplied millions of demons throng the air, all doing their best to find a home in some human heart. They constantly transform themselves into angels of light, and pass themselves on Christians for the Holy Ghost, and on Spiritualists for their dead relatives, thus deceiving the world by wholesale. A preacher stands in the pulpit, and a demon behind him gives the message and the utterance, passing himself for the Holy Ghost. It does not mean that the conscience of the people is seared with a hot iron, but that of the demons. Hence, their hopeless reprobacy. As the powers of Satan increase upon the earth in the last days, these demons literally flood the fallen Churches, inundating the pulpit. What is the remedy? Nothing but entire sanctification, in which dispensation we live, and for which we are especially responsible to God. The baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire burns out all of the jungles of inbred sin and all the morasses of depravity, leaving the demons no hiding-places, so they can no longer play off on you. You should always follow Jesus, led by the Holy Ghost; as these demons have no incarnation, they can not counterfeit Jesus, but as the Holy Ghost has no incarnation, they can counterfeit him. The Divine leadership is triple,—the Word, Spirit, and Providence. If you are true to this threefold leadership, you will never get sidetracked by these demons. I am satisfied they manipulate many pulpits and rule Churches not a few this day. I am in the forty-fifth year of my ministry. O what a fearful apostasy in my recollection! Entire sanctification is the only attitude in which you can securely avail yourself of the Divine

leadership. If you will not have it, you must take chances among the demons.

ARGUMENT 10

EATING AND DRINKING

3. “Forbidding to marry.” Here is a prophetic allusion to popery and other prohibitions of Christian wedlock. Marriage is God’s institution, old as Eden, and lies at the bottom of Christian civilization, not only the source of all the untold bliss of the Christian home, but a breakwater against floods of sin, which engulf millions in hell. Hence, we should be careful how we “forbid to marry,” lest we fall under this condemnation, as well as the Romanists. The Savior is plain, permitting divorce for adultery, a breach of the matrimonial covenant. This is for the defense and benefit of the injured party. (~~4th~~ Matthew 5:32.)

“Whosoever may marry the divorced woman”

[E.V., is a wrong translation; it should read, Whosoever may marry the cast-off woman; *i.e.*, cast-off without a divorce, and consequently still the wife of the cruel husband] “*commits adultery.*” If the woman had been legally divorced according to Scripture, it would be all right to marry her. This erroneous translation has led many astray. The balance of this verse, 4th and 5th, are on the meat question, which is so clear as to hardly need comment. “*Everything is good and nothing to be rejected, being received with thanksgiving, sanctified by the Word of God and by prayer.*” Certainly we have large liberties under the broad banner of the New Covenant. You can eat and drink anything you please in harmony with the moral and hygienic laws, the old ceremonial law of clean and unclean having fulfilled the period of symbolism, is now transferred to the spiritual man. Of course, all poisons—*i.e.*, intoxicating drinks, opium, tobacco, etc.—are to be rejected for moral and hygienic reasons. in the boundless department of edibles, which God, in his merciful providence, has provided, we must somewhat discriminate hygienically. *E.g.*, the meats are all too heavy for my constitution; consequently, as a rule, I prudentially abstain especially from swine, though I do not Judaize. Do not get into legal bondage about

anything. We live in a dispensation characteristic of large liberties. At the same time we should all live hygienically, for which no rule can be given, in view of the infinitesimal constitutional diversity peculiar to different persons. I am glad I do not know the taste of coffee, though I have rather a favorable opinion of it. But I find it masters some who drink it, so they are out of kilter without it. As I want to be always loaded and ready to shoot for God, I use no coffee nor tea. Use the good sense God has given you; live hygienically, do not Judaize nor run into legalism.

ARGUMENT 11

GODLINESS IS EVERYTHING

7. *“Common and foolish fables reject.”* “Profane,” in E.V., here is utterly misleading, as there is no such an idea in the Greek. This phrase is so frequently used by Paul to these young preachers as to become proverbial. What does it mean? The word, translated profane in E.V., means common, rustic, uncouth, uncultured. “Old wives” (E.V.) is *graodeis*, from *graus* — an old woman. Among heathen the women are not educated. Hence, they are very ignorant and superstitious. When old and in the imbecilities of second childhood, they become very silly and foolish. These ignorant, silly people, in all countries, believe all of the foolish stories they hear, and become dupes of superstition. So, what are these “common and foolish fables?” They are all of the silly notions, sayings, and superstitions of an ignorant people; *i.e.*, they are everything in religion except the truth of God revealed in the Bible and experienced in the heart. So they take in all humanisms of every kind; everything on the line of uninspired authority—your creeds, whether written or oral, everything that is not authenticated in the Word of God. *“Exercise yourself unto godliness.”* Go for holiness within and without with all your might.

8. *“For bodily exercise is profitable unto little.”* You receive some benefit from physical labor, and it is all right in its place. *“But godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”* Labor with your hands, and God will reward you with a living in this life. Go for godliness; *i.e.*, for holiness with all your might, looking a million of miles above everything that glitters and jingles,

and God will give you a living and all you need in this life, and a crown of glory unfading in a world of everlasting bliss. Hence, let godliness be everything, and God will attend to everything in this world and that which is to come. Poor Brother B—, living in an Ethiopian tenement, wanted sanctification in my meeting, but thought he could not keep it, because he had to drive Dr. S—'s mules for his daily bread, which were so contrary he thought no one could keep sanctified and drive them. I told him sanctification was the very thing needed to drive the mules. So he went for it, entering Beulah-land with tremendous shouts of victory; drives the mules all day, and comes to the night happier than a lark, and says: "O Brother Godbey, I do believe the mules have got it too. This is the happiest day of my life. I have been shouting on the wagon all day." I saw him no more for six years. I found him proprietor of a rich farm, living in a mansion, going to meeting day and night, and entertaining the Lord's people. How did it come to pass? The Lord took his sanctified wife to heaven, leaving him with three little children, and not worth a dollar. His bright face and jubilant look won a rich old maid, who gladly took his hand in wedlock, and was delighted with his beautiful little children. When I saw them last, she too was sanctified, and O how grateful to God for her good husband and sweet children! While I lived for this life, failure and bankruptcy hounded my track. When I gave it up altogether, and lived only for God, he wonderfully supplied all of my temporal needs, and has been astonishing me ever since, not only by the magnitude of his grace for my soul, but the munificence of his providence for my body. The man who lives for heaven, gets this world and heaven too. The man who lives for this world, as a rule misses both, and gets hell on earth and in eternity.

10. *—We have hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, really of those that believe.*" God is, in fact, the Savior of all men; but only believers receive him as their Savior, while all others defeat him in his saving capacity. The blackest ghost of hell torment is the horrific remembrance: "I had an Omnipotent Savior, who came all the way from heaven to suffer and die to save me; yet I broke his heart by contemptuously rejecting his salvation. So I die as the fool dieth." This dismal ghost will never down, but haunt you through all the flight of eternal ages.

ARGUMENT 12

TIMOTHY'S MINISTRY

12. “—*Be an example of the faithful word.*” Greek is *logos*, the Divine Word, and not *rhema*, man’s word. Hence, Timothy was to speak only “as the oracles of God.” In deportment—not conversation, as E.V.—the Greek means every turn he makes with soul, mind, and body. The gospel ministry takes in the whole man “*In Divine love.*” This is the very quintessence of the Christian religion, and must be lived every moment. “*In faith.*” This is the basis of all salvation, and must be ever unshaken as Gibraltar. “*In purity.*” This is the climax of ministerial as well as Christian character. Hence, Timothy must abide in entire sanctification forever.

13. “*Give your attention to reading, exhortation, teaching.*” The great work of the preacher is to read. God’s Word to the people, teach them the meaning of it, and exhort them to obey it. The modern sermonizing was unknown in the apostolic age. Paul utterly discarded it, lest the faith of the people might stand in the wisdom of men, rather than in the power of God. Really sermon-making is no part of gospel preaching, but a modern science, cunningly and adroitly manipulated by demons, thus wearing out the preachers and wasting their time, which is so much needed in soul-saving labor. The man who preaches all the week, day and night, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, simultaneously making a hundred pastoral visits, only in the interests of souls, carrying his Bible, reading a paragraph ever and anon, and studying it as he runs, and expounding it to the people, will preach infinitely better sermons on Sunday than his neighbor, who spent all the week with his books, crazing his brain to manufacture a heterogeneous conglomeration of all science, history, literature, and theology, with a ten per cent admixture of gospel truth. This is no exaggeration. I am satisfied I have heard sermons which had cost much hard study and great investigation, and did not contain one per cent of simple gospel truth. This is the reason why our metropolitan Churches are dying by the wholesale, and nearly all now in a north pole climate, while our poor little Churches in the mountains, piny woods, and deserts are like blooming oases in the great Sahara. They are served by our poor little preachers, who never rubbed against a college. Therefore, they know

nothing but their Bibles and their experiences. Consequently they either have to preach the gospel, or keep their mouths shut. The issue of the matter is, that these penniless rustics and uncouth pioneers get the pure, unadulterated gospel, and lots of it; for these illiterate preachers are delighted to preach all day instead of thirty minutes, and souls flourish like trees planted by the riverside. On the contrary, the collegiate pastors of the rich city Churches only preach fifteen to thirty minutes, and have to give the people a variety of everything they have on hand. Consequently they don't get gospel enough to make soup for a sick grasshopper. Of course, they starve to death and go to hell in platoons, from the simple fact that a little bit of science, literature, and theology has no spiritual nutriment. The shepherd goes out on Sunday morning with a bag on his shoulder to feed the sheep, all running and huddling nearly starved to death, many so poor they have to lean against the fence to bleat. Here comes the shepherd and strews the meal in the trough; but, behold! it turns out to be sawdust and chips and cockle-burrs, with a very slight admixture of meal, which the sheep can't get for the trash; and if they could get it all, there is not enough to keep one in a hundred from starving to death. The simple truth of this mournful problem looks me squarely in the face; our large and popular Churches are everywhere dead and dying of starvation for the want of the plain, nutritious gospel bread, which, I am sorry to say, they are not getting. As in my peregrinations I preach afternoon and night every day, I frequently, on Sunday morning, slip away and hear some great metropolitan pastor. Hence, I know whereof I affirm. We live amid the sad fulfillments of the woeful latter-day prophecies, and contemplate with horror this distressing "famine of bread." The eye of God is on this appalling state of things. In condescending mercy he is raising up an army of evangelists, regardless of race, rank, culture, color, or sex, and sending them out to do just what Paul here commands Timothy, *"Give attention to reading, exhortation, teaching."* Fortunately these preachers have no sermons, and few of them are competent to make any, and they have gumption enough "to keep their hands off the ark." Therefore, unencumbered with "dry-bone" sermons, they go out with their Bibles in their hands and the Holy Ghost in their hearts. They read God's Word, exhort the people to receive it, and teach them how to get religion, spend nights of prayer, and God puts his seal on their labors of love. Do you know that this is the very preaching commanded in the commission?

To preach simply means to proclaim; not a sermon which we have made, but God's truth revealed in the Bible. Satan has so utterly captured the modern pulpit as to humbug the preachers out of the very definition of gospel; i.e., "*the dynamite of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.*" Hence, where there is no spiritual dynamite to blow sins and devils out of the people, there is no gospel. O how the dead Churches do need this blowing up! In harmony with these facts, our Savior selected "unlearned and ignorant men" when he gathered around him the inspired twelve to head the gospel army going forth to conquer the world. If he had selected collegiate graduates, they would most likely have mixed up human learning with the gospel. All collegiate learning is good if baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire; but without it, a bad investment for the preacher, and a dangerous thing.

14. "*Do not neglect the gift which is in thee, which was conferred on thee through prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.*"

Prophecy is laid down in the catalogue of extraordinary spiritual gifts. (1st Corinthians 12.) These gifts constitute the Christian's panoply, and qualify the sanctified for their great and responsible work of saving others. Here we have an allusion to Timothy's ordination, which simply consisted of the intercessory prayers of the older and more spiritual members of the Church; meanwhile their hands are laid on him. There is an indescribable and a mysterious impressibility in the human organism, and an indefinable transmissibility of graces from one to another. When you pray for a person you will augment the efficiency of your petition by the imposition of the hand. Successful altar work utilizes the hand as well as the heart. Human ecclesiasticisms have long ago appropriated the New Testament ordination, and subsidized it to clerical intrigue. In its original simplicity it was simply the environment of candidates for gospel work with the elderly and more spiritual saints, and a union of prayer with simultaneous imposition of hands for the coming of the Holy Ghost on the candidates, and the impartation of his extraordinary gifts, the only available endowment for soul-saving work. Paul and Barnabas at Antioch were thus consecrated for the evangelization of the Gentiles

5. "*Meditate on these things, live in them, in order that your promptitude may be manifest to all.*" The Lord's preachers make an awful mistake when they try to fill up their heads with everything. John Wesley said that

sanctification made him “*homo unius libri*, a man of one book.” So was Timothy. At this point Satan sidetracks the preachers by wholesale. I preached fifteen years unsanctified, studied myself almost to death to make a preacher. In sanctification the preacher died, and I was perfectly willing to give up preaching and everything else for Christ’s sake. Then the Holy Ghost so filled me as to make me a preaching machine, a regular automation, never to stop again. So, for the last twenty-nine years I have been every moment ready to preach and to die. When presiding elder twenty years ago, I preached nine hundred sermons a year.

6. *“Take heed to yourself and to the teaching; abide in these; for, doing this, you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”* O the emphasis Paul lays on the teaching of God’s Word! What a mournful contrast with the diluted, humanized, despiritualized, and degospelized, misnamed gospel of the present day—little manufactured sermonettes substituted for a glorious banquet of God’s blessed, sweet, inspiring, reviving, convicting, converting, reclaiming, sanctifying, and uplifting truth! Paul here tells Timothy that it is by teaching the people God’s Word, the way of salvation, and a holy life, that he shall save both himself and those who hear him. How I tremble for the preachers in the judgment-day who have neglected their opportunities to preach the gospel, and let the people slip through their fingers into hell! As a rule, city pastors do not preach as much clear, straight gospel truth in a whole year as they could and should preach in a week. Good Lord, have mercy on them, and alarm their guilty fears before they face the great white Throne, and hear the bitter wails of their people as they sink into hell! Read the prophecies and look around, and you will conclude with me that the woes of the great Tribulation make haste.

CHAPTER 5

ARGUMENT 13

WIDOWHOOD IN APOSTOLIC CHURCH

1-16. Primitive Christianity is all luminous with spiritual wisdom. Widowed saints over sixty years were utilized in the Lord's work, "spending night and day" in prayers and supplications, and, of course, receiving temporal sustenance as beneficiaries of the Church. As they spent all of their time in prayer and soul-saving labor, they must be supported by Christian benefaction. This organization of venerable widowed saints, unencumbered with temporal affairs and devoted to incessant prayer, is a lost institution of the apostolic age, which should by all means be revived. The superficial religion of our day is poorly competent to appreciate this apostolic institution. Up in the mountains of West Virginia, years ago, a Methodist Church flourished, and shed her light over all the land. Ere long some of the members went to heaven, others to the wild West, and others to the devil, leaving a few to transfer their membership to other Churches. However, Aunt Peggy says she is too old to go off to meeting, and she will finish her pilgrimage alone in old Mount Tabor. The house is neglected, chinking out, chimney fallen down, and roof caving in, but Aunt Peggy spends the Sabbath there on her knees, often getting happy and arousing the citizens by her shouts. One Sunday afternoon, some mischievous juveniles say, "Let us go and scare the old woman." Halting in hearing distance, and listening to her supplications, behold! she is pleading with God to save the wicked young men of the neighborhood. Smitten by the thunderbolts of conviction, they come in, fall on the floor, and ask her to pray for them. This was the beginning of a great revival, resulting in hundreds converted and house rebuilt. Dr. Finney used to carry around with him a simple-hearted, illiterate old man, who had power with God to pull down salvation on the people. He would stay in his room, and pray while Finney preached. The Doctor said he could tell while he was preaching how the old man was getting along in prayers.

As you who read the “Life of Finney” will certify me, frequently the power came on his congregations, knocking the people down on all sides, till they would lie prostrate for hours crying to God. The world gives Finney credit for these mighty works, when God did them in answer to the prayer of that old saint. O how we need to revive our praying bands of sainted widows in every Church! “The power of prayer is actually unknown in the popular Churches of the present day.”

2. *“Elderly women as mothers, younger women as sisters in all purity.”*

God help us all to heed this admonition! I have been lied on from every point of the compass; beaten with dirt, stones, frozen potatoes, and eggs; mobbed, threatened with immediate death, and twenty-six years ago hauled out of my circuit as a crazy man, and repeatedly rejected and forced to travel; but never was a scandal raised against me. I have been astonished that Satan did not utilize this powerful weapon against me; perhaps it is because I have always observed Paul’s injunction here to Timothy, Treat the *“younger women as sisters in all purity.”* Do not forget this. You can not be too careful in your deportment toward young women. Many an innocent man has been ruined influentially by mere indiscretion.

4. *“If any widow have children or grandchildren,”* they should take care of them, thus relieving the Church.

6. *“But she who is wanton living is dead;”* i.e., she is backslidden through wantonness, and spiritually dead though physically alive.

8. *“But if any one provides not for his own, and especially the inmates of his home, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”* This is a terrible condemnation on lazy people who do not provide for their homes. God is so good pouring out the bounties of nature into the hand of industry on all sides, that almost any person with a very small effort can provide temporal sustenance. In Washington they claim to grow eight hundred bushels of Irish potatoes per acre. A person can live well on the potato and a little salt. This verse covers all the ground, and turns condemnation on all who do not provide for their families.

10. *“—If she has washed the feet of saints.”* Here Paul lays down foot-washing in the catalogue of Christian benefactions. In Oriental countries, Palestine, Egypt, Syria, and Arabia, they do not wear shoes but sandals, to

protect the bottoms of their feet from the burning sand. On arrival, hospitality greets the guest at the door, removes the sandals, and washes the feet. When Jesus was washing Peter's feet (John 13), responsive to the remonstrances of the latter, he said, "What I do thou knowest not now, but shalt know hereafter." Peter did know that Jesus was washing his feet. So that was not what Jesus was doing, but teaching him a profound lesson in Christian humility, which he could only receive after the consumption of all his blinding depravity by the fires of Pentecost. This statement of the Savior, and the historic fact that the primitive Church did not practice foot-washing, is demonstrative proof that it was not an ordinance of the Apostolic Church, like baptism and the eucharist, but simply an impressive lesson in humility, deduced from a long-standing custom of Oriental hospitality, now paralleled (especially in our northern latitudes, where sandals are not used), by blacking the shoes.

11-13. These verses refer to the sad fact of apostasy on the part of young widows through wantonness, whose provided remedy, along with the grace of God for keeping or reclamation, is matrimony.

14. Here Paul advises the younger widows to get married; as this institution is a blessed Christian privilege, and a powerful fortification against temptation and sin.

16. *"If any faithful woman have widows, let her support them, and let not the Church be burdened, in order that she may give her attention to those who are widows indeed. If your mother, daughter, or sister is left in widowhood, take care of her, thus relieving the Church."* This paragraph on widowhood is characterized throughout with good common sense, prudence, and wisdom. O that the Church would heed it, coming back to first principles!

ARGUMENT 14

MINISTERIAL SUPPORT

17. *"Let the elders, who stand before you in the beauty of holiness, be considered worthy of double remuneration, especially those who labor in word and teaching."* This does not mean simply a ruling elder, as in E.V.,

but the teachers and preachers of mature years, experience, and learning. The Greek, *proestotes*, in E.V. translated “rule,” is from *pro*, before, and *istemi*, to stand. Hence, it simply means standing before you in the attitude of a teacher. *Kalos*, “well” in E.V., literally means beautifully. Therefore the elderly brother and sister who stand before you preaching and teaching, adorned with the beauty of holiness, are to be counted worthy of double pay for their service. *“Especially those who labor in word and teaching.”* Preach means simply proclaim the Word of God as revealed in the Bible, while teach involves the deep subtleties of exposition. As the Bible was written in Oriental languages not now used by any living people, we must be educated and thus prepared to go down into the dark mysteries of these dead languages, and haul up the sparkling gems of inspired truth, that they may dazzle the illuminated eye of the faithful inquirer, exploring the deep things of God. In view of the time, money, and labor needed in the qualification to labor in “word and teaching,” the Holy Ghost here enjoins double remuneration in behalf of the elders, who *“labor in word and doctrine.”* In this and many other instances the E.V. bends the translation into favoritism with ecclesiastical authority, which at that time was so prominent in the Episcopal Church. But this passage has no intimation of official rank or prerogative, but simply exhorts the people to confer double remuneration on the elderly brothers and sisters who *“stand before them in the beauty of holiness, laboring in word and instruction,”* while hundreds of others around, with no costly education nor long years of experience, may preach the living Word with a small remuneration.

18. *“For the Scripture says, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his hire.”* This verse is confirmatory of the preceding. When I was in Egypt and the Holy Land, I saw the oxen, everywhere I went, going round on the threshing-floor, treading out the wheat and barley and other grains (there never having been any American corn in that country). Why don’t they use steam threshers? The iron horse is there, thundering along the railroad. Why do they not let him thresh out their wheat? The customs of the patriarchal age must abide there, witnesses to the truth of the Bible, till the Lord comes. Why do they not have steam mills to grind their wheat and manufacture their flour? Still, two women sit down on either side of the little hand mill, and grind

flour for dinner. They are waiting till the Lord comes for his Bride, taking up the one and leaving the other.

19. We have no right to conclude that this is only an official elder, as the original meaning of the Greek is simply of mature years. As people get old, extraordinary deference is due them. Hence, we should go slowly in their accusation and condemnation, keeping quiet till we can prove the allegations by two or three witnesses.

20. *“Convict those who sin in presence of all, in order that the rest may indeed have fear.”* O how plain and explicit the duty of the preacher is here specified! In the great congregation, God requires him to lift up his voice like a trumpet, sparing neither friends nor foes, but exposing all sin, and convicting all sinners. The word which I here translate “convict,” is *elegche*. It is the Greek word for the sentence of the criminal judge, when he gives his verdict against the accused, condemning him for the penitentiary or the gallows. It is the strongest condemnatory word in the Greek language. Do you know that condemnatory preaching is rapidly becoming a lost art, as very few Churches have the grace to tolerate it, and equally few preachers the heroism to give it?

21. *“I testify before God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, that you may guard these things without prejudice, doing nothing according to partiality.”* You see Paul solemnly obligates Timothy before God and the angels sent forth to help him, and the people to whom he preached to secure their heavenly election, that he will guard all these truths like a soldier standing sentinel, as that is the word here used. It was a penalty of death for a Roman soldier to go to sleep on guard. Every preacher is God’s sentinel under the eye of Omniscience and the elect angels standing to guard immortal souls against the invasions of the devil. Woe unto the pastor who permits the Lethean slumber so to somnify him that he shall fail to sound the alarm on every approach of the enemy! “Prejudice” is one of the meanest things ever hatched in hell. It is from the Latin, *pre*, beforehand, and *judicium*, judgment. Hence, it means a verdict given before the evidence is heard. I heard of a judge in the Emerald Isle who said he always gave his decision when he heard one side of the evidence; for if he waited and heard the other side he would get puzzled so he would not know how to decide. We have no right to have prejudice against anything,

not even the devil; for God is going to give all the devils a fair trial in the judgment-day. Prejudice killed Jesus and two hundred millions of his faithful followers. All the opposition to holiness is the work of Satan's prejudice. John Fletcher well says, "Perfect love is an angel so lovely and beautiful that the devil can't get his hell-hounds to chase it till he covers the amiable form with a bearskin." Then they will go for the bearskin, but not for the angel; so all the hell-hounds barking on the track of holiness are just after the bearskin, which the devil has thrown on it. "*Doing nothing according to partiality.*" To this Paul solemnly adjures Timothy. No wonder our Lord required even his own apostles to get sanctified wholly as a qualification to preach the Pentecostal gospel, as nothing but the fires of the Holy Ghost can burn the prejudice and partiality all out of the heart.

22. "*Lay hands suddenly on no one, lest you participate in the sins of others.*" This is very appropriate admonition. When they sent out men and women to preach, they gathered around them, laying hands on them, and invoking the descension of the Holy Ghost on them, with his extraordinary spiritual gifts, to empower them for the responsible conflict with sin and Satan, invariably incident to soul-winners. Before we thus commission people for responsible posts of duty, we should test them thoroughly, and be satisfied that they have a genuine case of personal salvation, lest they prove traitors, and bring reproach on the cause of God. "*Keep yourself pure.*" "Pure" in this charge not only includes experimental holiness, but emphasizes personal chastity, so preeminently imperative in the preacher of the gospel.

23. "*Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and frequent sickness.*" While Timothy was an exceedingly valuable preacher, he had a feeble constitution and a weak stomach. In my camp-meeting tour I traveled through the great South every summer and fall, where a diversity of febrile diseases are constantly prevalent, and ever and anon the pestilential yellow-fever visits the land. When he comes, I always pay him the courtesy of an orderly retreat. In case of all the other fevers, I stand my ground so far as possible, ceasing to drink the ordinary waters, which are frequently warm and malarious, but resorting to the medical springs, which, in the goodness of God, prevail in that country, determining the location of almost every camp; having never yet yielded to

the importunities of the natives to use coffee as an anti-malarial. The word used by Paul means neither fermented nor alcoholic wine, but the unadulterated fresh juice of the grape, which is nutritious, reviving, and sanitary. Mark the specification here, *“Use a little wine;”* i.e., not much. No person acquainted with the facts in the case can criticize Paul in this advice. Doubtless the water in that country at that time was not first-rate, and the atmosphere malarious.

24. *“The sins of certain men are manifest beforehand, going before to judgment, but to certain people, indeed, they follow afterward.”* This is a plain statement of universally prevailing occurrences. The two most prominent men in your village are your pastor and your saloon-keeper. All enlightened people condemn the latter, and deplore the evil employment in which he spends his life, not only poisoning and killing the bodies, but destroying both soul and body in hell. Not so with the pastor. All believe he is spending his life for the good of humanity. At the judgment he turns out to be a Judas Iscariot, who sold his Master for filthy lucre. A preacher in Brother Carradine’s revival was on his knees at the altar seeking sanctification. An ecclesiastic passes by, stoops down, and, putting his hand on his shoulder, whispers to him, “If you do not get away from there, you go to the piny woods.” He arose, and left, never to return; for he was in a fifteen-hundred dollar station. He beat Judas one hundred-fold, as he only got fifteen dollars.

25. You can hide your works here, and pass them for good when they are bad; but you can not hide them when we all stand before the great white Throne.

CHAPTER 6

1,2. The world was full of slavery in Paul's day. While the gospel provides for every relation in this life, it puts the plowshare down deep, and plows out all evil in due time. Rapidly is human slavery evanescent before the advancing light of Christian civilization.

ARGUMENT 15

HERESY

3. *“Teach these things and exhort.”* These constitute the work of the preacher. We must teach the people the truth of God and exhort them, in view of death, judgment, hell, heaven, and eternity, to obey these momentous commandments, and walk in the light of these grand and inspiring truths. *“If any one teaches otherwise, and does not give heed to the hygienic words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness.”* Hygienic is the Greek, so frequently used to describe the Word of God. While regeneration raises you from the dead, sanctification cures all of your spiritual diseases, makes you healthy, and qualifies you to live in harmony with all the laws of spiritual hygiene, so you will never again contract spiritual malaria and get sick. Heterodoxy is a Greek word, and simply means “another opinion” different from God's plain Word.

4. *“He is puffed up.”* Spiritual pride lies at the bottom of all heresy. The man is proud, and wants his own way. Salvation makes people humble and teachable. You can not teach a proud man, because he thinks he knows it already. If he does not get rid of his pride, he will have to be taught in the flames of hell. *“Knowing nothing.”* This heretic, who will not accept the plain Word of God as the umpire in every case, is really a miserable idolater, worshipping his poor little creed, and so blinded by the devil that he has never received the beautiful light of God in regeneration. He knows nothing about God and his blessed saving truth, but much about questions and word battles. I have frequently met this miserable character in my

travels, always ready for dispute. They are ignorant of God, and so blinded by Satan that they constantly handle the Word of God deceitfully. They will talk you to death, and say nothing. It is all a senseless clatter. Nuisance is no name for them.

5. *“From which [these disputes and controversies] come envy, strife, blasphemies, evil surmisings, and disputations of people, corrupt as to their mind and turned away from the truth, thinking that gain is godliness.”* They think if they gain a proselyte, they have achieved a victory for God; whereas it is for the devil, as they really serve the devil, thinking he is God. The scribes (the popular pastors in our Savior’s time) and the Pharisees (the official members of the popular Churches) were on this line, even *“compassing sea and land to make one proselyte, and making him twofold more the child of hell.”* He still had his own old sins, and now he joins them, adding the sin of hypocrisy, and doubling the mess for hell. Look out for these deluded people! Their name is legion. They make all sorts of professions, and possess but an evil heart. How can I know them? If you have much acquaintance with God’s Word, you will have no trouble to identify them. Their peculiarity is, they are wedded to a poor little creed, and want to bend the Bible to it. In this you can readily detect them. They are not willing to take the Bible for their only guide. They explain away the plain Word of God. They are objects of pity; having been caught in Satan’s lasso, they are faithfully working for him.

6. *“Godliness with contentment is great gain.”* If we have godliness, and are perfectly content with godliness alone, we have great gain, because God gives heaven and earth. If we are not contented with godliness, we will lose all in the end.

ARGUMENT 16

THE DANGER OF RICHES

7. *“We brought nothing into the world, because we are not able to carry anything out.”*

8. *“Having food and raiment, we shall be content with these.”* I am sorry for my rich friends. They are slaves to their possessions. O how free I am,

possessing nothing!—still get as much as the rich. I am as sure of a coffin and shroud as they are.

9. *“Those wishing to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and many injurious and hurtful lusts, which drown people in destruction and perdition.”* Could you uncap hell, and hear the mournful wails of the countless millions who have been drowned in the bottomless abyss of unquenchable fire through the allurements of riches, you would surrender forever your cherished aspirations after wealth. I knew a man, already rich, to kill his own dear brothers, and appropriate their part of the estate. What will not fallen man do for money? Nothing but entire sanctification can make you as dead to money as to oyster shells. Hence, you are never safe without it. Satan is watching for a chance to throw the lasso of money love about your neck.

10. *“For the love of money is a root to all evils.”* *“The root of all evil,”* E.V., is not in harmony with the Greek, nor with the facts of universal observation. Many evils come from other sources than the love of money, and are really antagonistical to it; *e.g.*, drunkenness and debauchery, which, instead of loving money, entail swift bankruptcy in earth and hell. *“Which certain ones seeking after have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”* The love of money is a wooden horse carrying Satan’s Greeks into the Churches of the present day. Why all these projects, causing wholesale apostasy? It is to get money, scandalizing the Christian’s God as if he were poor, when he is so rich that he needs none of these things. Preachers and people thus backslide together, hunting money. It ruined poor Judas, and nearly ruined Jacob. Look out, preacher, lest you prove a follower of Judas. You do not need any of these money-raising fandangoes. God’s ravens are not all dead. God open your eyes to see your members going to hell in platoons! You need a revival, instead of a festival.

11. *“O man of God, fly from these things!”* What things? Doctrinal heresies—*i.e.*, all anti-holiness teaching; for godliness is everything—and from the love of money. Be God’s freeman, and not man’s hireling. Good Lord, give us the spirit of Elijah, who stood alone for God! *“Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, Divine love, patience, and meekness.”* Let us appropriate these beautiful graces in their perfection!

12. *“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.”* When the sinner is not willing to be led captive by the devil at his will, he fights his own fight, and gets whipped all the time. When converted, it becomes a partnership fight between him and Jesus. But when he gets sanctified, then he fights the fight of faith alone, sweetly resting in the arms of Jesus, and shouting all the time over the victory which he receives by faith, even in anticipation; meanwhile Jesus does all the fighting for him, and gives him an everlasting victory. *“Lay hold on eternal life.”* Timothy was gloriously saved and sanctified long before this was written, and, of course, had the life of God in his soul. Yet he was still on probation, and liable to forfeit that life by apostasy; so Paul exhorts him to “lay hold on eternal life;” evidently, as we see from the context, referring to his admission into heaven at the end of probation. A man does not “lay hold on” what he already possesses. Hence, there was a sense in which Timothy did not then possess eternal life. What is that sense? Why, he did not at that time possess it in a non-forfeitable sense. There are no non-forfeitable blessings here. Let us take God’s Word as it is, and not trust to our creed, or trust that of another. This Scripture is decisive on this question. Lord, save us from controversy and creedism, make us to receive thy plain Word as the umpire in every case, and never bring our poor little ratiocination against thy *ipse dixit!*

ARGUMENT 17

IMMORTALITY

“You testified a beautiful testimony in presence of many witnesses.”

Timothy was all right on experience and testimony, always ready to ring out clear and straight.

13. Here we are assured that our Savior was always prompt and bold on testimony, even in the presence of Pilate, the world’s ruler. Of course, this occurred during his arraignment, and doubtless on other occasions, as he preached three years under the administration of Pilate.

14. *“That you keep the commandment spotless and blameless unto the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* We see Paul and his preachers were

not looking for death, but for Jesus. That is the true attitude of New Testament saintship. O the brightness it would flash over the gloomy escutcheon of the howling wilderness of Christianity of the present age, if they would exchange the anticipation of the old grim monster for the glorified Savior!

15. *“Whom the blessed and only Sovereign King of kings and Lord of lords will reveal in his own times.”* The Son sits at the right hand of the Father, awaiting his time to send him back to this world, while his faithful Bride, toiling and suffering, is waiting her Lord’s return to reign in his glory. The shepherds on the plains, old Simeon and Anna, Zacharias and Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary, were vividly anticipating the first coming; yet the time was known only to the Father.

The spirit of prophecy is still prevalent among the saints of God, in proportion to their proximity to the Throne, revealing to them the crowning climax of the world’s history; *i.e.*, the return of the glorified God-man to take charge of this world, casting out Satan and his myrmidons.

16. *“Who alone hath immortality.”* As this clause has become the battle-cry of the soul-sleeping heresy, it is pertinent that it receive our especial attention. Perhaps you are apprised that the above heresy despiritualizes you altogether, leaving you without a soul, and simply conceding physical immortality to the saints only, leaving final annihilation for the wicked. Thus it brutalizes humanity, depriving them of their immortality. It has even had the audacity to tinker with the inspired original, the very words of the Holy Ghost, and change the punctuation of our Savior’s words to the dying thief, so as to read, *“I say unto thee this day, thou shalt be with me in Paradise,”* thus making our Savior commit a solecism, as if he were not speaking to the thief in the present tense. They are constrained to make this silly change to save their idol, their poor little creed, which, like all other crededists, they worship as a god; since the true reading, which I here have in the Sinaitic manuscript, the oldest Greek Testament in the world, reads, *“Truly I say unto thee, This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise,”* revealing clearly and unequivocally the existence of the thief after his body was dead, and proving positively from the Savior’s lips the soul’s immortality. The rich man and Lazarus (²⁰¹¹Luke 16) both existed in

all the consciousness of their immortal being, after their bodies were dead and their souls had left this world, illustrating the soul's immortality beyond the possibility of cavil, on the responsibility of our Savior himself. This irrefutable testimony they utterly discard as legitimate proof, because they say, "*It is a parable.*" If it were a parable, it is perfectly authentic as proof of the soul's immortality, even on the hypothesis of parabolic truth. However, it is not a parable, but a positive and infallible history of two literal men, who lived and died in a bygone age, each surviving his body, the one reporting from Abraham's bosom, and the other from a place of fire and torment in Hades; both seen by the retrospective eye of the omniscient Savior. These and all other cases proving the soul's immortality, they must encumber all their wits to darken and pervert, in order to save the life of their poor little idol. In ²³⁴⁹Isaiah 14:9, 10, we have his inspired testimony to the arrival of Belshazzar, the last Chaldean monarch, in hell, and his salutation by his royal predecessors—rather a wholesale confirmation of the soul's immortality. Let us drop back to their hackneyed battle-cry, "*He alone hath immortality.*" The word here for immortality is *athanasia*, from *a*, not, and *thanatos*, death. Hence, it means freedom from death. Of course, this is a great primary truth; *i.e.*, God alone is free from death and its liabilities. All finite beings are in some way susceptible of death and liable to it. God alone is light and life. Yet he imparts light and life to whom he will. Life in all finite beings is exotic from the Creator, and not indigenous in the creature. In their helter-skelter application of this passage to the nullification of the soul's immortality, they palm off a lot of occult sophistries on unthinking and uninvestigating people, thus blinding their eyes, stupefying their consciences, and degrading their spiritual aspirations, to accept their brutalizing heresy, despiritualizing them and actually letting the unregenerate down to the level of the brute creation, and offering the saints of God nothing but physical immortality in the restored Eden of this world; thus sweeping away the very existence of heaven and hell. You would be astonished at the prevalence of this specious heresy in the different States of the Union. They adopt all sorts of stratagems to scatter their pestilential literature clandestinely over the land. At this you need not be astonished. It is peculiar to all heretics, as Jesus said, to compass sea and land to make proselytes, and to make them twofold more the children of hell. A man will die for his god. Their pusillanimous little creed is their god, for which

they will cheerfully labor, suffer, and die. The power of religion is wonderful, and an awful instrument of destruction when in the hands of the devil. Now let me post you in the adroit sophistries which lie at the foundation of this heresy.

(a.) They confound life and existence, which are entirely different things. They treat them as synonymous; *e.g.*, Satan died when he sinned, and is this day the deadest thing in the universe. Yet his personal existence is as real as that of God. So all the innumerable demons thronging the pandemonium and invading this world are utterly dead; *i.e.*, destitute of spiritual life. Yet these dead, lost, and miserable spirits have their actual, personal existence, as real as the angels. It is equally true of the soul of every sinner, though dead in trespasses and sins. (☞ Ephesians 2:1.) His spiritual existence is as real as that of Paul.

(b.) It is equally true of this heresy that it confounds death and nonexistence, which are utterly distinct realities. There is no such thing as annihilation. Burn a log of wood, and the ashes and gases will weigh just as much as the log before it was burnt. Annihilation does not belong to the province of Omnipotence, which simply has all power within its sphere when it is merely a question of power. There are some things which God can not do; he can not lie; he can not antagonize his own character and attributes. If it were possible, I think it highly probable that God, in mercy, would annihilate the devil and all his myrmidons and all the human souls in hell. But, unfortunately for them, they received immortality from the creative fiat, which opened to them the widest door in the universe for enlargement, achievement, aggrandizement, glorification, and eternal fruition. All this they forfeited by the unhappy verdict of their own free will. Good Lord, help us all to sink out of self, and die to everything but God and his truth, forever losing sight of all human creeds, and, like little Samuel lying on his pallet, meekly say, “*Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth.*” “Inhabiting light unapproachable, whom no one of men has seen nor is able to see.” We must keep in mind the glorious Trinity in Divine unity, not drifting off into the tritheistic heresy of three Gods instead of One; but still keeping constantly before our eyes the three distinct personalities of the glorious indivisible Divinity—*i.e.*, Father, Son, and

Holy Ghost; remembering that God is revealed in the incarnate Christ. Hence, through the flight of eternal ages the glorified humanity of Christ, filled with the Divinity, will be the inscrutable majesty and magnetism of the celestial universe, thus exalting our redeemed and transfigured humanity above all other created intelligences.

17. *“Command the rich in the present age not to think about exalted things, nor to trust in uncertain wealth, but in God, who conferreth on us richly all things for our enjoyment.”* The proud people rush madly after the golden apples, which Satan everywhere waves in the air to attract their deluded gaze, which, the moment received, turn to the ashes of Sodom on the disappointed lips. Meanwhile the humble poor, forsaking all the world and desiring nothing but God, are surprised unutterably and astonished ineffably, not only at the unearthly fruitions of his grace giving them a heaven in which to go to heaven, but lost in incomprehensible bewilderment to find their bodies literally flooded with the munificence of his providence, giving them more than heart can wish.

18. *“To do good, to be rich in beautiful works, to be free givers, ready communicators,*

19. *“Laying up for themselves a beautiful foundation for the world to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”* Paul again, as in verse 12, uses the powerful Greek compound verb, *epilambano*, which means to receive unto yourself “eternal life.” Let these two clear statements by the inspired apostle forever settle all controversy on the problem of eternal life, revealing positively the forfeitability of that life during probation, and sweeping away the Satanic subterfuge into which many a poor backslider has fallen, and been lulled to sleep by the diabolical lullaby, *“O you know you were once converted, and you can’t lose eternal life, so take another nap.”* So Satan sings another tune while he goes fast asleep till the devil can dump him into hell. Here, in the twelfth verse, Paul exhorts Timothy to be courageous, *“fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life;”* i.e., when he enters the pearly portals. In verse 19 he pours his burning exhortation on these paragon saints, whose lives have been flooded with holy philanthropy, thus *“laying up for themselves a good foundation for the world to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life;”* thus clearly confirming the conclusion that none of us receive eternal life in a non-

forfeitable sense till we pass our probation and enter heaven. These Scriptures confirm beyond the possibility of controversy the great Bible truth of our probation and liability to fall to the end of life. This truth should be proclaimed upon the housetops, as the only available antidote to the devil's soporific incantations, "once in grace, always in grace." If this dogma be true, there is not a solitary backslider in hell; whereas, the very contradictory is true. Hell is for none but backsliders, Satan to begin with, who was once an archangel. (^{254D} Isaiah 14:12.) And as the devils were created angels, as God never made a devil nor a sinner. They were all on probation as we are, and, unfortunately, "they kept not their first estate." (Jude.) By the glorious redemption of Christ all the human race are born in the kingdom of God like the prodigal son, and only get out by sinning out. Hence, it is an undeniable fact that instead of no backslider going to hell, none go but apostates; all the devils being fallen angels, and all human souls having enjoyed infantile innocence, were justified in the Father's house before they turned prodigals.

20. "O Timothy, guard the trust!" The Greek word here is the verb form of *phulake*, strictly military; as when a Roman soldier stood sentinel the lives of the army and the cause of his country were entrusted to his keeping; if he went to sleep, the penalty was death. The preacher is God's sentinel on the walls of Zion. "*Son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the whole house of Israel.*"

***"O watchman, what of the night?
The myriad foe come on to try thee with their might
If thou shalt fail one note thy trumpet sound,
I will hang upon these battlements the watchman on his round"***

During the pioneer Indian wars, a man was killed every night at a certain post. After several nights had elapsed, the notoriety of that dangerous post so spread throughout the army that no one was willing there to stand sentinel. Hence, they have to call for a volunteer. A stalwart backwoodsman enlists, and is sent to the post. About midnight he sees a large hog rooting round among the leaves. He observes the animal moving about, but getting near. He calls out to the hog, "Give me the countersign!" He calls the third time. No answer comes. He fires on the hog, and out wallops an old Indian. So God's sentinel is to take no risk; but fire on the innocent hog when there is good reason for suspicion. God help us to be

true sentinels! “*Avoiding common empty talks.*” “*Profane babblings*” in E.V. does not really convey the idea of the original. The above translation is literal from the original. You observe that Paul repeats this phrase over and over. Hence, it must be exceedingly important. Every speech, exhortation, sermon, prayer, testimony, and song, without the Holy Ghost, is empty. The Greek *kenophoonias* is from *kenos*, empty, and *phoonee*, voice. Hence, it literally means all empty utterances. Our voices belong to God, and should only be articulated for his glory. Therefore all of our utterances without the Holy Ghost are empty. At this point Satan utterly sidetracks the preachers, and gets them to preach, pray, sing, and talk without the Holy Ghost, simply utilizing their intellect and learning. I have known preachers who actually served as a clown for the entertainment of their members. Whenever without the Spirit, we are empty, burning our powder for mere fireworks. “*Be ye filled with the Spirit*” is a positive commandment of God. True to that commandment, you will never speak empty words in the pulpit nor out of it. O how obedience to these plain commandments would bring cyclones of power into the pulpit, and Niagaras of salvation into the pews, and “oppositions of science falsely so-called!” Satan’s people have always been trying to array science against the Bible. Bob Ingersoll arraigns Moses for his mistakes on the days of creation; because geology reveals that the earth passed through long periods during its formation. Hence, these demiurgic days were not twenty-four hours, but unknown years. It so happens that the mistakes turn out on Bob’s side of the controversy, as the Bible says (2 Peter 3:8) that God’s day is a thousand years, thus beautifully harmonizing with geology. Of course, these were not man’s days, as he was not in existence at that time, neither were the solar days, as there was no sun to measure them till the fourth day. Hence, they were God’s days, embracing the period of an indefinite thousand years, in harmony with the Hebrew word *yom*, translated “day,” which means a period of time, as we say Paul’s day. Heaven in R.V. is always singular, as the translators seem to take no stock in astronomy; while the Greek is generally *ouranoi*, plural, corroborating strikingly the astronomical discoveries of innumerable worlds, and some of them tremendously magnitudinous, constituting the celestial universe.

21. “*Which certain ones proclaiming have made shipwreck concerning the faith.*” O how cunningly and magnitudinously is Satan this day, using these “common empty talks” and misnamed “opposition of science” to sidetrack and wreck deluded millions! “*Grace be with you.*” See what a sweet, nice little benediction Paul here gives us, and how convenient when brevity is in demand.