

The Advent Review

AND HERALD OF THE SABBATH.

"Here is the patience of the Saints: Here are they that keep the Commandments of God, and the Faith of Jesus." Rev. 14:12.

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HOLD ON, MY HEART.

Hold on, my heart, in thy believing!
The steadfast only wear the crown;
Who when stormy waves are heaving
Parts with his anchor shall go down;
The whom Jesus holds, through all
Stand though earth and heavens should fall.

Hold in thy murmurs, Heaven arraigning,
The patient see God's loving face;
Who bear their burdens uncomplaining,
Tis they who win the Father's grace.
Who wounds himself who braves the rod,
Sets himself to fight with God.

Hold out! There comes an end to sorrow;
Hope, from the dust, shall conquering rise;
The storm proclaims a sunnier morrow;
The cross points on to paradise;
The Father reigneth; cease all doubt;
Hold on, my heart, hold in, hold out!

—Sel.

General Articles.

THE GIFTS AND OFFICES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.—NO. 3.

BY ELDER J. H. WAGGONER.

CIRCUMCISION OF THE HEART.

ALTHOUGH the promise of the Spirit is to all, manifestations are various, and it will not be stated in its operations. It serves no purpose; it gratifies no one's curiosity. It asks faith, and chooses its own mode of trying our faith. He who divided the sea before his people, who overthrew the proud masters in the same sea, who brought water from the rock, and who fed a multitude in a barren desert, would not go to Israel to battle when they murmured against him, or when a covetous man was in camp, or when their fears overcame their courage because their enemies had chariots of iron. And it has seemed strange to many a man that Paul, who had so great gifts bestowed on him that the sick were healed merely touching handkerchiefs which came from him; Acts 19:11, 12, yet left a combatant behind because he was sick. 2 Tim.

test the question of the extent of the use of the Spirit to all believers, it was asked of a minister who strenuously insisted that the extraordinary operations of the Spirit were designed only for a few, and to be perpetuated through all time: "Do you believe that Christians now have or may have the same measure of the Spirit that the apostles instructed the churches of their day to pray for?" Although he denied the question that his position was a denial of the use of the Spirit in its scriptural sense, he would give no answer to the question, and he was strongly pressed to do so. This he considered in the light of Scriptural facts.

In regard to the diversity of churches now existing no one will deny this rule, we must accept as the true church that which bears the characteristics of the church. We must take the church in its present stage, as planted by Christ and his apostles, for our model. To them we look for genuine and "primitive Christianity." We often referred to the day of Pentecost as furnishing evidence that the early churches were built up with the doctrine of "baptism for the remission of sins." But that is only a part of the truth; and, separate from its relation to the truth, it becomes an immaterial part. Churches in the days of the apostles ac-

cepted both in theory and fulfillment the doctrine of the gifts of the Spirit. Not a single church was planted without this. The modern doctrine of a church repudiating the gifts of the Spirit was not known in that age. And therefore any church which rejects these gifts is not after the primitive model; it lacks a characteristic, an essential element, of the church of Christ.

The Saviour said to those whom he sent out to preach the gospel, "These signs shall follow them that believe," not them alone that preach. Facts in the fulfillment of the work of the gospel prove that we are correct in our interpretation of the promise. In Acts 11:27, 28, are mentioned several prophets who were not of the twelve apostles. That the word prophet has here its usual and obvious meaning of a foreteller of events, one endowed with a gift of the Spirit, is proved by the circumstance of one of them, Agabus, foretelling a great dearth, which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. The same, essentially, is found in chap. 13:1. In chap. 21:8, 9, we are told that Philip the evangelist "had four daughters which did prophesy." There is nothing in the context to indicate that prophesy has here any other than its primary or usual signification, while, on the other hand, verses 10, 11, speak of the prophet Agabus, and relate that he foretold what should befall Paul at Jerusalem, showing conclusively that the word, in that text, has reference to the gift of the Spirit of prophecy, and that in the case of the daughters of Philip it was a fulfillment of the promise quoted on the day of Pentecost, that the Spirit should be poured out on the daughters and hand-maidens, and they should prophesy.

The acknowledgment of this fact is necessary to a reception of the truth of the word in reference to the witness of the Spirit, or the seal of the new covenant. While the "circumcision of the heart" has often been insisted on, it has not been sufficiently examined, as the seal of the covenant, to open it in its great importance to the understanding of the reader.

When circumcision was given to Abraham he was told that it was "a token of the covenant" made with him, and that every man child of his seed who was uncircumcised should "be cut off from among his people;" because he had not the appointed token, and therefore he had no part in the covenant. Gen. 17.

In Rom. 4:11, this token is also called a sign and seal. Hence Paul says:—

"After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." Eph. 1:13, 14.

In the above cited texts we have four terms applied to circumcision, viz: token, sign, seal, earnest. That we are not mistaken in designating the operation of the Spirit of God in the heart as the circumcision of the new covenant is shown by the following texts:—

"He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." Rom. 2:28, 29.

"Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." 2 Cor. 1:21, 22.

"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." Col. 2:11.

All these prove that the token, earnest, or seal, of the new covenant, the circumcision of this dispensation, is not an outward ordinance administered with hands, but is of the Spirit, internal, of the heart. Some, on account of their peculiar views of the relations of the covenants, have held that baptism is the circumcision of the new covenant. This is not only an error, being a direct contra-

dition of the Scriptures, but it is the cornerstone of other errors held by many in regard to the baptism of infants. Baptism is an outward ordinance, administered with hands, even as typical circumcision was. But the circumcision of the gospel is in the heart, in the spirit, not made with hands. The distinction is so very plain that an error here is inexcusable.

Another marked difference between the seals of the two covenants is this: In the first covenant outward circumcision, the token, was confined to the male children of Abraham and of his natural descendants. In the new covenant circumcision of the Spirit is given to all the believers in Christ, who is the "one seed," without regard to sex or nationality. In view of this truth Paul said:—

"There is neither Jew nor Greek [Gentile], there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Gal. 3:28, 29.

These scriptures cast light upon the apostle's words in another place, concerning which there has been much vain speculation:—

"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom. 8:9.

Two errors have obtained in regard to this text. First, that the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God are not the same. This is corrected by comparing 1 Pet. 1:10, 11, which says the Spirit of Christ was in the holy prophets testifying, with 2 Pet. 1:21, which says the prophets spake as they were moved of the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit, which is the same as the Spirit of God. The second error is, that the "Spirit of Christ" in this text does not mean the Holy Spirit, but only the temper or disposition of Christ.

It is indeed an important truth that he who has not the disposition of Christ is none of his; and it is a truth which will cut off the vain hopes of many proud, worldly, selfish professors of religion. But it is not the truth taught by this passage. This text is really a reiteration of the rule laid down to Abraham that he who was not circumcised, who had not the seal or token of the covenant, had no part in the covenant. We have seen that the Spirit of God, called also the Spirit of Christ, is the seal of the new covenant. And if any man have not the Spirit, he has not the token or seal of the covenant, and therefore he cannot be a partaker of the privileges of the covenant—he is none of Christ's.

And this again casts light on verse 16 of the same chapter:—

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."

The "witness of the Spirit" is an important subject, and one that has received the attention of the eminently pious of all ages. The internal evidence of the Spirit has been uniformly neglected, and eventually by many denied, whenever coldness, worldliness, and pride have crept into the church. But alas that it must be said that even in this doctrine the Saviour often receives the deepest wounds "in the house of his friends." Many whose lives in no way correspond with the "great Example," are often loudest in their profession of possessing the Spirit's "power." They seem to think that profession or feeling can atone for the lack of graces. These are they "by reason of whom the way of truth is evil spoken of." By reason of these, the Bible doctrine of sanctification through the truth is rejected and brought into contempt. Feeling, indeed, will not be lacking where the witness of the Spirit is given; but our Christian experience must have a stronger and deeper foundation than this. Our feelings are often controlled by circumstances, and these are so varied that our feelings cannot always be the same. But the hope of the Christian is "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," and we may have

"A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without;
That when in danger knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt."

But the question is asked, To whom does the Spirit witness? to the believer, or to the world? We answer, To both; but not to both in the same manner. When the disciples received "the Holy Spirit of promise," or "the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts," it assuredly witnessed to their own consciousness, as it could not witness to the world, otherwise it could not have been an earnest to them. But when it moved them to speak with other tongues, and to bear the cross, and "to perfect holiness in the fear of God," then in their lives evidence was presented to the world. These classes of evidence always go together—they will not be separated. So we conclude that the presence of the Spirit in the heart, inclining us to conform to the will and word of God, is the witness to ourselves; while the graces of the Spirit in our lives are the witness to the world.

We will illustrate this by applying to it a personal experience which all may appreciate. Thus: No one but myself can be conscious that I love my brother; there is an internal evidence of that fact which belongs to me exclusively, and if I never show that love in my actions, no one will have any evidence that I possess it in my heart. If I show an utter indifference to his welfare, and where our interests seem to conflict I care only for myself, every one will readily decide that I do not possess that love; that I am deceived, or my profession is hypocritical, which is, practically, the same thing. And this decision must be correct.

So it is with the witness of the Spirit. There is liability to self-deception; the Scriptures recognize this, and warn us to "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." And we have a double guard on this subject.

1. As the word of God was given by inspiration, men writing it "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," of course there must be perfect harmony between the word of God and the Spirit of God. To suppose otherwise were to suppose that God is not in harmony with himself. Therefore, any spirit which leads us not in harmony with the word—which calms our spirits and soothes our feelings while we are walking contrary to the word—cannot be of God. The Spirit of God, according to our Saviour's words, is given to guide into truth. And again, he said to his Father, "Thy word is truth." Hence they who have the Spirit of God as their guide, will in all things accept the word of God as their rule; and thus they are enabled to worship God "in spirit and in truth."

2. The Saviour gave another infallible test, namely, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Though these two rules lead directly to the same result, they are not the same. We may perceive duties in the word of God of which our neighbors are not aware. Unknown to all others a cross may be presented to us which we are unwilling to bear, a truth be made known to which our feelings are opposed. In these things and in such cases the word is a test, to our own consciousness, of the spirit which influences us. A feeling of opposition to the truth of God; a disposition to neglect it; an unwillingness to hear or learn any truth which will bring a cross to us; all this is direct evidence to ourselves, providing we are willing to examine ourselves, that we are not led of the Spirit of God. Of these feelings or actuating motives the world cannot take cognizance; therefore the world cannot judge of them. But if these feelings are submitted to or cultivated, our lives will soon show the effect of such an insult to the authority of God; the Spirit of God will be altogether grieved away, and we left in darkness to follow the leadings of the carnal mind. Then our lives will be evidence to the world that we are not led by the Spirit of God. By our fruits, and by these only, shall the world know that we are the children of God.

There is an error on this subject, largely prevalent, which well deserves a notice. It is generally taught by those who deny the direct power of the Spirit as a witness, or an instrument of conversion, that the only evidence we can have of our reception of the

