

Assembly Truth

from Memorials of the ministry of G. V. Wigram.

Vol. 2, Part 1, Ecclesiastical.

Fifth Edition

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Assembly Truth

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Preface.

This second volume, while differing widely from its predecessor, will scarcely be less acceptable. The first part contains some most valuable expositions of the doctrine and the discipline of the Church of God. The importance of these papers at the present moment, when so many souls are passing through deep exercise upon these subjects, cannot be overestimated. Many a sorrow, and indeed many a breach of the unity of the Spirit, might have been avoided, if the scriptural principles here enforced had but more generally governed the Lord's people. They are most earnestly commended to the prayerful study of the saints at large. The second part is critical in its character, consisting of "Remarks upon the English Psalter," "An Examination of the Hebrew Bible as to the Structure and Idiom of the Language," etc. These papers will prove exceedingly interesting to every student of the Scriptures, and are so simplified, accompanied as they are with new translations, that all will derive both instruction and edification from their perusal. One remark may be quoted. G.V.W. says: "When I read from Genesis 1 to 2: 3 in the English Bible, I am as one listening to a narration; *when I read the same portion in Hebrew, I am as one in the presence of God, the living God in action.*" This difference — and every one will feel its importance — he has sought to remove in his own translation. He adds: "Our authorized version, with its many words which have since changed their meaning (some of them altogether) since it was written; with its many italic words, put in to make it like English; with its want of uniformity as to the use of the same word in English for the same word in the original . . . is still (all that notwithstanding) a precious gift from God to the English people. But if it led the way, faith would follow on, through grace, to something better. Ezekiel 43: 10, may have a word for faith herein." It will thus be seen that the only desire of the writer was to convey more accurately, if possible, to the English

reader the words of God. The papers were written for publication, and it should be again stated that C.E.S. has most kindly rendered his valuable aid in passing them through the press.

May the Lord in His infinite condescension deign to own the publication of these volumes in the blessing of His people. E. D.

SEVENOAKS, KENT.

Part First.

ECCLESIASTICAL.

PREFATORY.

HAVING been lately appealed to by several beloved friends, in difficulty from questions in their localities, as to what some call discipline in the Church, for the results of my fifty years' experience, I felt that they were not worth much. After looking to the Lord, however, I bethought me that I might, at least, show love, and pass afresh through the word as *written* by our God on the subject. I did so, and jotted down the remarks which are found in these papers. When a dear young brother had made a clean copy of it for me, I asked him, "What do you say to its contents?"

His answer was, "I found much food for thought in it, but can give no judgment formed upon it as yet."

I gave the copy to another who is in the work to correct for me, and made the same inquiry of him.

His answer was, "It contains much that has to be weighed; much in it, in the aspect in which you look at it, is new to me." I think he judged that it was in itself worth perusing, though his perusal of it was as my fellow-helper.

To him I said, "If it will help 'ours' to examine the word of God afresh upon the subject, I would, after prayerful correction, publish it." For we have need, in these parts, having learnt that God's assembly is "holy," of a little help now to the better understanding and appropriating of what is meant by the "One Assembly," which is holy; as men say, the "Holy Catholic Church." It is not for me, on the one hand, to dogmatise; or, on the other, to keep back from my brethren anything which I can honestly say I judge to be of God, and for their good. "Let the rest judge."

SYDNEY, N.S.W., 1877.

ASSEMBLY-TRUTH.

INSTANCES of God's own interference inside the assembly; Himself — or by the Apostles.

1. Ananias and Sapphira, as in Achan of old and Judas, Acts 5.
2. The murmuring about neglect of the widows, Acts 6: 1.
3. Except the Apostles: The scattered abroad preach the Gospel, Acts 8: 1.
4. Simon, Acts 8: 9.
5. Peter going to Gentiles, Acts 11: 2, 3-18.

6. Jews in Antioch, Acts 15: 1-35.

7. Paul and Silas part, Acts 15: 36-41.

8. Paul will go to Jerusalem, Acts 21: 1-4, 10-40, and Acts 23: 11, etc.

No. 1. Rom 16: 17: "Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrines which you have learned; and avoid them."

There are two words, in our authorised New Testament, which are translated by the word divisions; the word here DICHOSTASIA, is, properly speaking, dividing or divisions; the other, schisms or rents. There might be any number of rents or splits in a skin or coat, without the skin or coat being divided in twain. Division, in contrast with unity of the Spirit, is what is looked at here by the Apostle. What lay at the root of these divisions shows the outrageous wickedness of the whole thing. "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (v. 18.) Paul's command, as to such, is to "mark them . . . and avoid them," (in the New Translation "turn away from,") and English New Testament (Rom. 3: 12) renders the same word by "go out of the way of." The *enormity* of the sin is marked: — If any man, instead of "keeping the unity of the Spirit," (Eph. 4: 3) and "the one body and one Spirit," (v. 4) sins against it, to set aside. It is sin (not merely against a man's own self, or a brother, but sin) against God, and Christ, and the Spirit, and the assembly, by breaking, what God had made to be one, into two. What Paul warned against is clear; any energy or action which had as its aim the setting aside of this unity. But no mention is made of whence the evil had, or might come; whether from outside or from inside. The wicked mischief-makers are not named here as being inside; nor as to arise from inside (as in Acts 20: 29-33). Nor was it likely, in the few weak ones at Rome, (chiefly individual believers who happened to be at Rome, etc.,) and the instruction of the letter being, too, of the most elementary kind possible, that they were from inside; the probability is all on the other side, as Paul found it there himself in the last of Acts. It was also from outside that Paul had himself had to meet the evil. See his letter to the Galatians; (see again and read Acts 15: 1-5, and 22-31). But he had (Acts 11: 29-33) to warn his beloved Ephesians of that same evil, in another form; it would appear from among themselves. "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." (See again 2 Tim. 2: 16-18, "Hymenaeus and Philetus," etc.).

If (Rom. 16: 17) it had occurred inside an assembly anywhere, I do not see any difficulty; put outside of the assembly in any place, they are put out as wicked persons, and no longer looked upon as "Dear Brethren." "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, saints as called," gives to the letter, in many ways, a peculiar interest. One thing is clear from it; viz., that an individual saint has to walk with God and please Him in every respect; and so gets the power of the assembly-truth as it is in God's mind. Saints nowadays forget this too much. Each saint must be made of God and walk with Him; each sheep must be a sheep ere it is one in the flock.

No. 2. Divisions, properly so called, (see 1), that is DICHOSTASIA, and schism properly so called (SCHISMA) (as in Cor. 1: 10) are different things, as we shall see, if we attend to text and context.

"I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no (*Greek*) *schisms* among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment."

To divide into two that which was one, by means of the introduction of a new root or a new set of principles [as where the pure gospel of God's grace in Christ had been received, to introduce "except ye

be circumcised ye cannot be saved," which was done by a wicked enemy] is one thing; and, for various parties or sections to exist inside that which had been one, and still remained in its unity, — "the Church of God at Corinth" was quite another thing.

When Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he looked at the assembly as the church which was for the *Christ in heaven*, His body and His bride; but when he wrote his first letter to the Corinthians, he looked at the assembly as the model of the *Church of God* down here on earth. (1 Cor. 1: 2-9.)

The Corinthians walked carelessly, and (it ought to be borne in mind, that) ere Paul wrote to them, God had been cutting off many of them for sin* (1 Cor. 11: 29-32) even before Paul was moved to write to them and point out the evil among them, and try to stop its continuance and the continuance of the judgments of God. The supper was for the company; but each at it had to judge himself. (vv. 28, 29.) If there was evil, each was to judge himself; if he did not, the assembly was to judge the evil in judging the evildoer. If it did not, God would vindicate His own holy presence and chasten His children, lest they should be condemned with the world. Well, a trustworthy report reaches Paul, and (oh, the grace of our God!) He used their failures in particular as an occasion in which to give to all His children more light and truth. All is real; whether their standing as of God, or their failure in conduct, their inconsistency with that standing, or His grace in so dealing with them — all is real.

*Not necessarily those that had sinned as individuals, but, perhaps, some whose removal would be most felt by the rest. Individuals are thus often removed when the company has to be judged.

The first thing that Paul writes against is sects or parties, formed by schisms among them. They appear to have thought of the Church more as *their* Church; and of their own places and privileges in it, than as God's Church and habitation upon earth. And so God's servants in the house, which house they themselves were, were theirs also (1 Cor. 3: 21-23) as they also were God's; but they squabbled about these servants, and would have made them heads of schools (1 Cor. 1: 11, 12); men who were God's servants, and theirs, for Christ's sake. They boasted in what *they* had gotten — a Church, and would be masters in it. Paul boasted in Him who had gotten him, and set him for the Church universal. His servant, slave, and bondsman Paul would be, and serve Him in any humble, lowly service down here. In them, too, it went so far as that there were contentions.* (v. 11.)

*The word ERIS, here translated *contentions*, is variously rendered in the N.T., "debate, strife, contentions, variance." Paul writes (1 Cor. 3: 3): "Ye are yet carnal" (fleshly, and not spiritual): "for whereas there are among you envying, and strife (ERIS), and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men!" That is, the flesh is the root of these things.

They used their privilege of being of the house wrongly; to God's dishonour and their own; still their sin was *inside* the church; and general corruption within was not like splitting the church and making it into two, and doing so upon the principles of Satan, the world and the flesh. (Rom. 16: 18-20.) They tried to rise out of their place and be free in nature (fallen nature), instead of being only living stones built together by God, and they fell. Paul knew his own servant's place, just like his Master, and went on with his service, in which he got breaking enough for himself, but so became, through grace, fitted of God to help them out of their fallen state. For he clave to, and loved the lowly foundation (1 Cor. 3: 10-15) which lay at the basis of all — a foundation so wondrous that everyone who built upon it in reality would be saved; if they built with works not according to God's mind, their works would all be burnt up, but the soul would be saved yet so as by fire; if the works that were built were good according to God, the soul would receive a reward. Their fleshliness, factions, blindness, self-complacency, etc., occupy him to end of 1 Cor. 4. Evidently Paul was occupied in love, not wishing to punish, but to get their souls into the light of the grace and blessing which belonged to them.

The perception of which, in contrast with their own practical walk and conduct, would have broken them down and restored their souls.

Then comes their unholiness, as making a faction against holiness and Paul, and sheltering an incestuous person. But Paul's treatment of the case throws much light upon what our conduct, if in the Spirit, should be under the circumstances, and what the points are which we ought to guard.

A sin of the flesh, and that too in a most abhorrent form — such as the heathen would not even have named — was the occasion of their being puffed up. (1 Cor. 5: 1, 2.)

Observe it. There was a door of escape from the censure; if any had been free from fellowship with the rest in evil, any poor weak one that had stood for holiness might have mourned before the Lord, in order that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among them. Instead of which they were puffed up. There were no (not even a few) Annas, not even one to sigh and to cry for the abomination (as in Ezek. 9 and 11) None save Paul (v. 5) were awake to the enormity of the dishonour put on God; none pitied the soul that had sinned; none thought of Christ and the Spirit and the assembly. But, through mercy, Paul stood firm for holiness (v. 3) and for the unity of the Assembly, and for God's way of staying the plague in the assembly, and for saving the soul of the chief offender in the day of the Lord Jesus. None at Corinth had, in their weakness, identified themselves with God against the evil. Paul's alternative was a sad and solemn one, if they persisted in the evil. There, where the name of the Lord Jesus was owned and submitted to, was God's Assembly: they that were such would gather together and act with, his servant, Paul, endued with the power of the lord. A solemn alternative, if the worse came to the worst; but an alternative which Paul had authority and power to carry out, and God and Christ would sanction him in doing; viz., to test the assembly, and to act out God's mind together with those that owned it, and leave all the rest for God to deal with. Paul and John and Peter, etc., had the power requisite for the equally awful act of judgment in the form referred to (v. 5), the delivering to Satan. The assembly has it not, though, acting with God, it is able, as we shall see presently, to act in similar cases to the one before us. But that responsibility and ability to use it rests with the assembly as such. The assembly, having exercised its mind, and everyone in it his, as to how far it has been compromised by and to past evil, and what the Lord would have it as a whole do with the unrepenting sinner in its midst, can, after every effort has been made to restore his conscience, shut him out of it, as a wicked person who will not repent; for the Holy Spirit is in the assembly, and we have His word; and even (in 1 Cor. 5: 6, 7, 8) the word of His grace, for such a case of leaven. If the assembly as such, and conscience in all, have, been appealed to, and all has been done in order to reclaim the erring one yet without avail, the honour of God, and of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit demands, at the hands of the assembly, the exclusion of such a person from it. The assembly as such must sanction what has to be stated about the person, whether it be to the saints only, as it might be in some cases, or before the world also, as in such a case of incest sanctioned at Corinth; but the dishonour must be removed from the name of God and His assembly. If the person is restored in soul, and really repentant, the assembly, but it only, can receive back. The action was always of the assembly as a whole, and not of a pastor or pastors, elder or elders. Besides, in enforcing holiness, we must remember that it is the assembly only receives, or excludes, or receives back again. And every caution and means should be taken to maintain this, for thus only every individual in the assembly is made to see his or her act and deed in the assembly's actings. Of course, in an assembly of the aged and infirm, and of others — it may be true of many an Anna — there may be those who, themselves not able to enter into a case from personal sickness or other reason, trust it all, with prayer and lively faith, to God. To a godly soul there is no difficulty, if God wills that I leave a matter with Him, in my doing so. It is the prayer of the hidden ones which often keeps up and restores strength in the assemblies. A few more

Annas and Simeons, what a gift from the Lord would it be to us in our day! Had there been one Anna at Corinth, evil would not have gone to the length it did.

But God is sufficient for us, and His way is best.

In 1 Cor. 5: 9 we read, referring to some letter which God has not seen fit to give us, "I wrote to you in an epistle *not to company with** fornicators," (not of this world, for then must ye needs go out of the world; but) "not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a man, no, not to eat. . . Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." From the surface, or at the first sight, of this passage, "company with," "keeping company with." look as if what was meant was that outside intercourse which a man has with a worldly man in business of any kind. But this is set aside by the apostle's adding, "not of this world, for then ye must needs go out of the world."

* The same word occurs in 2 Thess. 3: 14.

Moreover the meaning and use of the word is much stronger than would express such casual, outside intercourse. It is a compound word made up of three words, SUN, together with; ANA, thoroughly; and MIGNUMI, mingled. The last (MIGNUMI) is used (Matt. 27: 34) of the vinegar *mingled with* gall, given to our Lord on the cross; and again (Rev. 8: 7, Rev. 15: 2), fire *mingled with* blood, and a sea of glass *mingled with* fire; and again (Luke 13: 1), blood *mingled with* sacrifices; and its noun is used (John 19: 39), *a mixture* of myrrh and aloes. To me it seems that the compound word expresses that which we call "the intimacy of loving friends" more than aught else. But take it in its least forcible meaning. I deal with the man of the world, and have intercourse with him in business, without any question of how far his principles and morality are those of a Jew or of a heathen. I would like to confess Christ before him, and to be known in my principles and morality as not a man like those who have a name to live whilst they are dead, a mere man of Christendom, but a true living member of that body of which Christ is the glorified Head; but if any man *is called* a brother (a member of Christ Himself, and not only in the outside kingdom), and an immoral walk or ways are found to be his, confession and prayer and every effort to arouse his soul come in; and, if without success, I can at least break off all *intimacy* with him, and cease to take a meal with him. The assembly, as such, will have to act for God, and itself, and for him, too; but, as an individual, if he be unholy, and I cannot reclaim him, I withdraw from him all voluntary *companionship*, and tell him I do so, and why. The assembly may be called to act, and may prevail to restore him, and, if so, that would change my course as to him and me together. I must not act capriciously toward another, for my Lord's sake and my own as subject to Him. But if a Christian in early days could not walk up to, the standard of a Peter or a Paul, to his own satisfaction in the Spirit, a Christian in these latter times should still be aiming at that, trying to live to Christ, who wills that they that live should live unto Him. (2 Cor. 5: 15.) And thus he cannot bring his walk down to what the walk of persons in the assembly may be, but has Christ Himself to seek, and what was according to the original standard. I have often had to do this, but I told it not, save to the one whom it affected. And I must say, painful as it was to do it, the Lord owned it remarkably.

I have been asked, does "Put out from among yourselves that wicked person" (the extreme act of the assembly) put him back into the world where he was before he professed to believe? I answer, "Yes" and "No." "Yes, and Satan is the god of the world." "No, the man is not before God, my God, where he was before he professed to believe." If a Hebrew came to Christ, and gave up the bullock and the rams of the great day of atonement (types), and took to (the anti-type) Christ for atonement, and then turned his back on Christ, and went back to Judaism, "he had crucified for himself the Son of God,

and put Him to an open shame." (Heb. 6: 4-8, Heb. 10: 26, 27, 29.) Such an one had other things written about him by God in these passages, and the aspect was altogether different from "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23: 34) "Preach the gospel, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke, 24: 47; Acts 2: 14, etc.), and their aspect is to be to me what it is to God. Take again Paul's word. If he had delivered anyone to Satan "for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord," the man is, in mine eyes, in a new position to what he was ere converted. If the sin was unto death of the body, and pronounced so by an apostle, I could not pray for that sin to be forgiven in this life. (1 John 5: 16.)

It is a very solemn thing to be put outside of the assembly of God, and ought to be thought of as such. Has God a habitation upon earth? and has anyone been excluded from it? I am sure distance and reserve towards him of the whole household which has put him outside as a wicked person, becomes each one who remains in it, who knows and honours that house and the God who dwells there; and such, too, is the path of love toward the man himself. My relationships are as much interfered with, the assembly having put him out, as if an apostle had; for an apostle was but a servant of the Church; and who could conceive such a thing as Paul finding Timothy or Titus walking as friends with a Hymenaeus or Alexander (1 Tim. 1: 20), or with Philetus? (2 Tim. 2: 17, etc.) The very notion is incompatible with any truth about God, His house, the fellowship of the house with God, and with the servant whom God had used in such judgments.

But Paul did not put out this wicked person for our sakes, because God would have us to see how the assembly itself could act; and truly the apostle was glad to have it so, and felt bound not only by the assembly's act of exclusion, but by its act of reception again. It will not do to say, "But, *then*, they had *signs* close at hand, and there are none such *now*." For is it the presence of signs of power which is to rule in our minds? or the presence of the living God in His house, and His written word as our guide? But of this more hereafter.

Observe, it is not hidden evil within a man, but overt action, which shows that we do not discern and judge ourselves, which calls for correction outwardly.

In one place Paul names some in an assembly to which he wrote; they were discovered by him, but their outside conduct being fair, perhaps, they were not detected by others. What is within a man is all known to God, and if I do not count myself dead to it as sin in the flesh, but allow myself to act upon it, it is known to me if I am living with God; but as to a witness for Him before others, overt action has a more important place. The Lord knew all along who and what Judas was, the apostles did not; when the spirit of the man began to come out before men, the case was changed. So perhaps in Phil. 3: 18, 19.

No. 3. 1 Cor. 11: 17. The disorder at the table. In verse 18, divisions should be read *schisms* (as in 1 Cor. 1: 10); then, too, apparently instead of its being one supper common to all, each took his own supper with him, and one (the poor man) was hungry, and another (the rich) drank too much. (vv. 20-22.)

The supper was given by the Lord Himself to Paul for us, by the Lord then in heaven. (vv. 23-26.) And observe it once again. The Lord having been offended there, death and sickness had been sent on men, because their spirit and conduct were not consistent with the discerning the Lord's body, even ere Paul wrote this letter.

2 Cor. 2: 5-11 are to be noted. Paul had not acted in his power over the assembly (1 Cor. 5 and 2 Cor. 2: 5-11), but left the assembly (roused by him) to act; and they had found grace to judge themselves and the sin they had sanctioned, and to put out as a wicked person him that had done this.

God's honour cared for, and evil judged, God acted with them. Overwhelming sorrow came upon the man, and Satan, ever watchful, tried to turn it to his own purpose. Had the man destroyed himself, it would have been no wonder, Satan being at work. But God's end would not have been gained. Paul writes to the assembly, now, again: "My grief is past; your chastening of the man has broken him down, he is overwhelmed; receive him, and restore him; I beseech you confirm your love to him." Give (v. 9) proof of your obedience. If (v. 10) you forgive him, so do I: for what I forgave, it was for your sakes, in the person of Christ, that I forgave it. (v. 11) He had forgiven *something*, perhaps what the man had done against himself, and he beseeches them to think of the man *himself*, and restore him.

2 Cor. 7: 4-16 should be studied. What sort of a spirit becomes those who are forced to press God's judgment on others; and what is repentance after a godly sort? These are important questions for us.

In 2 Cor. 10: 6, we find a reason for his pouring out, and among disorderly persons, the light he had about evil. It might form some of them unto obedience ere he came with a rod to revenge all disobedience, when their obedience was fulfilled; for edification and not destruction was in God's mind, and in his too (v. 8), and he would keep within the line God had measured to him. (vv. 13-15.)

What happened in the Galatian churches would have been a cause for withdrawing oneself from another gospel, which is not another, unless God had, in mercy, sent Paul upon the matter to them.

No. 4. 2 Thess. 3: 6-15: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition (doctrine handed down) which ye received of us." The doctrine here referred to was (v. 10), "If any will not work, neither should he eat." And he adds on (v. 14), "If any obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." Yet "count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." (v. 15)

To be sure! A child in the nursery, or schoolroom, or in the family, must be trained to good habits (v. 10), and to submission to parental authority (v. 14); yet he does not lose his place of child, brother, etc., if, having been naughty, the rest of the children or school are told to withdraw or shrink from him, until he has confessed his fault. Suppose it were the rule:

No. 1. "Meals to be eaten when lessons have been said;" and, if one child having snatched his meal before lessons were ended, a second child despised another order — No. 2. "Do not speak to a disobedient child," and would speak and play with it, and got a bad mark for so doing, and were put into a room by itself, no one would count either the one or the other to have lost its place in *the* family. Family, nursery, and schoolroom correction may have died out, since the world got into its dotage; but in other days many a household of love and order witnessed such things, to the correction of evil in the little ones, but to the present prayerful grief of the nurse, governess, parents, etc.

Also, as it seems clear to me, that if Paul had sent Timothy to *abide* at Ephesus (1 Tim. 1: 3), Timothy, as a man sent down to instruct, could not set about leaving the house or the table (as some that are unwise would have done). If there were any there who rejected his teaching, he might withdraw himself, refrain from such, but he was told to teach inside, and not to go or to put outside; so I have no such idea as that this is a case of *excommunication*, or putting outside of the house of God* — no, but of correction inside the house of one who might have lost all but his place at the table. "To be sent to Coventry," that is, no one of your companions allowed to play with or speak to you - though you are not cut off from the meal table — is a serious punishment to a child.

*The question whether a person put away from the Lord's Table is put thereby out of the house of

God does not affect in any way the grounds of discipline. — ED.

No. 5. SUNDRIES: 1 Timothy, is Paul's letter to Timothy about the maintenance of doctrine (1 Tim. 1: 3; 6: 3-5); he is told as to those that are destitute of the truth — supposing that gain is godliness, etc. (v. 5) — "from such withdraw thyself." The words "from such withdraw thyself" are not in the better MSS. The word is APHISTEEMI, "withdraw, depart from, refrain from." It would not alter the sense if inserted. And (v. 20) he is to avoid (turn aside from), EKTREPOMAI, (the same word as in chap. 1: 6, and v. 15, is translated turned aside.). Clearly a man sent down to instruct a family or a college† would not set about either turning the children out or leaving the house himself. If there were any there who rejected his teaching he might "withdraw himself from such." It was Paul who bade him bide there, even that he might charge some not to teach other doctrines.

†Not Timothy nor Titus had Paul's apostleship under Christ, nor were they "the assembly." Only an apostle or the assembly could excommunicate.

Again, 2 Tim. 2: 16: Timothy was to shun "vain babblings." Two had been led away through them to err (to miss the mark or go astray), saying that the resurrection was past, and overthrowing the faith of some. Then (v. 19) "depart from iniquity" is the word to everyone that names the name of Christ (or "the Lord" as the MSS.). This is addressed to *us* (each) also, as to Timothy.

So *again*, from those that had the form of piety, but denied the power of it (2 Tim. 3: 5); he was to turn himself aside. Compare with Romans 1: 29-31, and you will see that the evil to be turned aside from was as bad as that among the heathen; only it was intensified by being in the place, and under the pretence of light.

Titus was left at Crete to set in order things which remained, and to place elders in every city. "As I appointed thee" gives to him the authority of one carrying on Paul's work so far. (Titus 3: 10.) "A heretic," after having twice admonished, he was to reject (or have done with) knowing that such an one is perverted, being self-condemned.

Defectiveness of doctrine does not make it to be heresy, nor is all error heresy. What constitutes heresy is, it is the fruit of "human mind and will having been at work in connection with doctrine." The word heresy means "a choice" (from "to choose"). If the evil is present in an upright mind, get the thing once clearly before his mind and he will be set free. If a second time the mind turns back to it, there is reason to fear that there is want of ingenuousness, his having turned away from it before (after the admonitions) condemns him, if he turns back to it. For he had admitted that the root out of which his doctrine flowed was a bad one. His will had been at work. Its reappearing looks as if he had changed his doctrine without giving up the root of it. "Reject, or pass by such;" that is, do not sanction with your authority, which is from Paul, any such as teachers.

1 John 2: 19. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us."

Observe, this is a final departure, upon the ground of never having had *real* connection with "us." But Paul, in the case of Hymeneus, Philetus, etc., speaks as though they may have had real connection with Christ, and so might be saved in the end, yet so as by fire; but that they were withdrawn from the church militant, as having been untrue, traitorous to their Master in the war, and had not repented thereof.

2 John 7-11. A deceiver goes forth, not confessing Christ coming in flesh. He is a deceiver and antichrist, and is no more to be received by a Christian than a Mohammedan would be. He wants to pass himself off as a Christian teacher! Do not know him, or say, "How do you do," to him. How

senselessly stupid, more so far than would be a religionist of any other name, is the Christian who accredits and lends his sanction, in any way, to one of whom John says, "He is a false teacher, a deceiver, an antichrist."

In Rev. 22: 11, the righteous and the holy are called to separate themselves from the unjust and filthy; and afterwards those that meet God's mind go into the city; and they that have not met His mind are shut out forever.

P.S. The living energy, the wisdom and love and care for God in His assembly, for it under Him, and for all in it — by God the Holy Spirit, as filling and acting in and through each apostle, must be seen in action in the Word itself. I have taken a few fragments out, to enable me the better to study the detail of directions either to the assembly or to the man of God, in it, But they must be seen in their connections with the life and heart, mind and soul of an apostle, for all their beauty to appear.

Remark this: Through the mercy and grace of God. the principle of *every evil* which has ever come out against Christ and His church, since Pentecost, was allowed of God to germinate and bud while there were yet apostles on earth, in order that we, led by God, might see the fuller development of the evil in aftertimes and various places in our own circumstances, and also the, judgment of the Holy Spirit, through the apostles, upon that particular evil, now fully opened near us, though then, perhaps, showing itself only in germ.

Take dislocated fragments, and you unavoidably get away from the mind and power of the Spirit of God, on the one hand and, on the other hand; from all the human affections of the apostles as to what is good.

God's word gives to me, in the histories of men from the commencement, a mirror of what is in my own heart as to sin. It is Scripture which is *the book of experience* to the simple saint.

Those experiences I cannot exhaust in my tiny life, nor find around me all the evil which is in contrast with God. The word is so full that, as I judge, no, evil can appear which is not found traced out, in some history or other, for my instruction. May my soul, in the secret of God's presence, learn the seeds of evil so as to judge them and to avoid the development of them. If there be self-discernment in God's presence, and self-judgment by us, there need to be no broken bones or rebukes from the assembly, or chastening from the Lord. Judge all when you are inside the veil with God and Christ.

The whole scope and range of the new name of God (as revealed in "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit") is the question in the assembly; and this as revealed in and through the Son of man, and wrought out from Him, by the Holy Spirit, in living apostles. God that Himself made and makes the assembly, is Himself the keeper of it; though allowing man, world, and flesh and Satan to discover themselves, the meanwhile, in and by outward connection with it; while they that walk humbly before Him are preserved and kept.

*** The above is an extract from a larger manuscript.