

Dec 15. William Gerald Walker, son of William and Frances White.

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WHY AM I A CHURCHMAN?

CHAPTER II.—CONTINUED.

2. Again, the Church may be regarded as the "Home of God's chosen people." It is spoken of as a Family, of which God is the Father, Christ the Elder Brother, "the firstborn among many brethren," and all the baptised "brethren" (Eph. ii. 19; Rom. viii. 15, 16, 29; Acts ii. 47; Heb. ii. 13, iii. 1; Eph. i. 5).

Into this "Family" we are born anew by water and the Holy Ghost (S. John iii. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 13), in the "washing," or bath, "of regeneration" (Titus iii. 5). It is evident that a Family must be ONE, and that men cannot form such a family for themselves, God alone can form it—God alone can add by adoption new members to it (Acts ii. 47; Eph. i. 5).

"And just as in any well-ordered family all is done that the children may grow up to a healthy manhood and delight their parents, so it is with the family of God."

In the Church is provided abundantly all that children need:

- (a) Sustenance for the life.
 - (b) Teaching for the mind.
 - (c) Discipline for the character.
- Canon Ashwell, "Lectures on the Church."

3. The Church is, also, "the

Guardian of God's Truth and Word."

This is a most important aspect of the Church, but it is a large subject, and we must deal with it as concisely as possible.

Many people seem to think that the Bible alone is all-sufficient for instruction, and that the interpretation of its words can be left, and ought to be left, to each man's private judgment.

But two things concerning the Bible are evident:

- (1) That *historically* the Church was in existence, and possessed, and propagated very widely the Faith before there was any book called the "New Testament."

The first of the Books now contained in the New Testament—the Gospel according to S. Matthew—was written not less than fifteen years after Christ's Ascension, while the last, and that one of the most important—S. John's Gospel—was not written till nearly seventy years after that event. For a long time some places had only some books, other places had other books. They were not gathered together till A.D. 170, and the Canon as we now have it was not settled till about the fourth century. Even the Council of Laodicea, in 364, omits the Apocalypse of S. John the Divine.

"Slowly, and with an ever-deepening conviction, the Churches received, after trial, and in some cases after doubt and contradiction, the books which we now receive."—Dr. Westcott, "Bible in the Church."

- (2) That the Scriptures are not, and do not profess to be, a