

"When it is affirmed that He [Christ] maintains the succession, the meaning is, that ministers are made by Christ, not by man, and that the succession is entirely spiritual—not dependent on any supposed transmission of virtue, power, or authority from one human being to another, but on the possession of those graces and gifts which it is the Saviour's exclusive prerogative to bestow. *By apostolic succession we understand a succession of apostolic men, holding and preaching apostolic truth, and leading apostolic lives.* No others are in the succession, however regularly, as human laws and customs declare, they may have been ordained and appointed. We may suppose a case, not at all unlikely to occur in these days. During the same service the bishop lays his consecrating hands on two candidates for the ministry:—one of them goes forth, preaching full salvation by the death of Christ, and seeking to promote evangelical holiness; the other connects the safety of the soul with baptism and the Church, substitutes the world's morality for the life of faith, and derides as fanatics those who plead for the new birth and for spiritual-mindedness. There is no difficulty in deciding that while the former is evidently in the succession, the latter is not—though both received the same appointment, from the same person, and at the same time. A man may be a minister of a church—of any church—who is not a minister of Christ, and will not be owned by him at the last day.

"That the succession has been maintained is proved by the existence of the Church. It could only have been perpetuated by the means and instruments which the Saviour at first appointed—by the ministry and manifestation of the truth. The fact, that there are at the present day servants of the Lord united together for Christian fellowship, holding the great truths of the gospel, and exemplifying its effects in holy lives and devoted zeal, will surely warrant the inference that in every age there have been such unions, on a greater or smaller scale, maintained by similar instrumentality. The chain of the spiritual succession has not been broken, though we may not