

## WHAT CHURCH SHALL I GO TO ?

BY THE REV. J. W. SHACKELFORD, D. D.

That depends upon what you are going to church for. If you are merely going to hear fine music, find out where the best music is performed and go there, whether it be a Roman Catholic church, or a Methodist, Baptist, Swedenborgian, or what not

If you are merely going to hear fine preaching, find out where that best suited to your taste is to be heard, and go there, whether to hear Beecher or Talmage, in Brooklyn, or Bishop Potter, Dr. Dix, Dr. Hall or Dr Taylor, in New York

But if you want to go to church to worship God, then it would be well to find out, first, whether Christ authorized any special worship; secondly, if He did, where can we find it.

The popular idea, as to the first question, is that when our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth," He swept away all special and external appointments of Divine Service and left man to worship as they please.

But is this true? We know that our Lord worshipped every day in the Temple, in the stately, solemn ritual of the Jewish Church; and when He held his famous conversation with the woman of Samaria, He certainly rebuked the sect spirit which had led the Samaritans into schism, claiming for the Jewish Church a divine authority ("We know what we worship"), and while He went on to state the Catholic character of the coming Church, He said not one word about departing from the established principle that

worship in truth is to worship the true God, and to worship Him as He has appointed. To worship Him in spirit, is to bring to that worship the spirit of reverence which bows the whole nature, body, mind and soul, before Him in adoration. There is not a hint of any abolition of the existing principles of worship

Christ certainly established a Church. He chose men to minister in and rule it. Certain acts were to be done, and they only were to do them. He gave them a solemn commission—"Go ye make disciples of all nations, baptizing them." He gave them the Holy Ghost, that they might rightly fulfil their ministry. They were to represent Him when He should be gone away into Heaven; in His name to bless, in His name to pronounce penitent sinners' pardon. "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted." Here was a commission given to a particular order of men, and they were to hand it down to others "As My Father sent Me, so send I you. He sent Me to send you. I send you to send others." And so they did. The priesthood was not to be confined to a tribe or a family, but spiritual fathers were to have spiritual sons. So the Apostles appointed successors to rule the Church when they should be taken away. Timothy was consecrated by the laying on of the Apostle's hands, to be the first Bishop, or Overseer (the name matters not), of Ephesus, and Titus to be the first Bishop of Crete. They had under them elders, or presbyters, or priests (they are called by all three titles), and deacons, and these all ministered in holy things. St Paul, in his epistles, gave directions to the Bishops about the ordination of the lower orders of the min-