

Any man that will tell me that what St. Paul said to the Corinthians, or Gallatians, or Thessalonians, he meant only for those people and not for the world at large, except a few passages carefully picked out and selected by himself, is beyond the reach of sound argument. Besides, who is to be the judge of this? Who is to tell what St. Paul meant locally or what he meant generally? The Plymouth Brethren? A sect you may say of yesterday!—A sect without a creed, without a ministry, without even agreement among themselves! Would they have us believe that they are the only infallible interpreters of Scripture? And would they have a people follow them so blindly that they must take *their* word, *their* dictum as to what passages are orthodox for believers, and what not? Is not this as bad, if not much worse, than Roman Catholic people who are not allowed to read any Bible but their own, and not that unless it has their own comments and explanations? It is the boast of this enlightened land that the Bible is scattered everywhere and that people are taught to "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest" its sacred pages—not a few favorite book or passages but the whole complete blessed volume as it stands—and shall intelligent people consent to be led away by random preachers who will hear no Scripture except a few well-thumbed, constantly studied passages?

There is the great question which meets us at the outset. The "Brethren" are obliged to consider lots of passages inapplicable to and never meant for the present day, and so virtually reject all the Bible except what they *want* to keep. You may not notice this peculiarity in them at first; but once allow yourself to be drawn into their "chosen band," and you will find yourself an adept at explaining away or rejecting altogether passages which you now consider sacred and precious to your souls.

With such people, then, I for one will never argue, and have, therefore, no desire for controversy with them. That is not my design in making these things public. My design is to banish or keep out of my parish the heresies of a people, whose teaching is "erroneous, strange, and contrary to God's Word." And I now proceed to make this statement good. I shall begin with bringing before you their views on one of the great leading doctrines of Christianity, viz.:

I.—REPENTANCE.

I dare say, if you do not know much about these people, you will be surprised to hear that they do not believe in any such thing as repentance at all! And yet that is one of their leading doctrines. — Before a man is *saved* he *can't* repent, because he *can't* pray! They won't allow that any one can pray unless he is