

In the first place, then, that there is such a divine institution as "the Church," the New Testament, we find, makes full and distinct declaration. By consulting a concordance, it will be seen that the word "Church" (which is *ecclesia* in the Greek tongue,) is used more than one hundred times by the sacred writers; and it means, as any one may know by the aid of a Greek lexicon, an assembly of persons, summoned or called out for some special purpose. It will further be found, by a reference to the Apostolic writings, that the Christian "ecclesia" are the *klétoi*, or "called" by Jesus Christ, through the ministry of the Gospel; out of the world of sinners into the holy kingdom of God. They are "called to be saints," "called out of darkness," "called of Jesus," "called to glory," "called by our gospel." The *called*, it would further appear, are always spoken of as *holy*, as "saints in Christ Jesus," "saints and faithful," "elect of God, holy and beloved," "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." As such they are also styled "beloved of God," "faithful brethren," "members of Christ's body," "one with God in Christ," all which implies that the *called* have repented "after a godly sort," have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, have been justified by the grace of God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and have become heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. It is further to these, and to these only, that the promises are given of the inheritance of the Saints, the teaching of the Spirit, and the everlasting presence and protection of Jesus Christ. They are *the Church* which is built upon the "rock," Christ, against which the "gates of hell" shall not prevail, and to which also it is said, "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world." It will, therefore, from these statements appear, that the Church is an assembly of persons called by Jesus Christ, believing, penitent, pardoned, sanctified,—in short, that the Church is the "Communion of Saints." Only such, therefore, as possess these characteristics of holiness are, or can be, members of *the Church*, sheep of the flock, stones of the living temple. And, on the other hand, such as do not possess these graces are not members of *the Church*, have no part or lot with it, and shall not inherit the purchased possession. We may thus say with Irenæus, that "where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there also the Church and every grace exists." The whole method of salvation points to this conclusion: Christ came into the world, that by his sufferings and death, he might "redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." The Gospel has been preached in every age, that it might call men out of darkness into light. Christ is, even now, seated as he is on his Father's throne, head over all things for the good of his body, the Church. It cannot, therefore, be shown that there is any other Church any where than the Saints. They are both the visible and the invisible Church. Visible and invisible are not, let it be noted, the titles of two Churches, but of one Church under two different relations. That which is termed the invisible is the whole number of the elect, the perfect body of Christ, and the spiritual temple of God, which the Divine Omniscience apprehends, and is, in fact, the only Church, than which there is no other. The visible, again, is just so much of the chosen assembly as is made manifest in the world, and to which, by reason of human infirmity and sinfulness, there ever adhere carnal and impure elements. Hence there are foolish virgins with the wise, tares among the wheat, bad fish in the net with the good; but these, although in the visible kingdom, are not of it. "They went out from us, but they were not of us," says St. John; "for if they had been of us they would have continued with us, but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." The foolish virgins, the tares, or the bad fish, of themselves, have no likeness to the kingdom of God. By their separation from the good it was shown that they formed no part whatever of the kingdom. They were cast out from