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the great doctrine of justification through faith in His blood. You will find this declared throughout the gospels. This same apostle, St. John, tells us on another occasion, that the blessed Saviour declared: *'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.'* Therefore the text which you bring forward with so much triumph does not contradict the many passages in my epistles, which declare most distinctly that the pardon of sins is not obtained by good works, but by unfeigned faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus in Romans iv. 3, *'What saith the Scriptures, Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness';* and in fifth chap., first verse, *'Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.'* Again, fifth chap., ninth verse: *'Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.'* Again, third chap., 28th verse, *'A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.'* Again, in Gal. 2nd chap. 16th verse, *'A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ.'* You can and should call upon all sinners to repent them of their sins, to believe in Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls, and to seek the sanctifying and strengthening influences of God's Holy Spirit; and to those who will not be converted, and even to those who say they have faith, but by their carelessness and ungodliness show that they have it not, you can and should say to them, *'You are infidels, and if you die in your sins the wrath of God will abide with you for ever.'*

It is in this way that you will "open the gates of heaven" to the former, and will "shut" them to the latter. But when a sinner repents, you must not in any way place a priest between him and Jesus Christ. If you do this, the influence of the priest will imperceptibly increase, whilst that of Jesus Christ the Lord will decrease. He will soon not know how to find Christ without looking first to the priest.

"You should never think that God has relinquished the power of forgiving sins, which is one of his most spiritual attributes, and has conceded it to you, who are no more than frail and weak beings, and subject to commit sin."

"But tell me, what is the meaning of that metallic sound which I hear, and which seems to be produced by silver coin." "Sir, the faithful are only paying for the masses which are being celebrated on 'the altar of pardon,' so that the souls of those for whom the masses are being celebrated may escape from Purgatory."

"What do you mean by that word PURGATORY? I can well comprehend that the payment of money for masses signifies that, unworthy priests and bishops, in receiving money for masses do their best to imitate the unfaithful Judas Iscariot, who sold his Divine Master for thirty pieces of silver, with this important difference, that he did it once, and then went and hanged himself, whereas you commit this great sin every day without shame or apparent regret. But do explain to me what you mean by the word PURGATORY."

"Sir, Purgatory is an unintelligible and gloomy place, where the souls of those who die without having satisfied God for their sins whilst on earth, remain undergoing the most terrible torments until their relations pay money enough to secure the said mass to be celebrated, on which being done, the soul is rescued from those terrible torments."

"I do not know what conscience you have," the apostle would answer, "if you are robbing the public in such a scandalous manner, and I am surprised that the competent authorities of the church have not long before this interfered to protect the people from being so grievously fleeced. But tell me, who has taught you that fable about PURGATORY, which is no more than an old woman's tale; for you will find nothing of it in the Scriptures. On the other hand, I find that you are in a most grievous error in supposing that mankind can satisfy God for their sins, which is absolutely false. Read in the Epistle I addressed to the Ephesians, chap. 2, verses 8 and 9, what the Holy Ghost saith, *'For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.'* Besides, the pure and most precious

blood of Jesus Christ cleanses every soul from all sin, if it trust and believe in His Divine Majesty. If this be the case, why should the Church of Rome (whose sons ye are) invent a PURGATORY, where souls are to be purified from their sins. But I see plainly enough why your church invented Purgatory. It was for the purpose of bleeding the people and making yourselves rich, in order to satisfy your gross appetites, to maintain your many sacrilegious children. Tell me what does your frightful picture represent?" "It represents *Purgatory*," would be your unwilling answer.

The Holy apostle, full of indignation, would exclaim, "You seem to have fallen into the deepest degradation possible. Those images, too, which I some time ago called for an axe or hammer to destroy, were not put up by those ancient heathen, the Aztecs, but by you, who, though professing to be Christians, are nevertheless idolators; for know, that all who worship graven images are idolators, and it would have been much better if I had returned to heaven before entering this place, where I have found the greatest abominations."

(To be continued.)

#### THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH; WHICH IS IT?

To the Rev. Thomas Witherow, Professor of Church History, Londonderry.

##### LETTER X.

MY DEAR SIR,—Let us glance again over the ground we have passed in Letter IX. We see that St. Paul in writing his epistle to the Church at Philippi, sent it by the hands of Epaphroditus the *Apostle* (i.e., Bishop) of this Church, and addressed to the *Bishops* (i.e., the Presbyters and Elders) and the Deacons, thus recognizing the existence of *three orders* in the ministry of the Apostolic Church. We have seen also that although there were *Elders*, also called *Bishops*, both in this Church and that of Ephesus, yet there is not the slightest hint in the New Testament to lead us to suppose that there was not also a separate and distinct congregation for each separate Presbyter or Elder. And we find also that St. Luke in Acts XIV. 23, does not state that the Apostles Paul and Barnabas "ordained them Elders in every Church," but simply in, *through, for, or among* the Church, or "*in accordance with,*" or "*in conformity to* Church usage or custom." These facts, therefore, completely destroy your *third principle*. We will therefore turn to your *fourth*, which you state to be "that in the APOSTOLIC CHURCH ORIENTATION WAS THE ACT OF THE PRESBYTERY—of a plurality of elders:" p. 34. Ordination you define to be the solemn designation of a person to ecclesiastical office with (or rather by) the laying on of hands;" p. 32. I make the above correction on the authority of the Presbyterian "Form of Church Government," published in Glasgow, 1843, with the "Confession of Faith, &c." p. 360. "Every minister of the word is to be ordained by imposition of hands and prayer, with fasting, by those preaching Presbyters to whom it doth belong." That is to say, they were to be ordained by the laying on of hands, by prayer, with fasting, and by those to whom the right of ordination belongs. Please bear the distinction between *by* and *with* in mind, as I purpose referring to it again.

The "laying on of hands" is declared to be one of "the principles of the doctrine of Christ," (Heb. VI. 1-2) and was used in conferring both ordinary and extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit (Acts VIII. 17; IX. 17; XIX. 6) in the miraculous healing of the sick (Mark XVI. 18; Acts XXVIII. 8) in commending persons to the grace of God (Acts XIII. 3; XIV. 26, perhaps also XV. 41); and it was also used in the solemn investment of persons to ministerial functions in the Church of God (Acts VI. 6; 1 Tim. IV. 14; V. 22; II Tim. I. 6), and this laying on of hands in Ordination was always considered as not only conveying *jurisdiction*, but also as conferring the gifts of the Holy Spirit for the fulfilment of the work of the ministry to which the person was then set apart. You must acknowledge that all power and authority is vested in the great Head of the Church. From Him came the original

commission to the ministry of the Christian Church in the words (St. Matt. XXVII. 18-20): "All power is given unto Me both in Heaven and in Earth; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world." This may be called their jurisdictional commission, the whole earth was to be their Diocese, and the discipling of all nations their ministerial work. While that as given by St. John (XX. 21-23) was the conferring upon them indelibly their ministerial character in the words, "Peace be unto you, as my Father hath sent Me even so send I you;" and when He had said this He breathed on them and said "Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." The ambassador of Christ, therefore, does not derive his official character from the men of the world, nor yet from professing Christians in the Church, but from our Lord Jesus Christ Himself through the order He established to transmit and propagate it to the end of the world. Indeed, it would be hard to find in all human transactions a more explicit appointment of particular men to a particular office, or a more distinct conveyance of authority and power for the fulfilment of the duties connected with that office than is found in these solemn words of our Lord to the Apostles whom he had chosen. And the inspired writers when speaking of this ministry refer to it as the gift of God thus, "the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus," (Acts XX. 22). "God hath committed to us the ministry of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God," (II Cor. V. 19-20). Again it is stated that the gift of the apostles, prophets, &c., for the work of the ministry, &c., was from Him "Who hath ascended far above all Heavens," namely, Christ, (Eph. IV. 10, 11.) And our Lord in His own words states the same thing, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain," (St. John XV. 16.) The Elders of Ephesus, though undoubtedly ordained by St. Paul, are stated to have been made Overseers of the Church by the Holy Ghost, (Acts XX. 28.) St. Paul also in speaking of the ordination of Timothy calls it "the gift," (I Tim. IV. 14.) "The gift of God;" and what gift was that? It was the gift of the Holy Spirit conferred by the laying on of hands at his ordination, (II Tim. I. 6.)

But to return. The instances you adduce from Holy Scripture in support of your fourth principle are from 1 Tim. iv. 14; Act xiii. 1-3, and Acts vi. 6. In reference to the first you say: "The Apostle exhorts his son in the faith to employ to good purpose the gift of the ministry that had been conferred upon him. He intimates that this gift had been given by prophecy—that is, in consequence of certain intimations of the prophets who were numerous in that age of spiritual gifts, making him out as one who would be an eminent minister. He adds that the gift was conferred with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery—that is by the presbyters or elders in their collective capacity. The words of the Apostle are: 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee which was given thee by prophecy WITH THE LAYING ON OF THE HANDS OF THE PRESBYTERY.' These words are decisive as to the parties with whom the power of ordination is lodged."

Before I enter upon the examination of this passage I would ask you to turn to page 18 of your tract and read it through carefully. You there condemn the practice of those visitors who "select some one of our modern churches which happens to be a favorite, delineate its characteristic features and then proceed to show that they are a reflection of the pattern presented in the word of God." And you state as a reason for your "grave objections" that it "produces the fatal impression that the writer has determined in the first place that his view of the subject is right, and then goes to Scripture to search for proof of it." And you continue: "Besides, it affords opportunities for viewing passages of Scripture