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MY PEOPLE – OUT OF BABYLON. A LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

DEAR SIR: – Apology for what follows is needless; this would not be written had the writer doubts of your sincerity and desire to live up to the *full light*.

The June number of Z.W.T., under head of "Come out of Her!" contains in the "Reply" an error, in my opinion, of great harm.

(1.) Briefly – God, at the beginning of the present age, and while selecting his "little flock," made use of apparent human means – an association of believers, who at Antioch were first called Christians. These associations, called Churches, were specially blessed, and several have special mention.

(2.) These associations have been the means used by God to bring down the *Truth* to this day. This you will admit.

(3.) I believe that the church rightly perpetuated itself – under Divine guidance – by regular means, and that the pedigree of the "Clergy" of the Church is as well authenticated to-day, as was that of the Levitical in its day: that this is not accident, but the result of the Divine interposition, and therefore is to some good end.

(4.) Further, that the Churches each had its own territory in which it was the supreme or only visible means of identification of the membership or legitimacy of the little flock. Concurrent jurisdiction would not be an exception so long as they *agreed*. The original Churches mentioned in the New Testament have here in the United States of America, certain legitimate descendants, that can be readily identified – THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH. I came out of that district of Babylon known as *Congregational*. [R984 : page 5]

(5.) Granted that at this day many of the membership of *The Church* [Protestant Episcopal] are proud of their age; that they look with reverence at its honors and *worldly* trappings; and that the "little flock" may not get its rightful food, and may even be ministered to by "*wolves*" – this does not alter the fact of the Divine appointment of the institution.

(6.) Wesley tried to keep his hot-headed followers in The Church and reform IT. And this is our right and privilege. But this has *never been done* – and this is the starting point.

(7.) Simple ordering out, does not improve the matter. The little flock must be organized – and until you, MR. RUSSELL, have something better to offer them, modesty should indicate a different course. Very Truly Yours.

WM. M. WRIGHT.

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The above, from a Brother in Christ who has not long been a reader of the TOWER, but who has been greatly blessed by the reading of MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I. as previous letters show, is well stated; and as its answer may be of interest to many of our readers, we give it space. We have numbered the paragraphs so as to simplify our answer, the numbers of which correspond or relate to the above.

(1.) Our brother has well chosen his terms, calling the early churches "associations," rather than "organizations;" for they were merely associations, not bound and fettered by creeds and traditions, as the organizations or systems of to-day are. These associations bound themselves only with love and truth, and were just such as *we* have to-day, and generally small, their usual meeting places being private dwellings or rented upper rooms. (Philemon 2; Acts 20:8; 28:30,31; 1:13; Mark 14:15.) In no respect did those early *associations* or gatherings resemble those of Babylon, "mother" or daughters, to-day. Neither in size, in worldly place and honors, in

forms and ceremonies, in display of dress, in choirs, nor in a titled and salaried "Clergy," was there any resemblance whatever. The "first love" and "first works" are gone long since, except among the few outside of Babylon. Yes, the early "*associations*" were blessed of God; and all of like spirit, even though only twos or threes, who have since associated in the name of the real Head and Master, and under ruling of His Word alone, have also been blessed.

(2.) We cannot admit that those early associations, good as they were, have been the *means* of bringing down the *truth* to this day. On the contrary, they had nothing to do with it: they gradually *lost* their first love and first works, and their liberties, and became subject to ambitious leaders and teachers, finally drifting into that great system of error so conspicuous in Revelation, called "Babylon," "The Mother of harlots." "The Mystery of Iniquity." On the contrary, the Lord himself, through his Word written by his inspired Apostles and Prophets, has been the means of handing down the *truth*. What came from Babylon's streams has been foul with errors and traditions of men, – the more direct the more foul – and the only draughts of pure water have been given to the church by messengers whom God has from time to time raised up, who dipped directly from the fountain – the Word of God. These have in nearly every instance been raised up *outside* of organized Babylon among the *associating* believers; or if inside and faithful, God drove them out. Such were Huss, Wyckliffe, Zwingli, Melancthon, Luther and others.

(3.) We are well aware that about the third century, the "*Mystery of Iniquity*" whose spirit was already working in Paul's day, began to rise in influence and power, and triumphed over the more slowly developing "*Mystery of God*" (the little flock). We know that this great, grand, powerful, *organized*, false church persecuted the dissenters, who protested against her errors, until she was intoxicated with her success, (Rev. 17:6.) and deceived all nations, and gained their support. This continued until her worldliness and devilishness became apparent to all except the blind, and forced the less corrupt of [R984 :

page 6] nations and individuals to leave her bosom, protesting against her *open* errors and crimes. Such a seceding and protesting branch, split off and took root in England and still flourishes, with fewer of the vices, but many of the errors of organization and tradition inherited and still injuriously retained – The Protestant Episcopal Church of England.

We are aware, too, that the "Mystery of Iniquity" has a "clergy" upon which *she* confers certain powers and honors; but we do not know of any such class with such powers in the early *associations*. The only ones recognized as having special authority were the Apostles, whose teaching the true church has always had, and consequently never needed popes claiming to be "Successor of St. Peter" in authority. The Apostle Peter needed no successors, and in his epistles opposes these would-be successors and their errors.

This self-authorized and self-organized clergy, called by each other, and ordained by each other, do slightly resemble the Levitical priesthood; but our Lord was not of that priesthood, nor was he called nor ordained like unto either these or those. [See "The Melchisedec Priesthood" in June TOWER.] Instead, therefore, of considering this *system* of Clergy a divine arrangement, we consider it the reverse, a delusion and snare of the devil, by which the simplicity which is of Christ has been destroyed, and the development of *the saints in that great system* has been greatly hindered. Our Lord recognized no separate "clergy" class, but said, "*All ye are brethren;*" (Matt. 23:8) and *all* the brethren were to exhort one another and stir up each other's pure minds in remembrance; *all* the brethren were to seek ability to prophesy (teach publicly), and all were surely to be living epistles of God ready at all times to give a reason to every inquirer, of the hope that was in them. (1 Thes. 4:1; 1 Cor. 14:1,31,39; 2 Cor. 3:2; 1 Pet. 3:15.) And these instructions the early Christians followed, and *all* preached. – Acts 8:4; 11:19.

The "clergy" of the nominal church was not organized as a priesthood, or system resembling the Levitical priesthood, by the apostles, nor until the fifth century, as saith the historian: –

"With the fifth century the church strove more and more to perfect her outward temporal form as *Roman Catholic*, a theocratic institution. The conception of the church *as a community of the saints* is now lost. The *priestly order* are the rulers, the *laity* are the ruled – the clergy, as *ecclesia representativa* hold unconditional preferment, and form a hierarchy. The prominent peculiarity of the mediaeval church is its purely clerical character. The rigid distinction between the secular order and the *spiritual*, is marked by the external appearance. Clerical dignity and power are signified by a peculiar costume which varies with the rank of the office."*

*Herzog, Vol. I., page 678.

The same historian says again: –

"This much is certain, that in the time of the Apostles, about the middle and even towards the close of the first century, there was *no external union* of all the churches, no ecclesiastical establishment, no visible headship with an ecclesiastical centre. Of 'the Church' in the *later* sense of the word, there was yet no conception. There was one holy mystical body of Christ – one great Church organism, *hidden* however from the world, having Christ for its soul, and by His Word and Spirit assured of future perfection and glory. And still, there were many local communions, made up of those who were *believers*, having a nucleus of *true disciples [saints]* but exposed to worldly influences, and soon embracing a mixture of *genuine* believers with *nominal* members and backsliders. These separate churches [congregations] *were not* connected by any external bond, but *only* by the instinct of brotherly love, and the tendency to mutual fellowship."

Under the head of Episcopacy, McClintock and Strong's Cyclopaedia very moderately says: –

"This *change* in the mode of administering the government of the Church, resulting from peculiar circumstances, may have been introduced as a salutary expedient, without implying any *departure from the purity* of the Christian spirit. When, however, the doctrine is (as it gradually gained currency *in the third century*) that the bishops are by divine right the head of the Church and invested with the government of the same; that they are the successors of the Apostles and by this succession inherit Apostolical authority; that they are to be the medium, through which, in consequence of that ordination which they have received merely in an outward manner, the Holy Ghost in all time to come must be transmitted to the Church – when this becomes the doctrine of the Church, we certainly must perceive in these assumptions a great corruption of the Christian system. It is a carnal perversion of the true idea of the Christian Church."

Notwithstanding the errors of many well-meaning men in forging, out of their ideas of faith and forms, chains and fetters, which have greatly hindered many of their no less honest and able successors in the Christian pathway, it is still a fact that *the church* ("whose names are written in heaven," "the sanctified in Christ Jesus") has been perpetuated *by God*, begotten of him by the spirit of *truth*, through the word of truth (James 1:18), and neither created nor perpetuated by the hands of bishops. **[R985 : page 6]**

(4.) Whenever and wherever Christians are, as fast as they become known to each other they will be drawn together by love and common interest in their one mission, unless, as to-day, *kept separate* from one another by doctrinal errors and party spirit – contrary to the spirit of Christ. And each such association or gathering, assembled in the name, not of popes, bishops, apostles, synods, or presbyteries, but in the name of their only head, Christ Jesus, is a Church, whatever its size, in the original use of the Greek word *ecclesia*. But such a Church

of *believers* is not the *true* Church, and may contain few or none of the final members of the *true* glorious body of Christ. The true Church *is not yet fully organized*, and will not be until this age ends. During this age we are all probationers, who for the time are *reckoned* members of the true Church pending our present trial and testing, which must prove whether as "overcomers" we shall be worthy of membership in that glorious Church which is to be fully organized and fitted for the great work of the Millennial age.

Failing to see that the great work of the Church for the world is future, the Church in the fifth century, seeking to accomplish that work of the next age in the present age, saw that organization was essential to that work, and *organized* under antichrist a system or "clergy" which is neither more nor less than a *counterfeit* of the true Church of overcomers, the glorious Royal Priesthood, the Kingdom of God under the whole heaven, which Christ is to organize shortly and place in control. From this serious error, the Reformation movement of the sixteenth century only partially freed a few. Seeing the statements of Scripture, that the Church was to rule and judge the world, and losing sight of the "ages to come," all predictions were crowded into the present age, and the Scriptures were wrested so as to make the prophecies of Christ's Millennial reign applicable to their popes who represented him as his *vice-gerents*. And the promises made to the overcoming saints, they applied to the "clergy" who thus constituted a *hierarchy* claiming to be Christ's spiritual kingdom, the Royal Priesthood. Carrying out further their self-deception, they thereafter recognized only this *hierarchy* or clergy as THE CHURCH, and the common believers, who in the Apostles' days constituted the church, were styled the laity, or *children* of the church.

It should be remembered, too, that about the same time, the church, having mistaken its proper present mission, viz.: the selecting of the church, the body of Christ, to be in due time joint-heirs with him, and having gotten the idea that they were now, in this age, enjoying the *reign*, strove to do the new, kingdom work, viz.: to convert the

world and rule it. They therefore baptized the heathen professors of Christianity, who really knew nothing of Christ, and endeavored to teach them morality, which they made impressive upon them by forms, ceremonies and rituals. And to keep all power in their own hands, as well as because these savages were unprepared to do so, the right or *authority* to teach was claimed as the exclusive prerogative of *the church*. And so say we, that the church and its members alone may teach; only we object to their definition of true church – "the clergy" – and claim the Apostolic definition – all consecrated believers in and followers of Christ. All such are brethren; all such are God's ambassadors; all such are ministers (servants) of Christ, head and body, each according to his talents. As yet there are no "children of the church," and there will be none until the church is exalted and glorified. The Church complete – head and body – is to be the "Everlasting Father," or life-giver, and all the restored millions will be the "children of the resurrection."

From these erroneous ideas regarding the church, Protestants escaped in part only. They still *organize*, and still recognize the terms "clergy" and "laity," and vest the power and privileges of ministry chiefly in the former; and many of them still hold the Episcopal or *hierarchal* form of church rulership; and though under this the "clergy" rules as a superior and independent order, yet generally the "laity" is recognized as being part of the church, and not merely "children of the church." They have reformed this much at least over the great apostasy, of which the Church of Rome is the only full representative to-day.

The mistake started with the supposition that when the church obtained influence with the Roman Empire, it was being "set up" in power by God, to rule the world. It was really *set up* by Satan, as clearly shown in the book of Revelations, to deceive the nations, and if possible the very elect. How well his plan succeeded, let all judge.

The Reformers partially discovered this error among the many others they had received for hundreds of years, through the teaching of those they had, as taught, long revered as specially authorized *exponents of the truth* and *successors of the Apostles*, divinely inspired *by the laying on of the holy (?) hands* of the claimed Apostolic succession, communicating the holy spirit. Luther distinctly pointed out that *all consecrated children of God* are prospectively members of the "Royal Priesthood," of which Christ Jesus alone is the head or High Priest, and consequently that all have the *same authority* now to offer up their lives and talents in the service of God, of his truth and his children – every man according to his several ability or talents, carrying out the example and teachings of the Lord and the Apostles, who in no age have had successors. They remain with us ever, represented by their words and examples.

So then we can say truly that *legitimate* children of God, begotten not of pride and formalism, nor in any sense of the will of the flesh, but begotten of God by His Word of truth, are to be found to-day and can be readily identified, not by titles or gowns, but as the early church of priests was identified – by their love for the truth (John 13:35.) and by their *sacrificing* for it and for all those who love and serve the truth. (Gal. 6:17; 1 Cor. 9:12; Col. 1:24.)

(5.) If we grant this claim of our correspondent, it destroys his entire argument; for, to say that God established the "clergy" and, by the laying on of hands of the Apostolic succession, specially commissioned them, and them only, to feed the flock, and then to admit that some of these specially consecrated ones are "*wolves*," is to charge God either with giving them a *bad* spirit, or else with selecting and placing over the true flock false and improper teachers. We prefer to explain the prominence of these "wolves" in control of sheep, in the light of the inspired explanation of the Apostle Paul, who said: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, [to influence and authority as teachers,] speaking perverse things, to draw

away disciples after them [and their systems]. Therefore watch" [beware of these].

Then the Apostle tells what God's means of keeping them would be if they were faithful – not a sacred order of "clergy" puffed up with pride and adorned with worldly titles, not wolves in sheep's clothing, but he explains: "Now brethren, I commend you to God, and to the *Word of his grace*, WHICH IS ABLE to build you up, and to give you an inheritance [not present, but future] among all them which are sanctified" [the true Church, the true Priesthood]. – Acts 20:29-32.

Furthermore, if our brother admits under this head (5.) that "*many*" of the membership of the Episcopal Church are proud and worldly, does this not prove that they are not members of the *true* Church, who are the "blessed, the meek?" And since such are members of the Protestant Episcopal Church (and others of the sort are in all sects), does it not prove that none of these professed churches are the *true* Church, but only human organizations fashioned somewhat to correspond to the true Church of the future?

And if the "little flock" are those in Babylon without the holy hands, and the "wolves" are those who have the holy (?) Apostolic (?) blessing, and if the true sheep get some food, notwithstanding the efforts of the "wolves" to withhold it, and if they live somewhat consecrated lives even in spite of the unfavorable surroundings of "pride and worldly trappings" – would they not be much better off, and much better able to perform their sacrifices to God as Priests under Christ our High Priest, by getting free and separate from all those hindrances? [R985 : page 7] Common sense says, that the *true* would make much more rapid progress if rid of those hindrances, and merely associating in spiritual things with the truly consecrated.

(6.) One weakness of that great and good man, John Wesley, of which all his followers (who know of it) are ashamed, and because of which Episcopalians in his day despised him, was his course in staying himself in the Protestant Episcopal Church to the day of his death,

while founding *another* Church which the Protestant Episcopal Church condemns as a *sect*, and would not recognize in her pulpits. Thus from your stand-point John Wesley stands condemned by his conduct: either for not leaving the Episcopal Church if it was wrong, or for organizing *another* if it was the true.

Mr. Wesley, though free from many of the errors of the Apostacy, which for centuries had blinded and deluded the church as well as the world, still clung to the error that the "clergy" is a sacred class, specially authorized and appointed of God to baptize and to administer the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper, though no such limitation can be found in the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles. It is only *for* the "Royal Priesthood," and they are as capable of dispensing it [R986 : page 7] to each other as of partaking of it. Wesley's followers for years were sent for baptism and the Supper to Episcopalian ministers. As they became numerous in America, and especially after the Revolutionary War, when many of the Episcopalian ministers as British sympathizers fled the country, it was found that *something must be done*, or Methodism would come to naught. Wesley appealed for years to the Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church to lay holy (?) apostolic (?) hands on some of his followers if not on himself, to make a bishop for the new associations, which up to that time much resembled the early church, not even taking a sectarian name though called Methodists in derision by their opposers, the Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Mr. Wesley well knew that according to the laws of Episcopacy *he* could not ordain a minister – that only a bishop had that authority, and he saw that if he could only get one bishop ordained in harmony with him and his *new* Church, all would then be smooth, and as many ministers could be *authorized* as might be needed; but his appeal was in vain.

Finally as a last resort, Mr. Wesley with two others – T. Creighton and R. Whatcoat – ministers (not bishops) of the Church of England, determined to do the *best they could* to hold to the *form* of Episcopacy, and attach it to the new Church, so they met and ordained Thomas Coke

a *bishop*. They well knew that they were violating the rules and principles of Episcopacy and that under those rules ten thousand of the "inferior clergy," or ordinary ministers could not make a bishop, but they did the best they could and made the best imitation bishop they knew how, and this started the great Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States of America. On Mr. Coke's arrival a general conference was held at Baltimore, and *sixty ministers* who had long been preaching Christ were *authorized* to baptize and to officiate at the Lord's supper. These were ministers not in the sense of titled and honored "clergymen," but in the true and early sense of the word ministers, namely *servants* – servants of God and his people.

Let us not be misunderstood; we mean no disrespect to Methodists in showing that Methodism has only the *form* of Apostolic succession and ordination; on the contrary it is our claim that they needed not even the form. Each of those sixty ministers (servants) of God had just as much authority *before* Mr. Coke authorized them, as afterward. They needed no such human authority, but had it direct from the Head of the Church in the Bible, and were only hindered from seeing it by the long standing customs and superstitions coming down from Rome. Every child of God is authorized to preach, everywhere, Jesus and the resurrection, and to immerse any believer; and every believer is invited to partake of the emblems of his Lord's body and blood in remembrance of him, without asking liberty or requiring the assistance of any other member of the body.

We have referred to this in answer to proposition six (6.) above, to show that the feature of Mr. Wesley's course commended by our brother, was the worst failure Wesley made. Notice for instance, When he believed that divine *authority* lodged in the Episcopal Bishops as the *representatives of the Apostles*, was he not wrong in organizing a church contrary to their will, and in opposition to their authority? – if they had any authority, which we deny.

Our brother is right in saying (6.) that the reform of the Episcopal Church has "never been done." It itself was a reform on a previous system, and hence its title *Protestant*. It protested and rebelled against the Church of Rome. It did not and could not reform the Church of Rome, for the same reason that it cannot be reformed from within, viz.: because all these systems are so carefully and thoroughly *organized* that a sufficient number of those who have the holy spirit of Reform could never get into the places of power and control.

Besides, from another standpoint our brother's argument is unsound. If we concede that our Lord and the Apostles authorized and organized the Protestant Episcopal Church (which we do not), still it would not follow that it must triumph, and must be *reformed*, and that from *within*. The Jewish Church *surely was* organized and authorized by God, yet it was not reformed but cast off, and only the Israelites indeed gathered out into the Gospel favor. Our Lord declared the reason that he did not attempt to reform Judaism, and why that was *not his* "starting point;" and his wisdom is shown by the failure of modern reformers to reform present institutions from within. He says: – Men do not put a patch of new cloth on an old worn out garment, neither do men put new wine into old wine-skins, for they are not strong enough to hold it and the result would be a waste of the wine. Our Lord thus illustrates his reason for not trying more to put the Gospel into the Jewish institutions. New vessels and agencies were preferred by the Lord when opening up the Gospel age.

Even so now, he again chooses new vessels for the opening work of the Millennial age, and for the same reason. He even shows us clearly that the closing of the Gospel age was foreshadowed by the closing of the Jewish age. Now as then great *nominal* Israel is to stumble in her blindness and be cast off from all *special* favor; and only the remnant, the faithful few, the Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile, are to be accepted into the higher favor of Millennial glory with Christ.

(7.) The brother errs here; it is not we, but Christ, who calls his people out of Babylon. We merely call their attention to his words and show that they are reasonable. It was the Lord himself who said – Let wheat and tares grow together *until the* HARVEST, and who now in the harvest himself thrusts in the sickle of truth to separate these as he did in the "harvest" of the Jewish age. (Matt. 13:30.) His work then, as now, was a separating work, a gathering of the Israelites indeed into harmony with himself, and the separation from them of the great mass whom he never recognized as his kingdom or joint-heirs. Mark that Babylon had long been in existence as an abomination, and had even become a *mother* of other harlots and abominable systems (all of which bear her name – Babylon) and had been drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus (Rev. 18.), and yet it is not until the time of her complete overthrow that the message is sent by the Lord who is about to destroy her utterly (not reform her), saying, "Come out of her, *my people*, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18:4.) We are not ashamed to be the Lord's mouthpieces in this timely but unpopular message: and what timely truth has not been unpopular?

But some may object that the Lord and the Apostles did not call believers out of the Jewish synagogues, but "went into the synagogues" and taught the people there. (Luke 4:15,44; Matt. 4:23; Acts 9:20; 13:5.) Ah yes! The Lord and the Apostles could go into the synagogues, and could teach the people there, for a time, but as they shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God, they soon found little and finally no opportunity to teach the people in the synagogues. (Matt. 10:17; Mark 13:9; John 16:2; Luke 4:28-29; John 9:34.) But could the Lord or the Apostles get into the pulpits of any of the various divisions of Babylon and teach the people? We all know that they *could not*. In the Protestant Episcopal Church for them to preach from the pulpit and altar would be considered defiling, and they would need to be cleansed and possibly re-consecrated. To get into such office and privilege of teaching the people, they would require the holy Apostolic blessing from three bishops, or at least from one. And none could be found who

would dare install either the lowly, untitled Nazarene, or the tent-maker of Tarsus, or any who humbly follow in their footprints.

The *system* of Babylon is much more thorough than that of the Scribes and Pharisees. Law and custom has so hedged the sheep about, that only the *regular* shepherds have access to them to feed them. And the "Clergy" has so exalted its office and power, that it can and does keep out all whom God could or does use in feeding to the sheep "meat in due season." Hence the Master, the great Shepherd who bought the sheep, needs now to call his sheep "out," because they cannot be rightly fed while *in* these man-made systems, as our Brother admits in proposition (5) five.

But this Brother and many others err in supposing that we or the Lord are calling the "little flock" into confusion and beyond the bounds of all authority. Not so; while the nominal human institutions have continually had trouble about their organizations, and have been continually trying to get *rightly organized*, as the names "Protestant," "Reformed," "United," etc., etc., indicate, the true Church has had no such trouble, but has had a temporary organization all the time. God has this organization under his charge. "*The Lord knoweth them that are his,*" and their "names are written in heaven," and such only who prove unfaithful are ever blotted out. No "wolves" are *of* that organization and its teachers are the Lord and the Apostles only. They teach by the Word, using the various members of the "body of Christ" in building up and strengthening one another through that Word. All are led of the spirit, and all are priests ministering and sacrificing daily.

Oh no! We want none to come out of *this* organization, this true tabernacle, in every lively stone of which, God through his spirit operates. Thus seen, we have something much better than the Babylon confusion with its attempted, but only [R987 : page 7] slightly successful reforms, to offer to the saints, the "little flock"; but we have nothing whatever to offer to the proud, worldly-minded masses of Babylon *now*. Their imitation churches will all fall, being "cages" of

unclean birds. (Compare Rev. 18:2 and Matt. 13:4,19.) We can only promise them something much better than their present systems and Kingdoms, – after the "little flock," the *true* Gospel Church, is glorified. Then they will be taught better than the "many wolves," and the machinations of the devil blinding them, will now permit. They will come to a *knowledge* of the Lord and can then worship him in spirit and in truth, and not as now, draw nigh with their lips, while their hearts are *far* from him.

"Love not the world, neither the things of the world" [the *World's* churches, etc.] says the Master, and so we urge. As saints, seek not the favor of men, but of God only, and learn of him. Hear his voice and come out of Babylon into the sunlight of truth, into the green pastures where the good Shepherd leads. He declares, "My sheep hear my voice and *they* follow [obey] me!"

