

CHAS. H. SPURGEON'S POSITION.

In our December '87 issue we referred to this celebrated minister of London, as having left the Baptist *denomination*. We were promptly contradicted by some who felt loth to acknowledge the loss to Babylon of so able a man. Fuller reports show that we were entirely correct. Mr. Spurgeon's withdrawal was from the *Baptist Denomination* – the "Baptist Union."

Many do not know that the "Baptists," "Disciples," "Congregationalists," and some others, are not organized into one body throughout the world, in the same manner as are Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, and E. Methodists, but *each* congregation maintains the *right* to control its own affairs and its own faith independently of other congregations. [This is well, but the same principle should extend to each individual in each congregation. Each should be asked if he accepts the Lord by the *only name*, Saviour, and the Bible as God's divinely inspired communication to man; and beyond this, *each* should be left to believe all that he can find in God's revelation, each ready to assist and be assisted by the other, to grow in *grace* and *knowledge* and in the *love* of God.] But those independent congregations, *imitating* the various sects, have formed "*Unions*" by which the majority of such churches attempt to fix the *faith* and affairs of the others, much the same as *Conferences* do for the Methodists, and the *Presbyteries* and *Synods* and *General Assemblies* of the Presbyterians, and the Convocations Councils and generally the hierarchies of the Protestant Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches.

We did not say that Mr. Spurgeon withdrew as pastor of the congregation he serves. If they as a people are free from *denominational* shackles, free from the control of others, and meet to study God's Word and to offer Him worship they are a church in the original form, such as the congregations in the days of the apostles were. And this is just where Mr. Spurgeon and the congregation he ministers to

stand: They have withdrawn from the "Baptist Union" and stand independent. For this others blame Brother Spurgeon, while we commend his steps. He does not see all the truth as we see it yet, but now that he is free and has taken a bold stand, if he follows on, he will soon see more and more light – until the perfect day. That we correctly state Mr. Spurgeon will we think be apparent from the following abstract from the *Sword and Trowel*, a paper which he publishes.

In it he has written: "The case is mournful. Certain ministers are making infidels. Avowed infidels are not a tenth as dangerous as those preachers who scatter doubt, and stab at faith." In these remarks Mr. Spurgeon evidently refers to the same class in its many forms so often reproved (Eph. 5:11) in the TOWER, who reject the inspiration of the Bible, laugh at the stories of the flood and of Balaam's speaking ass, and Jonah and the fish, etc.; who declare with great show of worldly wisdom that Adam's fall must have been upward, and who, denying the original sin and its penalty, see no reason to believe in a *redemption* from that fall by the precious blood of Christ, and who consequently deny the ransom, and claim that our Lord was merely a good *example*, and that the whole world in God's order is being *evolved* from lower to higher conditions, and that all will finally be saved irrespective of faith and obedience to a "*historic Christ*." This error, as we have shown, is spreading into all the pulpits and pews of "Christendom" rapidly, being helped along by the false views hitherto held concerning the wages of sin and the character of our Lord's ransom-sacrifice. That Mr. Spurgeon is opposing this same class, is evident from the following quotations from his paper.

He says: "It is only too evident to all who are zealous for God and his truth, that on one side there is a perilous growth of superstition and sacerdotalism, and on the other of unbelief and indifference to vital religion. The *substitutionary sacrifice* of our Lord and Saviour is lightly esteemed and even *repudiated* by some prominent teachers – the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, with other verities of the faith of Christ, are explained away, in many instances."

"A new religion has been initiated, which is no more Christianity than chalk is cheese; and this religion, being destitute of moral honesty, palms itself off as, the old faith, with *slight improvements*. The atonement is scouted,...the punishment of sin is turned into fiction, and the resurrection into a myth; and yet these enemies of our faith expect us to call them 'Brethren' and maintain a confederacy with them.

"The results of this erroneous teaching and perversion of the gospel are apparent; worldliness, sensuality, and luxury... abound, and Christian liberty has become license in the walk and conversation of many of the professed disciples of Christ."

In closing Mr. Spurgeon asks – "*What shall we do?*" and answers, "*We retire at once and distinctly from the 'Baptist Union.'*"

To the supposed inquiry whether he would attempt to head a *new* denomination, he answers, No; and declares [what we declare] that denominations are unnecessary among *Independent* congregations.
