

# The Axe Laid to the Root of the Old Corrupt Tree

by Isaac Penington

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*The sermon calls for a return to the true faith of God, which is a gift given from above, and a rejection of the faith of man, which is a power of believing found in the nature of fallen man.*

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 15:23

**Topics:** "Second Coming", "Eschatology"

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## Description

The preacher delves into the Greek word 'parousia,' which signifies the Second Coming of Christ, emphasizing that it involves both an arrival and a consequent presence. The term 'parousia' is used in various contexts in the New Testament to describe the return of Jesus Christ with His saints in manifest glory to establish His kingdom on earth. The sermon explores the significance of Christ's parousia, highlighting the hope and motivation it brings to believers to live in anticipation of His return and order their lives accordingly.

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## Transcript

THE

AXE LAID TO THE ROOT

OF THE

OLD CORRUPT TREE

AND

THE SPIRIT OF DECEIT STRUCK AT IN ITS NATURE

FROM WHENCE

ALL THE ERROR FROM THE LIFE, AMONG BOTH PAPISTS AND PROTESTANTS, HATH ARISEN,  
AND BY WHICH IT IS NOURISHED AND FED AT THIS DAY

IN A

DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE FAITH WHICH IS OF MAN AND THE FAITH WHICH IS OF GOD

AND

In some ASSERTIONS concerning true FAITH; its NATURE, RISE, &c.; its receiving of CHRIST, its abiding and growing in his living VIRTUE

WITH

A Warning concerning Adding to and Diminishing from the Scripture in general, and the Prophecies of the Revelations in particular. Discovering what it is, and the great Danger of it, with the only Way of Preservation from it. Whereto is added A short Touch about the Use of Means

AS ALSO

A Brief History concerning the State of the Church since the Days of the Apostles

WITH AN EXHORTATION TO THE PRESENT AGE

By the Movings of the Life, in a Friend to the Living Truth of the Most High God; but an utter Enemy to the Spirit of Error and Blasphemy, wherever it is found, as well in the strictest of the Protestants, as among the grossest of the Papists

ISAAC PENINGTON, THE YOUNGER

[1659]

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PREFACE

There was a glorious day, and bright appearance of Truth in the times of the apostles. They had the true Comforter, who led them into all Truth, and kept them alive in Truth, and Truth alive in them. By this Spirit, they, as living stones, were built up a spiritual house, founded upon Sion, the holy mount; into Jerusalem, the holy city, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of Truth. And here they had their conversation in heaven, with God, the judge of all; with Christ, the Mediator; and with the spirits of just men and the holy angels, which always behold the face of God. They lived in the Spirit, they walked in the Spirit, they prayed in the Spirit, they sung in the Spirit, they worshipped in the Spirit, and in that understanding which the Truth had made free, and had God dwelling in them, and Christ walking in the midst of them; and, by the presence and power of his life in them, were truly dead unto sin, and alive unto God; they being not strivers against sin with man's legal spirit, but by the power of grace, which made them more than conquerors through him that loved them. This was part of the glory of that state, in the day of the sunshine of the gospel.

But, behold! a thick night of darkness overspread the beauty of this! Some false brethren went out from the true church into the world, getting the sheep's clothing, making a great outward appearance, and drew the world after them; yea, and some from the very churches themselves. (How hard was the apostle Paul obliged to plead with the Corinthians about his own apostleship and doctrine, that he might preserve that church from the false apostles!) And when they had gathered a sufficient party in the world, they made head against the true sheep and lambs of Christ, fought with them, and overcame them. And when they

had overcome them that had the living testimony of Jesus, and the true power and presence of the Spirit among them, then they set up their own dead form, making a cry all over the nations of the earth: "Revelation is ceased! there is no looking now for such an infallible Spirit, and such immediate teachings as the Christians had in the apostles' days, who had the anointing to teach them all things;" but they pointed men to traditions, to the church, as they called it (which title the whore hath engrossed since the days of the apostles), or to searchings of the scripture, and reading expositions upon it, and bodies of divinity, formed by the understanding-part in man to instruct the understanding-part. Thus the whole course of religion, and of the knowledge of God, came to be out of that Spirit and life wherein it first came forth (and wherein it first stood), and consisted in doctrines of men, and a form of worship and knowledge which the wisdom of man had framed, in an imitation of that which formerly stood in the life.

And now men being gone from the life, from the Spirit, and his immediate teachings, into an outward form of knowledge and worship of God in the wrong nature, antichrist is got up, and the dragon sits in the temple, appearing there as if he were God, giving out laws and ordinances of worship in public, and putting men upon duties and exercises of devotion in private, and he is obeyed and bowed down to in the observation of these; but the true, living God is not known, nor his secret, still voice which calls out of these heard; because of the great noise which the dragon makes in his temple (for so it is now, he having gained it, though it was once God's), about his laws and ordinances of worship, which he would have all compelled to, and none suffered to testify against them that they are his, and not the Lord's.

Yet it pleased the Lord, all the night of this darkness, to raise up some witnesses against the dragon, and all his invented forms of worship; though they were still hunted, persecuted, knocked down, and their testimony cried out against, as error, heresy, schism, and blasphemy; and the ways, worships, and ordinances of the whore, the beast, and dragon, still cried up as the truth. Thus the Papists cried out against the Protestants as heretics and schismatics, who were witnesses against them; and the Protestants cried out against the Non-conformists, Separatists, and Brownists, who were witnesses against them; and every sect cries out most against them who are led further from the apostasy, and raised up by the Lord, as witnesses against them, against their sitting down in their forms, and not pursuing the guidance of that Spirit, which would lead them quite out of the darkness, and not have them sit down by the way.

Now the Lord God, in these latter days, hath not only raised up witnesses against the whore, the dragon, the beast, the false prophets, with all their inventions which they have set up instead of the truth; but hath assayed, and begun to deliver his people out of this Egyptian darkness, and to bring them back to the light of the land of Canaan. And now great enemies have appeared; the sons of the night exceedingly strengthening themselves to keep out the daylight, every one crying up his own form, and all joining hand in hand against the power: yea, and that spirit which first tempted from God is exceeding busy to cause those whom the Spirit of the Lord hath been drawing out of the land of darkness, to make a captain to return to Egypt; or at least to sit down in some form, or some pleasant notion of things by the way, and not to follow the Lord through all his intricate leadings in the vast, howling wilderness, till he bring them into the possession of the true rest.

What a work was there to quench that spirit which stirred in the Protestants against Popery, and to fix them in Episcopacy, and in the use of the common prayer-book! When that was detected, and turned from, the Presbytery endeavored to take its place, and to bring in its directory; but the pursuit of the Lord was so hot against that, that it sunk presently, and his mighty hand would not suffer it so much as to arise. Much about the same time Independency and Anabaptism appeared and contended; and there was a

more simple and honest thing stirring there, than in the other: and accordingly the blessing of the Lord (which was not to the form, but to the life which was stirring within) did appear more among them.

But they fixing there, lost the life and simplicity to which the blessing was, and met with the death and the curse, which is the proper reward of the form: for any form, out of the life, kills the life; and its reward is death to itself. The form kills the life, which stirred underneath, and made it appear with some freshness; and when the life, from which it had its seeming beauty and lustre, dies, then it soon withers and dies also: so that the living principle being once slain, there remains nothing but the dead spirit, feeding on the dead form.

There was one more pure appearance, and nearer to the kingdom than all these; which was of seeking and waiting: but death overcame this also, making a form of it, and stealing in some observations, from the letter of the Scriptures, concerning the kingdom, whereby their eyes were withheld from beholding the inward principle and seed of life within, to look for some great appearance of power without (such as was among the apostles), to set things to rights; and so they were held captive by the same spirit, in their seeking and waiting, whereby the others are held in their forms.

Thus have persons generally missed the following of that good Spirit, which began to lead them out of Egypt, the dark land; and losing their guide, have fixed some where or other by the way; resting in some form, or in some notion or expectation of things (according as in their wisdom they have imagined from their skill in the letter), short of the life itself. Thus have their carcasses fallen in the wilderness.

Now this I have to say to you all: all you who rest in any form whatsoever, or rest in any notion or apprehension of things short of the life itself, ye had even as good have stayed in Egypt, as to fix by the way, and to take up a rest in the wilderness, short of Canaan. In plain terms, ye had as good have abode in Popery or Episcopacy; ye had been as acceptable to God there as here. Not that I say your forms of Independency, Anabaptism, or Seeking, are as bad as Popery, Episcopacy, or Presbytery: nay; they are all somewhat nearer, and the last of them very much nearer: but your fixing there, and the dead spirit feeding there on the dead thing, is as remote from life as if it had gone quite back again. And this dead spirit is as hateful to God here, as it is among the Papists; yea, and in one sense more, because it makes a pretence beyond them.

And the truth is, ye have gone back again, though not in the direct form, yet into that very spirit wherein Popery's strength and kingdom lie; and so are become one of the beast's names; and your strength and defence lie in the beast's horns, either in the outward powers of the earth, or in that inward knowledge of things and wisdom from the letter, which is out of the life, and so are not yet come out of the city of Babylon. For mark: the spirit that fixeth in a form short of the life, is the same that whored from the life: and the same spirit is the whore still, in what form soever she be. The Spirit that rose up in the life, against the death and corruption whereof Popery wholly consisted, was a good Spirit; and this Spirit would pass through all forms, till it meet with the life. It is the other spirit that says to thee, Thou hast gone far enough; and so tempts thee to stay by the way. And he who hearkens to this spirit, and stays any where by the way, is caught with the old whore in a new dress, and is drinking the cup of fornication afresh. And then, like the Papists, he runs to the powers of the earth, to defend his form against the witnesses of God (and that is his cover under which he persecutes, and there he lies hid), or at least to his own wisdom and reason, to strengthen himself with arguments for fixing here, and against going any further. And then he grows wise in the flesh, and cries against them who are still led by the same Spirit to press on further, as weak, silly, giddy, unsettled, seduced people, that can never know when they are well. Thus the wise

Episcopalians reviled the simple-hearted Non-conformists, who pursued further than they. And the Non-conformists, when they lost their simplicity, and began to stick, reviled those that pursued beyond them. And thus at this day, those who are pressing on in the Spirit, are disdained by those who have taken up their station in the flesh; and with their two great horns of earthly power and earthly wisdom, are they pushing at them.

Look about ye, look about ye, all sorts of devout professors; see where ye are! Are you not dead in your forms? Is not the good old Puritan principle (wherein once was true life in its measure) dead and buried there? Consider with yourselves; hath that grown in your forms? Or hath it been slain there? Speak the truth in your own hearts; can ye truly say, from a sensible feeling in the life, that that principle is still alive in you? If it were so, ye could never be drawn to persecute, no, nor suffer persecution, ye that have power to hinder it: but if that seed be choked, then ye may well connive at, if not further the enemy, and plead for him, and join interests with him. While Abel lived in you, Cain could not rise up in his dominion; but now the right seed is slain, the murdering nature appears.

Oh hasten out of this spirit! Hasten out of Babylon! Cast off the spirit of Popery: return to the old Puritan principle: do not cry it up in deceit, to oppose the present appearance of truth, which is grown up further in it; but subject that dead, formal, earthly spirit to it, which is fallen beneath it. And when ye are come to a true touch of life there, ye may be able to own the same truth in its growth to a further measure. But while thou art in the dead understanding, and from the power and life of truth in thine own particular, dost thou think to be able to measure truth aright in others? Nay; thou measurest by a false appearance of things in the fallen understanding, and in the wisdom which thou hast gathered there, since thou thyself fellest from the living principle: and this must needs commend that most which is nearest to it, and not that which is nearest to truth. And this is the great error of this age; men, with a gathered knowledge from scripture words, without the true faith and life, go about to measure that life and knowledge which come from the faith; and because it suits not with the apprehensions which they have taken into their minds, they condemn it. And thus, being in the stumbling wisdom, and way of observation to which truth was never revealed, but was ever an offence, they stumbled at it: and so men generally dash and split themselves against the same rock now, as the Pharisees did of old. Now this understanding must perish, and this wisdom in men be brought to nought, before that can be raised up which can judge aright.

Hearken therefore to my exhortation, as ye love your souls; Come out of Popery in deed and in truth: come out of the SPIRIT of Popery: burn the whore, in her new forms as well as in her old: cast off all these new names of the beast, under which the old spirit has made a prey of the life in your own particulars, and lies lurking to make a prey of the life in others, and to force it into its own deceitful forms of death, and slay it. Leave defending your faith and church by the beast's horns, and come to that faith and church which is received, gathered, and defended by Christ, the One Horn of Salvation. Leave your reasonings and disputings in that wisdom which has slain the life, and come to that wisdom which comes from the life, and springs up in the life; and ye will find more certainty and satisfaction in one touch of true life, than in all the reasonings and disputes of wise men to the world's end. The ground wherein men's religion grows (even the most zealous) is bad; even the same ground wherein the Pharisees' religion stood and grew; and it hath brought forth such a kind of fruit; namely, such a kind of conformity to the letter as theirs was; which stands in the understanding and will of man, rearing up a pleasant building there, but keeps from the life, and from building in it. But the true religion stands in receiving a principle of life; which, by its growth, forms a vessel for itself; and all the former part, wherein sin on the one hand, or self-righteousness on the other hand, stood and grew, passeth away.

These things following strike at the king of Babylon himself; yea, even at the very root of the antichristian spirit in every man; which he that can mildly receive the stroke of, may feel the true Spirit of life (which lies underneath) spring up in him, and give life to his soul: which, when it is delivered, will be able truly to know, and rejoice in the Lord his Saviour. And when the root of that spirit is cut down (which never brought forth sweet, pleasant fruit unto life; but only sour fruit, finely painted and dressed for the eye and palate of death), its body, branches, leaves, and fruit will wither and die daily, and truth come to grow safely.

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A DISTINCTION between the FAITH which is of MAN, and the FAITH which is of God: One whereof is the Faith of Sion, the other the Faith of Babylon: The one laying hold on Christ, as he is revealed the King of Life in Sion; the other lays hold on a Historical Relation of Christ, the Fame whereof hath sounded in Babylon.

THERE is a faith which is of a man's self; and a faith which is the gift of God: or a power of believing, which is found in the nature of fallen man; and a power of believing, which is given from above. As there are two births, the first and the second, so they have each their faith; and each believes with his faith, and seems to lay hold on the same thing for life; and the contention about the inheritance will not be ended, till God determine it. Cain will sacrifice with his faith, and he believes he shall be accepted: if he had not believed so, he would not have been so angry when he found it otherwise: and the Cainish spirit in man, the vagabond from the life of God, which hath not a habitation in God, nor the eternal life of God abiding in him, is busy with the same faith at this day, and hath the same expectation from it as Cain had.

This is the root of the false religion; of the false hope; of the false peace; of the false joy; of the false rest; of the false comfort; of the false assurance; as the other is of the true. In this faith, which is of man, and in the improvement of it, stands all the knowledge, zeal, devotion, and worship of the world in general, and of the worldly part in every man in particular: but the true knowledge, the true zeal, the true devotion, the true worship, stand in the faith which is given of God, to them that are born of the immortal seed; which lives in God, and in which God liveth for ever.

Now it deeply concerns every man, to consider from which of these his knowledge, religion, and worship proceed, and in which of them they stand. For if they proceed from, and stand in, the faith which is of man, they cannot please God, nor conduce to the salvation of the soul. But though they may taste very pleasantly to man's palate now, and administer much hope and satisfaction to him at present, yet they will fail at the time of need; for, as Christ said concerning the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, so may I concerning this faith; Except your faith, with the works of it, exceeds that faith, and all the works of it (even to the uttermost improvement thereof) which is to be found in man's nature, it will never lead you to the kingdom of God, nor be able to give you any right to the inheritance of life. For he that will inherit, must be the right heir, must have the faith of Abraham, the faith of Isaac; which springs up from the root of life in the seed; and this leads the seed into that spring of life (out of which it shot forth as a branch) which is the

inheritance promised to the seed. And here is Christ, Alpha and Omega, in every particular soul where life is begun and perfected, running its course through time, back to that which was before the beginning.

Therefore observe, and consider well, what this faith which is of man's self can do; and how far it may go in the changing of man, and in producing a conformity of him to the letter of the Scriptures. And then consider where it is shut out, what it cannot do, what change it cannot make, what it cannot conform to: that so the true distinction may be let into the mind, and not a foundation laid of so great a mistake in a matter of so great concernment.

1. A man may believe the history of the Scriptures; yea, and all the doctrines of them, so far as he can reach them with his understanding, with this faith which is of man. As by this faith a man can believe a history probably related to him; so by this faith he believes the histories of the Scriptures, which are more than probably related. As by this faith a man can receive doctrines of instruction out of philosophers' books; so by the same faith he may receive doctrines of instruction out of the Scriptures. Reading a relation of the fall of man, of the recovery by Christ, that there is no other way to life, &c., this faith can believe the relation of these things, as well as it can believe the relation of other things.

2. This being believed from the relation of the history of these things, it naturally sets all the powers of man at work (kindling the understanding, will, and affections,) towards the avoiding of misery, and the attaining of happiness. What would not a man do to avoid perpetual extremity of misery on soul and body for ever, and to obtain a crown of everlasting blessedness? This boils the affections to an height, and sets the understanding on work to the utmost, to gather all the rules of scripture, and to practise all the duties and ordinances therein mentioned. What can the Scriptures propose to be believed, that he will not believe? What can it propose to be done, that he will not do? Must he pray? He will pray. Must he hear? He will hear. Must he read? He will read. Must he meditate? He will meditate. Must he deny himself, and all his own righteousness and duties, and hope only for salvation in the merits of Christ? He will seem to do that too; and say, when he has done all he can, he is but an unprofitable servant. Does the scripture say he can do nothing without the Spirit? He will acknowledge that too, and hope he has the Spirit. God hath promised the Spirit to them that ask it; and he has asked long, and asks still, and therefore hopes he has it. Thus man, by a natural faith, grows up and spreads into a great tree, and is very confident and much pleased; not perceiving the defect in his root, and what all his growth here will come to.

3. This being done with much seriousness and industry, there must needs follow a great change in man: his understanding will be more and more enlightened; his will more and more conformed to that to which he thus gives himself up, and to which he thus bends himself with all his strength; his affections more and more weaned; he will find a kind of life and growth in this, according to its kind. Let a man's heart be in any kind of study or knowledge, applying himself strictly to it, he gathers understanding in his mind, and warmth in his affection: so it is also here. Yea, this being more excellent in itself, must needs produce a more excellent understanding, and a more excellent warmth, and have a greater power and influence upon the will.

4. Now, how easy is it for a man to mistake here, and call this the truth! First, he mistakes this for the true faith; and then he mistakes in applying to this all that which belongs to the true faith: and thus entering into the spirit of error at first, he errs in the whole course of his religion, from the beginning to the end. He sees a change made by this in him; and this he accounts the true conversion and regeneration. This leads him to ask, and seek, and pray; and this he accounts the true praying, the true seeking, the true asking. This cleanseth (after its kind) his understanding, will, and affections; and this he takes for the true sanctification.

The justification which is to the true believer, he also applies to this faith; and so he has a peace, a satisfaction, a rest here, and a hope of happiness hereafter. Thus he receives what is already revealed; and he waits for what may be further revealed, which he can embrace and conform to, turning still upon this centre, and growing up from this root. And he that does not come hither in religion, falls short of the improvement of man's nature, and of the faith that grows there (which naturally leads all the powers of nature hither, and fixes them here), which is but dead. And now this man is safe; he is a believer; he is a worshipper of God; he is a Christian; he is an observer of the commands of Christ: when the overflowing scourge comes, it shall not touch him: all the judgments, plagues, threatenings, in the Scriptures, belong not to him, but to the unbelievers; to them that know not God; to them that worship not God; to them that observe not the commands of Christ. Thus, by his untempered mortar from his false faith, he has built up a wall against the deluge of wrath; which wall will tumble down upon him when the wrath comes. The growth of this faith, and great spreading of it into all this knowledge, zeal, and devotion, hath not changed the nature of it all this while; but it is the same that it was at the beginning, even a power of nature in the first birth; and all these fruits are but the fruits of the first nature, which is still alive under all this. All this can never kill the principle out of which it grows; but feeds it more, and fattens it for the slaughter.

Thus far this faith can go: but then there is somewhat it is shut out of at the very first: there is somewhat this faith cannot receive, believe, or enter into. What is that? It is the life, the power, the inward part of this. Though it may seem to have unity with all the scriptures in the letter; yet it cannot have unity with one scripture in the life: for its nature is shut out of the nature of the things there witnessed. As for instance: it may have a literal knowledge of Christ, according as the scripture relates; of his birth, preaching, miracles, death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, &c. Yea, but the thing spoken of it knoweth not. The nature of Christ (which is the Christ) is hidden from that eye. So it may have a literal knowledge of the blood of Christ, and of justification; but the life of the blood which livingly justifieth, that birth cannot feel; but can only talk of it, according to the relation it reads in the scripture. So it may have a literal knowledge of sanctification; but the thing that sanctifieth, it cannot receive into itself. So for redemption, peace, joy, hope, love, &c., it may get into the outward part of all these; but the inward part, the life, the spirit of them, it is shut out of, and cannot touch or come near; nor can it witness that change which is felt and known here. And here is the great contention in the world between these two births; the one contending for its knowledge in the letter, and the other contending for its knowledge in the life: the one setting up its faith from the natural part, calling it spiritual; and the other, which has felt the stroke of God upon this (and thereby come to know the difference), setting up the faith of the true heir: which faith hath a different beginning, and a different growth from the other, and will be welcomed into the land and kingdom of life; when the other will be manifested to be but the birth of the bond-woman, and be thrust forth with its mother to seek their bread abroad: for the seed of the bond-woman is not to inherit with Isaac, the seed of promise.

Quest. What then is that faith which is the gift of God? And which is distinct from this?

Ans. It is that power of believing which springs out of the seed of eternal life; and leavens the heart, not with notions of knowledge, but with the powers of life. The other faith is drawn out of man's nature, by considerations which affect the natural part, and is kept alive by natural exercises of reading, hearing, praying, studying, meditating in that part; but this springs out of a seed of life given, and grows up in the life of that seed, and feeds on nothing but the flesh and blood of Christ; in which is the living virtue, and immortal nourishment of that which is immortal. This faith, at its first entrance, strikes that part dead in which the other faith did grow, and by its growth perfects that death, and raiseth up a life which is of

another nature than ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. And by the death of this part in us, we come to know and enjoy life; and by the life we have received, know, and enjoy, we come to see that which other men call life (and which we ourselves were apt to call life formerly) to be but death. And from this true knowledge, we give a true testimony to the world of what we have seen and felt; but no man receiveth our testimony. It grieves us to the heart to see men set up a perishing thing as the way to life; and our bowels are exceedingly kindled, when we behold an honest zeal and simplicity betrayed; and in tender love do we warn men of the pit, into which they are generally running so fast; though men reward us with hatred for our good will, and become our bitter enemies because we tell them the truth, and the most necessary truth for them to know; which they can bear neither in plain words, nor yet in parables. Yet be not rough and angry; but meekly wait to read this following parable aright, and it will open into life. The parable is briefly this:

That which sold the birth-right, seeks the birth-right with tears and great pains; but shall never recover it. But there is one which lies dead, which hath the promise, which stirs not, which seeks not till he is raised by the power of the Father's life, and then he wrestles with the Father, prevails, and gets the blessing from him. Therefore know that part which is up first, and is so busy in the willing and in the running, and makes such a noise about duties, and ordinances, and graces, to keep down the life which it hath slain: and know that seed of life which is the heir, which lies underneath all this, and must remain slain while this lives: but if ever ye hear the voice of the Son of God, this will live, and the other die. And happy for ever will he be who knows this! But misery will be his portion, who cannot witness a thorough change by the almighty power of the living God, but hath only painted the old nature and sepulchre, but never knew the old bottle broken, and a new one formed, which alone is able to receive and retain the new wine of the kingdom; whereas the other, Pharisee-like, can only receive a relation of the letter concerning the kingdom.

#### SOME ASSERTIONS

Concerning FAITH, its Nature, Rise, &c., with its Receiving of CHRIST, and what follows thereupon; namely, a Growing in his living Virtue; with a Knowledge of the true, living, unerring Rule, and Obedience to it in the Life.

#### ASSERTION I

THAT the true faith (the faith of the gospel, the faith of the elect, the faith which saves the sinner from sin, and makes him more than a conqueror over sin and the powers of darkness) is a belief in the nature of God; which belief giveth entrance into, fixeth in and causeth an abiding in that nature. Unbelief entereth into death, and fixeth in the death: faith giveth entrance into, and fixeth in the life. Faith is an ingrafting into the vine, a partaking of the nature of the vine, a sucking of the juice of life from the vine; which nothing is able to do but the faith, but the belief in the nature. And nothing can believe in the nature, but what is one with the nature. So then faith is not a believing the history of the scripture, or a believing and applying the promises, or a believing that Christ died for sinners in general, or for me in particular; for all this may be done by the unbelieving nature (like the Jew); but a uniting to the nature of God in Christ, which the unbeliever starts from, in the midst of his believing of these. Yet I do not deny that all these things are to be believed, and are believed with the true faith: but this I affirm, that they also may be believed without the true faith; and that such a belief of these doth not determine a man to be a believer in the sight of God, but only the union with the nature of that life from whence all these sprang, and in which alone they have their true value.

## II

That the true faith springs from the true knowledge, or comes with the true knowledge of the true nature of God in Christ, which it believes in. He can never believe in the nature of God, who hath not first the nature of God revealed to him. If a man search the Scriptures all his days, hear all that can be said by men concerning God, Christ, faith, justification, &c., be able to dispute about them, and think he can make his tenets good against all the world; yet, if he hath not received the true knowledge of the nature of these things, all his professed faith in them cannot be true.

## III

That the true knowledge is only to be had by the immediate revelation of Christ in the soul. No man knows the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the son reveals him. The dead shall hear the voice of the son of God, and they that hear shall live. There is no raising of a dead soul to life, but by the immediate voice of Christ. Outward preaching, reading the Scriptures, &c. may direct and encourage men to hearken after and wait for the voice; but it is the immediate voice of Christ in the soul, which alone can quicken the soul to God: and till the light of life shine immediately from Christ in the heart, the true knowledge is never given. 2 Cor. 4:6. Therefore they that never yet heard the immediate voice of Christ, are still dead in their sins, and have not yet received the true, living knowledge, but a dead, literal knowledge, which gives a false shining of things in the dead part, but kills the life. Indeed the proper use of all means, is to bring to the immediate voice, life, and power; and till this be done, till the soul come to that, to hear that, to feel that, to be rooted there, there is nothing done that will stand; but men stick by the way, crying up the means, and never knowing, tasting, or enjoying the thing which the means point to. But he that knows God comes into the immediate presence; and he that daily lives in God, lives in the immediate life; and the true faith leads to this, giving the soul such a touch and taste of it at first, as makes unsatisfiable without it. By this Christ cuts off the Jews, with all their zeal and knowledge. John 5:37-38. "Ye have not heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape; and ye have not his word abiding in you." There is the hearing of the voice, the sight of the shape, and the having the word of God abiding in the heart, which gives both the hearing of the voice, and the sight of the shape, and keeps the soul quick, and living in the life. The voice gives life, the sight of the shape daily conforms into the image, which is beheld by the eye of life; and the word abiding in the heart nourishes and feeds the living soul with the pure bread of life. But the Jews knew not this; but were crying up their sabbaths, the law of Moses, the ordinances of Moses, the temple of God, the instituted worship of God, and so were shut out of the thing itself which those things ended in, and out of a capacity of receiving it. And thus many zealous ones at this day, not having come to this, no more than the Jews did, but sticking in the letter of the gospel, as the Jews did in the letter of the law, stumble at the present dispensation of life, and cannot do otherwise.

## IV

That Christ's immediate revelation of the nature of his Father is to his babes. Not to the wise, not to the zealous, not to the studious, not to the devout, not to the rich in the knowledge of the Scriptures without: but to the weak, the foolish, the poor, the lowly in heart. And man receives not these revelations by study, by reading, by willing, by running, but by being formed in the will of life, by being begotten of the will of the Father, and by coming forth in the will, and lying still in the will, and growing up in the will, here the child receives the wisdom which is from above, and daily learns that cross which crucifies the other wisdom, which joins with and pleases the other will, which loves to be feeding on the shadowy and husky part of knowledge, without life. Therefore, if ever thou desire to receive this knowledge from Christ, know that eye

in thyself that is to be blinded, which Christ will never reveal the Father to: read at home, know the wise and prudent there, whom Christ excludes from the living knowledge. And if thou canst bear it, that eye that can read the Scriptures with the light of its own understanding; that can consider and debate, and take up senses and meanings of it, without the immediate life and power; that is the eye that may gather what it can from the letter, but shall never see into the life, nor taste of the true knowledge; for Christ, who alone opens and gives the knowledge, hides the pearl from that eye.

The true knowledge is only poured into the new vessel. It is the living soul alone that receives the living knowledge of the living God from Christ the life. The old nature, the old understanding, is for death and destruction. The wisdom of the flesh, though painted ever so like the spiritual wisdom, is not to be spared anywhere; but that wisdom, with all its zeal and growth and progress in religion must perish. All men's knowledge of the Scriptures which they have gathered in that part will profit them nothing, but hinder them. Every building which the leprosy of sin hath overspread, is to be pulled down; therefore he that hath only the old house swept and garnished, never received the true knowledge, from whence the true faith springs, but his life lies in the oldness of the letter, in the conformity of the dead part to that, and he knows not the virtue of the knowledge of God in the newness of the Spirit (the veil being over his heart) which is only given to the new understanding.

V

That this faith (which springs from the true knowledge) is God's gift, and is not that power of believing which is to be found in man's nature; but of another nature, even the nature of the giver. And when man is called to believe, he is not called to put forth that faith wherewith he believeth other things; but to receive and exercise the gift of faith, which is from above. That which is to be believed in is spiritual; and that must be spiritual which believes in it. Man, with all the powers of his nature, is shut out; it is another thing, distinct from man, which is let into life, and which lets man in. For man receiving the faith, entering into the faith, and becoming new-formed in the faith, then he also may enter; but till then he is shut out, and knoweth not the life, let him believe and read and pray and hear and exercise himself in that which he calls duties and ordinances ever so much; for all these, set up in the wrong part in man, only feed the wrong part; and that, with all its food and nourishment, falls short of the life. Therefore the true entrance into religion is to feel that power which slays man's natural ability and propensity to believe, that so the gift of the true faith may be received: for there is no rising up and living of the second, without the death of the first, with all its natural faculties and powers.

VI

That by this faith alone, which is the gift which is from above, (and not that faith which grows either in the wilderness or garden of the old nature, and is fed by the oldness of the letter, and not by the newness of the Spirit) is Christ received. For Christ can be received by the faith alone that comes from him; and that faith which comes from him cannot but receive him. Man's faith refuseth him; it receiveth a literal knowledge of him from what it heareth from men, or from what it readeth related in the Scripture concerning him; but refuseth the nature of the thing. And it cannot be otherwise; for man's faith, not being of the nature of it, cannot but refuse it. But this faith, which is given of God, which is from above, being of the same life and nature with Christ, cannot refuse the spring of its own life; but receiveth him immediately. There is no distance of time; but so soon as faith is received, Christ is received, and the soul united to him in the faith. As unbelief immediately shuts him out, so faith lets him in immediately, and centres the soul in him: and the immortal soul feels the immortal virtue, and rejoices in the proper spring of its own immortal

nature. But the faith of man never reaches this, never receives Christ, but only a relation of things concerning him; and with that faith which stands in the letter, opposes that faith which stands in the life. And here is the spirit of antichrist; here is the mystery of iniquity, working out of one form into another: for antichrist does not directly deny Christ, or deny the letter; but cries up Christ, cries up the letter, cries up ordinances; but so as they may feed the faith of his own nature, and maintain a hope there. And thus the spirit of man is at unity with what will feed his own, with what interpretations his own understanding can gather out of the Scriptures. And thus can he cry up Christ, and say he hopes to be saved by him, while the spirit of enmity against the nature of Christ lodgeth in his heart. This is antichrist, wherever he is found; and this is his faith, and great is his knowledge, and many are his coverings; but the Lord is searching him out, who will strip him, and make his nakedness appear.

VII That Christ is received as a grain of mustard-seed. Christ is such a thing, as every eye, but the eye of this faith, despiseth. He is the stone which the wisdom of the builders, in all ages, hath rejected. They look for a glorious Messiah; but they know him not in his humiliation, in the little seed, out of which he is to grow up into his glory: and so missing of the thing, they build up only with high imaginations in the airy mind concerning it. As when God sent Christ in the flesh, there was no form nor beauty in him; the Jews, whose hope and expectation lay there, yet saw no manner of comeliness, no desirableness in him; even so it is now: when God comes to offer him to those that think they place all their hopes in him, they see no loveliness in him, but refuse him daily.

What! this little thing, small, like a grain of mustard-seed, can this be the glorious Christ which the Scriptures have spoken so much of? Why, we know the descent of this (its father, mother, and kindred are with us), we find this in our nature. Thus, like the Jews of old, they make a great noise about Christ, but refuse the thing itself. And this for want of the true eye of faith: for if they had that eye, they would see the virtue in the little seed, and receive him in his humiliation in their hearts, where he knocks daily for entrance, and be content till this grain of mustard-seed grew up into a great and glorious tree.

But for want of this eye, they keep him out, and let in the painted murderer, who dwells in them, and covers himself with a knowledge, a zeal, a faith, and hope, &c., in the old nature, in the old vessel, in the old understanding: and thus they give God and Christ good words, while the evil spirit has their heart, and dwells there, bringing forth his own old evil fruit under an appearance of devotion and holiness. Hear now, ye wise in the letter, but strangers to the life! there is a twofold appearance of Christ in the heart; there is an appearance of him as a servant to obey the law, to fulfill the will of the Father in that body which the Father prepares there for him: and there is an appearance of him in glory, to reign in the life and power of the Father: and he that knows not the first of these in his heart, shall never know the second there.

And he that knows not these inwardly, shall never know any outward, visible coming to his comfort. For if Christ should come outwardly to reign (as many expect), yet to be sure he would not reign in thee, whose heart he hath not first entered into and subdued to himself; which is only to be done by his appearance there, first as a servant, then as a king. But what estate are Christians (so called) now in, who know not him in them who is able to serve the Lord; but are striving and fighting in that nature where sin hath the power, and which can never overcome, being not in union with, but strangers to, that life and power which is the conqueror!

Therefore let all consider in the depths of their hearts; for this is infallibly true: they that never received the seed of life in their hearts, never received Christ; and such shall never be free from sin while they live: for having not received the Son, who makes free, how can they be free indeed? Or be free from wrath when

they are dead? For that faith concerning Christ will not save them hereafter, which did not bring them to receive Christ here.

## VIII

That this seed being received, groweth up into its own form; or is formed in that creature into which it is received. It there groweth up into the body in which it is to serve the Lord, and which body is to be glorified when it has finished its service. As a seed cast into fitted earth, or the seed of man or beast sown in a fitting womb, receiveth form and groweth into a plant, or living creature; so it is with this seed in its earth. Open the true eye, O ye Christians! and begin to read the mystery of godliness.

## IX

That this creature, or the Spirit of life in this creature (which it is in union with, and which is never separated from it) is the Christian's rule. Gal. 6:15-16. 1 John 2:27. Heb. 8:10,12. The Son is never without the Spirit of the Father; no, not in the seed; and the Spirit of the Father is the Son's rule. Outward rules were given to a state without; to men who were not brought to the life, but were exercised under shadows and representations of the life: but the Son, who is within, who is the substance of all, who is the life, who is one with the Father, whose proper right the Spirit is, he is not tied to any outward rule; but is to live and walk in the immediate light of the Spirit of his own life. And he that hath the Son, hath this rule; and he that hath not this rule, hath not the Son: and he that hath not the Son, hath not the true faith (which immediately receives him) and so is no Christian; but hath stolen the name from the letter, having never received the nature from the Spirit, to which alone the name belongs.

## X

He that hath Christ, or the seed of eternal life, which is Christ, formed in him (which seed the Spirit always dwells in, and never is absent from, which is the same Spirit which gave forth the Scriptures), he is in a capacity of understanding those scriptures which that Spirit gave forth, as that Spirit leads him into the understanding of them. But he that hath not received that which is like the grain of mustard-seed, and so hath not Christ nor his spirit (whatever he may pretend to), he, by all his studies, arts, languages, reading of expositors, conferences, nay, experiences, can never come to the true knowledge of the Scriptures; for he wants the true key, which alone can open. He may have got a great many wrong keys, none of which can open; but he wants the true key of the true knowledge, and so is shut out of that; and only let into such a kind of knowledge as the wrong key can open into. And with this kind of knowledge the merchants of Babylon have long traded; but their day is expiring apace, and their night of lamentation and howling hasteneth.

XI Though he can understand the Scriptures, as the Spirit leads him into the knowledge of them, and can set his seal to the truth of them, yet he cannot call them his rule: for, having received the life for his rule, and knowing it to be so, he cannot call another thing it. He that hath received the new covenant into his heart, with the laws of the life thereof written there by the Spirit of life, who doth write them there, even in the least of all that believe, as well as in the greatest, he knoweth that this living writing is his rule.

The Scriptures give relation where the covenant and law of life is written; and if I will read it, thither must I go, whither the Scriptures point me. I must go to Christ the book of life, and read there with that eye which Christ gives, if I read the things of life. And the Scriptures are willing to surrender up their glory to Christ, who was before them, and is above them, and shall be after them. But there is a false spirit, which hath

seated itself in a literal knowledge of the Scriptures, and hath formed images and likenesses of truth from it (every one after the imaginations of his own heart); and all these fall, if Christ the life appear: and so this spirit cries up the Scriptures now in a way of deceit, just as the Jews cried up Moses.

It was a good remove, to withdraw the ear from the false church, and to listen to the true testimony which the Scriptures give of Christ: but it is the seducing spirit which tempts to stick by the way, and to rear up buildings and forms of knowledge from the letter of the Scriptures, and not come to feel after, unite with, and live in, Christ the life. And unless ye come to this, your reading of the Scripture is vain, and all your gathering rules of practice, and comforts from promises, will end in vanity: for until ye know, and have received the thing itself, ye are at a distance from that to which all belongs.

A lively and glorious testimony of truth hath God held forth in this age, at which all that stick in the letter cannot but stumble; and there is no possibility of knowing or receiving it, but by feeling the true touch of the inward life of it. "Wisdom is justified of her children:" but they that are not born of her, cannot justify her womb or birth. To the Jews, who were an outward people, there was an outward rule given, a law of commandments, statutes, judgments, and ordinances, proper to that state wherein they were, and to that thing to which the ministry was: but all this was to be done away, and to end in that which all this represented.

So that to Christians, Christ the substance being come, which is the end of all these shadows, the true Jew being raised in the immediate life, now there is a necessity for the immediate life for the rule. To them under the gospel, to them who are come to the substance, to them who are begotten and born in the life, there can be no rule proportionable to their state, but Christ the substance, Christ the life. Here he alone is the light, the way, the truth, the rule; the Spirit is here the rule, the new creature is the rule, the new covenant the rule; all which are in unity together, and he that hath one of them hath them all, and he that hath not them all hath none of them.

So that directions taken out of the scripture cannot be the rule to him who is the true Christian; but the measure of grace, the measure of the light, the measure of the Spirit, the measure of the gift received into the living soul from the spring of life, this is the alone rule of life. But Christians in the degeneration have lost this, and so have taken up words for a rule (which were not given to that end); and so with deductions by the earthly part, they feed the earthly part.

What is fed by men's scripture knowledge, but the earthly understanding? The earthly will heated; the earthly affections warmed? And of the fruits of this earth they bring sacrifices to God: and they are angry that God hath raised up Abel, their younger brother, who offers up the Lamb of God to God, and serves the living God, in his own living Spirit, and with the faith which comes from him. Abel's religion stands not in that part wherein all other men's religion stands, but in the death of that part; and in the raising up of another part, wherein life springs.

Can ye mildly receive these gentle leadings? Do not provoke the tender heart of the Lamb against you, who also hath the voice of a lion, and can roar terribly out of his holy mountain against the enemies of his life and Spirit.

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A NECESSARY WARNING

And of very great Importance to all that call themselves CHRISTIANS, and hope for a Share in the Book of LIFE, and the escaping the Damnation of Hell; which is their Portion whose Names are written in the Book of Death, and blotted by God out of the Book of LIFE, though they hope to find them written there.

#### HEAR AND CONSIDER

IT is recorded, Rev. 22:18-19. "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Great are the plagues that are written in this book, even the pouring out of eternal wrath without mixture; torment day and night, in the presence of the Lamb, &c. As the growth and fulness of the mystery of iniquity are spoken of in this book, so the measuring out of the fulness of wrath to it, is spoken of also. And great are the life and blessedness that are here promised, to those that fight with and overcome the mystery of iniquity: and receive not any marks or names of the beast, nor are subject to any of his horns, though he push ever so hard with them. Now to meet with all the plagues here threatened, and to miss of all the blessedness here promised, is it not a sad state? Why, he that addeth to these things here spoken, or diminisheth from the words of the prophecy, the Lord hath said this shall befall him. Therefore, in the fear of that God who hath spoken this, and will make it good, let every one search, who is the adder, who is the diminisher.

Now mark, see if this be not a clear thing. He that giveth any other meaning of any scripture, than what is the true, proper meaning thereof, he both addeth and diminisheth; he taketh away the true sense, he addeth a sense that is not true. The Spirit of the Lord is the true expositor of scriptures; he never addeth nor diminisheth: but man, being without that Spirit, doth but guess, doth but imagine, doth but study and invent a meaning, and so he is ever adding or diminishing. This is the sense, saith one; this is the sense, saith another; this is the sense, saith a third; this, saith a fourth: another that is witty, and large in his comprehension, he says they will all stand; another, perhaps more witty than he, says none of them will stand, and he invents a meaning different from them all. And then, when they are thus expounding them, they will say, take the sense thus, it will yield this observation; or take it thus, and it will afford this observation. Doth not this plainly show, that he who thus saith, hath not the Spirit of the Lord to open the scripture to him, and manifest which is the true sense, but is working in the mystery of darkness? And yet this very person, who is thus working with his own dark spirit in the dark, will in words confess, that there is no true understanding or opening of scripture, but by the Spirit of God. If it be so, how darest thou set thy imagination, thy fancy, thy reason, thy understanding on work, and so be guessing at that which the Spirit doth not open to thee, and so art found adding and diminishing?

Now he that is the adder, he that is the diminisher, he crieth out against the Spirit of the Lord, and chargeth him with adding and diminishing: for man being judge, he will judge his own way to be true, and God's to be false. That which is the adding and diminishing, he calls the true expounding of the place; but if the Spirit of the Lord immediately open any thing to any son or daughter, he cries, This is an adding to the word: the scripture is written; there are no more revelations to be expected now; the curse, saith he, is to them that add. Thus he removes the curse from his own spirit, and way of study and invention, to which it appertains; and casts it upon the Spirit of the Lord. And man cannot possibly avoid this in the way that he is in; for having first judged his own darkness to be light, then, in the next place, he must needs judge the true light to be darkness. He that hath afore-hand set up his own invented meaning of any scripture to

be the true meaning, he must needs oppose the true meaning, and call it false, and so apply himself to form all the arguments he can out of other scriptures, to make it appear false. Thus man, having begun wrong in his knowledge of the Scriptures, stands engaged to make use of them against the Lord, and against his own soul; and yet really in himself thinks that he makes a right use of them, and that he serves the Lord, and that he is not opposing his truth, but opposing error and heresy; while he himself is in the error, and in the heresy, and against the truth; being a stranger to that Spirit, in whose immediate life and presence the truth grows.

Did the Lord, in these words, of forbidding to add or diminish upon so great a penalty, lay a restraint and limit upon his own Spirit, that it should no more hereafter speak in his sons and daughters; or did he intend to lay bounds upon the unruly spirit of man? Did God leave man's spirit at liberty to invent and form meanings of his words, and bind up his own Spirit from speaking further words afterwards? When Moses said, thou shalt not add or diminish, was this to be any stop to the prophets, in whom God should speak afterwards? Is not this one of the subtle serpent's inventions, to keep up the esteem of man's invented meanings as the true sense, and to make a fortification against the entrance of that Spirit, which can discover all his false interpretations of the true words of God, and to make him see that he is the adder and the diminisher, and that his name will not be found in the book of life, when the true light is held forth to read by?

But this is general, extending to all scriptures: my drift is more particularly concerning adding to the things, or diminishing from the words of the book of this prophecy.

There are two things chiefly spoken of in this book; Mystery Sion, Mystery Babylon; the true church, the false church; the Lamb's wife, the whore; the hiding of Mystery Sion, the appearing of Mystery Babylon in her place; the flying of the church out of her heaven into the wilderness, leaving all behind her which she could not carry with her; even all the ordinances and institutions of Christ, wherein once she appeared worshipping and serving God; and the starting of the false church into her place; taking up all that she had left, even all the ordinances and institutions of Christ in the letter; thus covering herself with the form of godliness, with the sheep's clothing, that she might pass the better for the true church: and the dragon who managed the war against the woman and her seed, raiseth up first one beast, and then another, and sets this whore on the top of them; who with the cup of fornication makes all the earth drunk, all nations, peoples, kindreds, tongues, languages. And the beast hath his horns everywhere; his marks everywhere; his names everywhere; and also his image in every part of Babylon. And who will not worship him, he fights with; yea, such as are led by God to rent from the whore, he calls schismatics, heretics, blasphemers, and persecutes them as persons not worthy to live. Thus the state of things is quite changed, the power of truth lost, the form set up without it; those that seek after the power hated, persecuted, blasphemed; but those that lie still under any of the beast's forms, go for good Christians, for members of the visible church, so called by them.

Now mark: he that calls anything the church, but what this book calls the church, he adds: he that doth not know the wilderness, and own the church in the wilderness, he diminishes. The church of Rome is not the church in the wilderness; the church of Scotland is not the church in the wilderness; and the church of England is not the church in the wilderness; the several gathered churches are none of them the church in the wilderness: all these have sprung up since the church's flight, and have appeared in her absence, usurping her name, and appropriating it to themselves; but God, who gave it to the church, hath not given it to them; and so they must lose it again, when God brings back the church out of the wilderness. So he that calls those, which formerly were the institutions and ordinances of Christ, which the woman left behind

her, and which the harlot hath got and attired herself with, which she now appears in, and wherewith the dragon is now worshipped, he adds to this book, which says the outward court was given to the Gentiles, and the true church had nothing left her but the inward temple, wherein alone the true worshippers worshipped; and they that worship elsewhere, are the false worshippers, worshipping in false temples, in temples of the whorish spirit's building; take it either outwardly or inwardly, for it holds true in both. He that makes the beast's names fewer than they are, or his marks fewer than they are, or his horns fewer than they are, or his image less than it is, he diminishes. And the danger hereof is not small; "For if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." Rev. 14:9, &c.

Now this I affirm: Whosoever has not the name of Sion, the mark of Sion, which he received of her in the wilderness, where the living God is with her, and where he is taught by God the laws of the wilderness-worship, and in some measure to testify against all the corrupted ordinances and institutions which have the beast's mark, and go now abroad in the world under the beast's name; I say, whoever has not the true mark of Sion, it is impossible for him to avoid the mark of Babylon. And he who avoids not the mark, cannot escape the plagues. But he that hath the mark of Sion, is, by a secret inward instinct of true life, led from the marks of Babylon; and (if he faithfully follow the guidance of it) from out of all the names, and from under all the horns.

It is not enough to be rent from Popery, and sit down under the power and government of the same spirit in another form; or to be rent from Episcopacy, and the same spirit sit down in Presbytery; or to be rent from Presbytery, and the same spirit sit down in a form of Independency, or Anabaptism; or to be rent from these, and the same spirit sit down in a way of seeking and waiting, and reading of words of scripture, and gathering things from thence without the life: but the true religion consists in knowing and following a true guide to the church in the wilderness, and thereto receive the mark, the living mark, which will preserve out of all invention, and further progress of the dead spirit.

Now therefore look about you; know the spirit of whoredom, and see how ye have been begotten in the adultery, and born of the whore, and have served the dragon, and worshipped his dead idols, and not the living God. And be not satisfied with changing of forms and dresses (which are but the several deceitful appearances of the whore), but put off that spirit; lest when ye have hated the whore, and burnt her flesh as she appeared in one form, ye give yourselves up to her again, when she appears in another form: for the plagues are not so much to the form wherein the whore appears, as to the whorish spirit: and whosoever is found under her dominion, in any of her territories, under any of her forms, with that mark of hers upon them which belongs to that particular form, though ever so curiously painted, he shall drink of the unmixed cup of wrath.

Therefore tremble all sorts of people! pluck off your false coverings; see the shame of your nakedness, while it may be for your advantage so to do. The angel is gone forth, the corn is reaping and gathering into the garner, many lambs are brought into the fold of everlasting rest, Sion is redeeming, the true life is rising, the whorish spirit is judging, the door of life is yet open. Do not lie secure in the whore's wisdom! Do not lie slumbering, and reasoning, and disputing from the letter of the Scripture, till the gathering be finished, till the door be shut, till the eternal flames seize upon you, and ye find yourselves in the bosom of

hell unawares, and see the children of the kingdom in Abraham's bosom, but yourselves shut out, and left to weep, and wail, and gnash your teeth.

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