

ADDRESS TO THE CHRISTIANS

COMMONLY CALLED

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN,

ON

LIBERTY

OF

MINISTRY AND GIFT.

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## LIBERTY OF MINISTRY AND GIFT.

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To every truth God has given a certain basis of evidence and proof. On that it rests securely : apart from it, it is liable to be overthrown. If rested upon false foundations, it works mischief in a variety of ways.

Bear with me then, Brethren, while I endeavour to point out to you, that the subject of Liberty of Ministry is among you founded upon a wrong basis.

Liberty of Ministry with you, reposes upon this assumption—that we have the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and you add that in your assemblies not man but the Holy Ghost speaks;\* that 1 Cor. xiv, is the ground on which believers ought to meet ; † and that the rejection of this ministry of the Holy Spirit is the proof of the apostacy of the present dispensation. ‡

I would at the commencement of the discussion fully admit, that it is the present privilege of every believer, that his body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, who dwells in him : as also that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of union, whereby believers are united in fellowship, and the Spirit of worship, by whom they draw nigh unto God.

These admissions made, let us advance to the question at issue. When then it is asked—Have we now the gifts of the Spirit? your writers almost with one voice answer—Yes! By Mr. Darby indeed the statement has been considerably altered in a late tract. “It is important to notice, that there is no such term in Scripture [as ‘gifts of the Spirit,’] and the Holy Ghost is never spoken of as *giving*.” *Remarks on the Presence of the Spirit*, page 7. Now if this distinction be true, very many of your tracts need alteration ; especially the very title of one of Mr. D’s

\* *God's System of a Church*, p. 9. † *Answer to Mr. Cox's Tract on Plymouth Brethrenism*, p. 19. ‡ *Thoughts on the Apostacy*, pp. 4, 7.

*“ Gifts of the Spirit remaining among the saints.”* But the distinction is not, I apprehend, correct either as to the letter, or the spirit. For we read—“ God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and *gifts of the Holy Ghost*, according to his own will:” Heb. ii, 4. It will perhaps be answered, that the Greek word here (*μερισμοις*) is not properly translated “ gifts,” but should be rather, as we find it in the margin, “ *distributions*” of the Holy Spirit. Be it so: the smallness of the difference will, however, show that it is a mere verbal objection to say that “ gifts of the Spirit ” is not Scriptural. In the ensuing tract if any one will read “ distributions of the Holy Spirit,” in place of “ gifts of the Spirit,” he is welcome. The argument is not thereby affected. Moreover, while it is true, that the expression—“ the gifts (*χαρισματα*) of the Spirit” is not common—the expression, the “ *gift of the Spirit*” (*δωρεα*) is. And this is a general expression, comprehending all the special endowments (*χαρισματα*) as prophecy, speaking with tongues, &c. Acts x, 45, 46; xi, 17; Hebrews vi, 4. But how could the learned writer affirm, that the Spirit is *not spoken of as giving*? Contradiction the most direct can be produced. “ *For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit:*” 1. Cor. xii, 8.

We may then speak of the gift or gifts of the Holy Ghost, as of a Scriptural reality: and we proceed to inquire, Are we now in possession of them?

The question may be made more definite by asking—Is there any difference in the matter of gift, between us and the primitive Christians?

The answers to this question given by your writers, are very different. The original doctrine was, that we have the gifts, for God promised them.

1. “ As to the Spirit’s gifts in office, as—‘ Some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors, and Teachers’—[Eph. iv,]—I would say two words. First, ‘ *it is a matter of faith with every one that maketh not God a liar, that these things have continued.*’ “ *God has written that these things shall continue, therefore they are certainly among us:*” *Christian Witness*, vol. ii, 166—7.

That ground is quite abandoned now.

2. "Except the gift of Teacher, which is connected with that of Pastor, *all the gifts found here* [Eph. iv] *are lost*: at least in their primitive form and character." *Darby on Ministry*, p. 21.

3. "That there were gifts, which had a sensible miraculous character, I do not deny, and *such we have lost.*" *Darby on the Presence of the Spirit*, p. 22.

4. "All who are called in the present day from among the Gentiles, are in like manner partakers of the same Spirit, though not manifested in the same power or miraculous gift as we there find. *The difference appears to be one of degree, not of kind.*" *Answer to Cox on Plymouth Brethrenism*, p. 8.

5. "If we have indeed lost many and ornamental members, it is no reason why we should summarily cut off the rest—"the word of wisdom" or "the word of knowledge" of which there is assuredly *some measure yet remaining in the church.*" *Christain Witness*, vol. 1, 166.

6. "Our only difference in circumstance from them [the early christians] is, that in the increase of the power of the flesh, *the strength of the Spirit has been withdrawn.*" *God's System of a Church*, p. 19.

By another writer, the gifts are said to be "varied, to meet the need of another age," and "to meet our condition,"<sup>1</sup> By another, that they are "not so clear" "as in the primitive church." (2) By another, that we have the gifts of Eph. iv; except apostles and prophets. (3) In another tract it is stated, that while "many of the gifts are missing," "others are equally truly manifest." (4) In another, that the miraculous gifts are not to be expected. (5) In another, that infallibility is not possessed now. (6) And lastly, one writes that not only are the gifts of healing not possessed, but that pretensions to *such gifts* should be associated in our minds with miracles of evil spirits. (7)

The opposition of these statements to one another, I need not point out. But they bring the question fairly before us. The question then simply is—The gifts of the

<sup>1</sup> *Words to any gathered in the name of Jesus*, pp. 6, 15. (2) *Christian Witness*, vol. ii, 171. (3) *Dorman to the Dissenters*, p. 9. (4) *Choosing a Minister*, p. 3. (5) *Dorman's Principles of Truth*, p. 33. (6) *Darby on the Presence, &c.*, p. 10. (7) *Silver Trumpet answered*, p. 57.

ancient believers were miraculous: have we these now? Some reply, 'Yes, only not so clearly:' some rightly answer, 'No'!

OBJ. I. But some with Mr. Darby, affirm, that though in their strict and primitive sense, apostles and prophets have ceased, yet that in a *subordinate or lower sense*, we have them still. (8) "The individual may possess the prophetic gift, that is of speaking to men to edification, exhortation, and comfort." (9)

1. Let us then investigate this question. Does Scripture use the term prophecy, in a certain lower sense, in which it is possessed as a gift even to this day? I answer with confidence, Certainly not! Let us take the characteristic of prophecy given us by Peter. "We have also the more sure word of prophecy." "*Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost:*" 2 Peter, i, 19, 21. We are sure then that *inspiration* and *infallibility* enter into the Scripture idea of prophecy. But it is confessed as we have just seen, that no speaking now is infallible, therefore we have no prophecy in the Scripture sense.

2. The prophet of old was able to judge and decide on inspiration, what was given by the Lord Jesus, what not. Have we such a power now? 1 Cor. xiv, 37.

3. To them the secrets of God, and the secrets of man's heart were revealed, in such a manner as to force a confession that God gave them this power. Have we this? 1 Cor. xiv, 24, 25.

4. The equivalent expression to prophecy is revelation. "Let the *prophets* speak two or three." "If any thing be *revealed* to another sitting by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all *prophecy*:" 1 Cor. xiv, 29—31; Eph. iii, 5.

5. It was promised by Jesus in its strict sense. "He shall relate to you the future." (τα ερχομενα αναγγελει) John xvi, 13. It was promised again in its strict old testament sense at Pentecost. Peter cites Joel. "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and *your* sons and your daughters shall *prophecy*, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And on *my*

(8) *Darby on Ministry*, p. 24, 25. *Gifts of the Spirit remaining*, p. 8. 9. (9) *Reasons for leaving the Moravians*, p. 25.

servants, and on my hand-maidens will I pour out in those days of my spirit; and they shall *prophesy*." Speedily afterwards Peter takes up this promise, and applies it to those present. "The promise [of Joel] is unto you [Jews] and to your children, and to all that are afar off, [Gentiles]\* as many as the Lord God shall call:" Acts ii, 17, 18, 39. It was so fulfilled in Agabus foretelling the famine in the days of Claudius, the binding of Paul and other like instances: Acts xi, 27; xxi, 10, 11.

6. By it Timothy was called to his office, and received gift, which cannot be supposed of any thing short of inspired command: 1 Tim. i, 18; iv, 14.

7. It was a manifestation of the Spirit joined with tongues and miracles: 1 Cor. xiii. By it Paul and others knew that the Holy Ghost had descended on those of John's disciples who were re-baptized at Ephesus: Acts xix, 6. But there had been no proof of this in their simply preaching.

8. The test proposed in 1 John, iv, 1, proves that nothing short of inspiration is meant. In that place the Apostle gives a criterion by which to decide when any who spoke prophetically, was a false prophet or a true. "Many *false prophets* were gone out into the world." How then could a true prophet be known from a false? By trying the spirit that dwelt in and inspired them. Not the man's own spirit, but the spirit which inspired him, was to be questioned—whether Jesus had come in the flesh? If the spirit denied it, the speaker was inspired by a false spirit, a spirit of anti-christ. This test of prophecy does not apply now; so that we have not, it is evident, prophecy in the Scripture sense.

OBJ. II. But there is one passage which is always insisted on as proving a lower sense to belong to the word prophecy. "He that prophesieth, speaketh unto men edification,† exhortation, and comfort": 1 Cor. xiv, 3. This passage however will not prove the point. For it

\* Observe, that the difference "*your sons*," and "*my servants*" in Joel, meets with a like distinction on Peter's part, who speaks of the promise as belonging universally to the Jewish nation, but among the Gentiles to the believers alone.

† There is no 'to' in the original: as is proved by the word being in italics.

is not a definition of prophecy,\* but the Apostle is comparing together tongues and prophecy as to their respective merits, in the course of which he affirms, that, since in the assembly prophecy is more edifying than tongues, it is superior to it. But neither edification, exhortation, nor comfort, whether taken singly or jointly *define* prophecy: they are qualities which belong to it in common with others of the gifts: Col. iii, 16. While then prophecy carries with it edification, exhortation, and comfort, the speaking to edification, exhortation, and comfort *is not prophecy*. Isaiah's prophecy exhorts, edifies, comforts: but there may be all these without a word of prophecy.

I have heard one other passage noted as teaching the same thing. "And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, with much utterance† exhorted the brethren and confirmed them:" Acts xv, 32. But this proves the very contrary. The church at Jerusalem sends to Antioch an inspired letter, and in it declares—"We have sent therefore Judas and Silas who shall also tell you the same things *by utterance*." (λογου, "word" margin.) Simply to say by mouth the same things as the inspired letter contained, would have been small confirmation. But that by the inspired infallible utterance of the Holy Ghost, they should address the believers to the same effect as the letter, carried with it a full and decisive confirmation. Judas and Silas therefore were inspired, like all other prophets.

But if we have not prophets now, much less have we apostles. We are to try those who should call themselves apostles, and are to require of them the signs and wonders of an apostle: Rev. ii, 2; 1 Cor. ix, 1; 2 Cor. xii, 12. If they have them not, they are liars.

OBJ. III. "But if we have not either apostles or prophets, at least we have 'the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge.'" Indeed, we have not. The persons who had them were inspired men, speaking infallibly by

\* The logical flaw of the argument is an attempt to prove an universal in the second figure. The consequence is an undistributed middle. If the middle is distributed, and the verse made a definition, the major is false.

† Δια λογου πολλου.



the dictation of the Holy Ghost. What is the connexion in which the words occur? "Now concerning the spiritual\* [inspired persons] brethren, I would not have you ignorant." Paul then notices the inspiration of evil spirits, by which of old they were led to idolatry, and then gives certain tests, by which they might know when a person, evidently inspired by a spirit, was speaking by the Holy Ghost, and when by an evil spirit. "No one *speaking by the Spirit of God* calleth Jesus accursed; and no one [of the inspired] can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." ver. 3. He then traces the source of the gifts to the same One God in three Persons. Though they were so different in their character, they did not proceed from different spirits, but from the One Holy Spirit of God. They were "MANIFESTATIONS of the Spirit given to each† to profit with." Such manifestations of the Spirit were "the *utterance*† of wisdom, the *utterance*† of knowledge." Those who had it were "*inspired*," or, (as it is translated ordinarily,) "spiritual." (πνευματικοί.) This is the sense it had of old. "The *prophet* is a fool: the *spiritual* man is mad:" Hos. ix, 7. Such is its sense again: 1 Cor. xiv, 37; "If any man think himself to be a *prophet* or *spiritual* [inspired,] let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are commandments of the Lord."

There are two senses, then, of the term "spiritual:" in one, it is opposed to fleshly, and evil; in the other, it signifies inspired, in opposition to the natural powers of the flesh. In the first sense, then, we may be spiritual now, as Gal. vi, 1. But, in the second sense, none now are spiritual: 1 Cor. ii, 15. In the first sense we may have "spiritual songs," as opposed to the light, vain songs of the world. But, in the Scriptural sense of *inspired* songs, (Eph. v, 19; Col. iii, 16; such as those of Hannah, Elizabeth, Zacharias, and others,) we have them not. Now our songs are *forms*; things of the *letter*; *then* they were inspired productions of the Holy Ghost, in which, as it appears, *one* believer addressed the assembly; not, as now, all singing together. We have not, then, either "the utterance of wisdom or the utterance

\* Περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν. † Ἐκαστῷ.

† Λόγος. So translated in 1 Cor. i, 5; 2 Cor. viii, 7

of knowledge," for these were inspired, infallible manifestations, the privilege of those baptized in the Holy Ghost, (1 Cor. xii, 13,) which baptism we have not. To this point I shall return; since the contrary is constantly assumed by you. The gifts are called "spiritual" (Rom. i, 2) because they were imparted by the Holy Spirit, and were inspired, and the parties possessing them were "spiritual," as the gifts are themselves called "spirits:" 1 Cor. xiv, 12, marg.

OBJ. IV. "But if we have none of these, we claim at least 'Singing in the Spirit' and 'Blessing in the Spirit.'" The above remarks prove the claim to be incorrectly made. But another proof can be given. For, in the passage in which the apostle treats of prayer in the Spirit, and singing and blessing in the Spirit (1 Cor. xiv, 14, 20) he discloses another truth—lost sight of or denied in the present day, yet capable of being fully manifested from the Scripture—that the person so described as singing and blessing in the Spirit, might, and often did, pray, sing, and bless, *without understanding what he was saying*. He who prayed in a tongue prayed in his spirit, but his "*understanding was unfruitful*." And, therefore, Paul desired, that he who prayed in the Spirit, sang in the Spirit, and in the Spirit blessed, should do so *with the understanding also*. This of itself manifests, how totally different from any thing possessed now, was the singing in the Spirit, and blessing in the Spirit.

OBJ. V. "But even granting that we have none of the *miraculous* gifts of the spirit, at least we have others which are *non-miraculous* and ordinary." This supposes that some gifts of the spirit were ordinary. And Mr. Darby has the following strange statements:—"We have seen real proper gift (or *χαρισμα*) identified (in the case of Timothy) *with the diligent use of means*."—*Presence of the Spirit*, p. 18. "*The Holy Ghost's using the mind is gift, properly and truly gift, and stated by the apostle to be the superior kind of gift*."—*Ibid.*

As to the first of these, the gift of which the apostle speaks, was on the very surface of it, *supernatural*: "Stir up the gift of God *which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands*:" 2 Tim. i, 6; 1 Tim. iv, 14.

The second statement has arisen from misunderstanding

the meaning of 1 Cor. xiv, 13—20. St. Paul there discloses, that the gift of tongues, *in itself*, without the gift of interpretation, did not convey to the understanding of the party possessing it, the meaning of the words uttered. The Spirit was indeed engaged in the devotion; but neither the memory nor the intellect were employed. But he would desire, that the believer should have the use of his understanding in his devotions, as well as that his spirit should be engaged. Have we anything answering now to a believer's speaking by the Holy Ghost, ignorant, all the while, of the meaning of what he utters?

Having noticed these points, let us next inquire—What is meant by “the gift of the Spirit,” (*δωρεα*) or ‘the gifts of the Spirit;’ (*χαρισματα, μερισμοι*) for the first of these terms (as already noticed) is a general one embracing the other.

1. It was something bestowed *after faith* and in consequence of faith, as its seal, and proof. “In whom also *after that ye believed*, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise:” Eph. i, 13. “Have ye received the Holy Ghost *since ye believed?*” Acts xix, 2. Nor was it to be bestowed ordinarily till *after baptism*, no less than after faith. “Repent and *be baptized* every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins; *and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost:*” Acts ii, 38. But any so-called gifts possessed now, were possessed before faith, and, therefore, are not the gift of the Holy Spirit, nor any seal of faith.

2. Not only was it bestowed after faith, and so was extraordinary and supernatural, but it was also miraculous, carrying its own evidence along with it. It was a **MANIFESTATION of the Spirit**. It was a bestowment of “power:” Acts i, 8. And this was true as well of the gifts of utterance, as of those of action. Paul's utterance was “in demonstration of the spirit and of power:” (1 Cor. ii, 4) while to the gifts of utterance the tests presented in 1 Cor. xii, and 1 John iv, always applied. But we have no gifts now that manifest the Spirit; none can *manifest* the Spirit that are not supernatural, infallible, and accompanied with miracle, or self-evidently miraculous. They must be as of old, manifest even to the unconverted, as even Simon the magician saw that by the laying on of the hands of the apostles, the Holy Spirit

was given : Acts viii. It is for this cause that they are called the seal of God, (John vi, 27 ; 2 Cor. i, 22,) for a seal is a manifest thing ; and the seal of God is the " manifestation of the Spirit," which is another word for a spiritual gift. They are made equivalent in 1 Cor. xii.

3. Every gift of the Spirit was bestowed only in one of two ways, either by direct descent (or illapse) of the Spirit from heaven, attended with flame ; or by the laying on of the hands of the apostles : Acts, ii, viii, x, xix. Hence, we read of their being "*ministered*," that is, "*imparted*," by certain individuals. "He then that *ministereth to you the Spirit*, and *worketh miracles among you*, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Gal. iii, 5. So, 2 Cor. iii, 8 ; xi, 4 ; 2 Tim. i, 6. Since, then, we have neither the descent of the Spirit in tongues of fire, nor the laying on of the hands of the apostles, we have not any gift of the Spirit.

4. They were given as confirmations of the gospel, and were, therefore, miraculous : Heb. ii, 4.

5. They were peculiar to the professing servants of Christ, as the Parable of the Talents shows ; not to be attained by study or diligence, (though they might be enlarged thereby,) but suddenly acquired. They might be neglected, and are not possessed by all, as the Parable of the Virgins shows.\*

Your great mistake lies in assuming that the gifts or gift of the Holy Ghost are invisibly and silently bestowed upon faith, and have been possessed by all the church since the Spirit's descent at Pentecost. That this is your opinion the following passages show :—"I do see, therefore, that for believers to be praying for the Holy Ghost *to be given to them or to the church, is nothing short of direct unbelief* ; and is a virtual denial that Christ's emphatic promise of the Spirit has been accomplished to the church. I can quite understand the prayer, that God would stir up the energies of the Holy Spirit in his children and in the church ; but I cannot understand the prayer of a believer for the bestowment of the Holy Spirit :"  
*Dorman's Principles of Truth*, pp. 18, 14.

"The question comes simply to this—'Is the Holy Ghost a divine person, and *is he present in the heart of each?*'"

\* See *Prophecy on Olivet*.

If he is, who can decide *whom he may choose to speak by?*”\*

You confound together, in short, the **INDWELLING** of the Holy Ghost, with the **BAPTISM** of the Holy Ghost. But these are quite distinct in kind, and the difference between us and the ancient church is one of *kind*, not of degree. The indwelling is possessed by all believers; the baptism of the Spirit is experienced by none now. Look at the conspicuous facts which prove them distinct in kind.

Philip went down to Samaria and preached Jesus to them. They believed and were baptized. Just so far have we attained. But was that all that was expected or desired? Far from it! The apostles marvelled that the Samaritan believers were not gifted, as themselves had been. *And not being gifted, they had not received the Holy Ghost; though he dwelt in them, because they were believers in Jesus.* For what says the Scripture? “Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who when they were come down *prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.*† For as yet he was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands upon them, and *they received the Holy Ghost:*”‡ Acts viii, 14—17. *We then, like the Samaritans, have never received the Holy Ghost:* for though faith gives *title* to the gift of the Spirit, it does not give *possession*. And this receiving of the Holy Ghost is the same thing as the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

\* *Choosing a Minister*, p. 5, 6; also *Groves on Liberty of Ministry*, p. 74, 75, 76, 78; *Morris's Christian Manual*, p. 18; *Christian Witness*, vol. ii, p. 116.

† Or “a holy spirit,” *πνευμα αγιον*. The remarkable usage of the New Testament writers with regard to the omission or insertion of the article before *πνευμα* deserves notice.

‡ It is worthy of notice, that there are two forms of expression in speaking of this matter—*αγιον πνευμα* and *το Πνευμα το αγιον*, or *το Αγιον Πνευμα*.

1. Whenever the Scripture speaks of being filled with, receiving, being partakers of, and baptized in, the Holy Spirit, the article is omitted: Matt. iii, 11; John vii, 39; Luke xi, 13, &c.

2. Yet in the same context the expression with the article follows: Acts i, 2—8; Acts xi, 15, 18.

I should incline to translate therefore the first cases with the indefinite article: for “spirits” are used in the plural when referring to the gifts: 1 Cor. xiv, 12, 32.

Peter declares of Cornelius and his friends, who were gifted by the Holy Ghost (as the apostles were at the beginning) that that was the baptism in the Spirit which Jesus foretold: Acts x, 44—48; xi, 15, 16.

2. The same thing is evident from the case of the twelve disciples of John the Baptist at Ephesus. They were "disciples," of whom, nevertheless, Paul asks the question, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" This proves that a man might believe, yet not possess the Spirit's gift. And, upon inquiry, he found not only that they had not received the Spirit, but that they had not even heard of the bestowal of his gifts through faith. Paul, therefore, lays his hands on them, and then, and not before, the Holy Ghost was received by them. As marking this great difference between the sanctifying indwelling, and the miraculous endowments of the Spirit, two different phrases (never interchanged) are employed. The Spirit as sanctifying, is said to "dwell in" the believer; as endowing him, it is said to "come upon" to "fall upon" to "fill" him.

3. So entirely distinct are the indwelling of the Spirit, and the gift of the Spirit, that the gift of the Holy Ghost *is made the proof of the indwelling*. To this point I request particular attention. "He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. *And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us:*" John iii, 24. Because of its importance this statement is repeated, "*Hereby we know that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit:*" iv, 13.

Now the proof must always be clearer than the thing to be proved. The point to be proved then, and which is supposed to need proof is, that God indwells in the believer. The proof given is, that God has given him of his Spirit. Now if the gift of the Spirit be supposed some natural gift, common to both the worldly and the believer, the possession of it would be no proof of God's indwelling.

Again, as the passage is ordinarily understood, the Spirit given, and God's indwelling, are not two distinct things, but two different modes of expressing the same thing. Moreover in place of standing related to each other, as the proof to the thing proved—the sign or proof being something evident, which is to make clear the secret thing

which is to be proved—*both are alike secret*; and the Spirit's being given is an expression more obscure than the Spirit's indwelling. It cannot mean sanctification, both because that is an invisible thing, and because that existed before the Spirit was given: John vii, 39. But understand the gift of the Spirit to signify *the miraculous gifts*, and all is beautifully clear and consistent. The miraculous gifts were manifest to every eye, and these served as the proof of the indwelling God, both to the believer himself and to all others. Who could raise the dead? who unfold the secrets of God's mind, save by the power of God? Miraculous power possessed, therefore, was a proof to the saints and to all of God's indwelling. But if so, *the reason here given for the possession of the gifts is an abiding one, affecting Christians of every age and clime.*

We have the Spirit's indwelling now, but we have not *its proof*; we have the reality, but not the token of it. The spoon is silver, but it lacks the goldsmith's mark. To prove the invisible we need the visible. The flag hoisted on the castle-tower is the visible proof of the Queen's unseen residence within. And thus Peter urges the baptism of the Spirit bestowed on Cornelius as the visible proof of the Gentile's faith: Acts xi, 15—17; xv, 7, 8; so Acts v, 32.

But, it has been said, (if I rightly understand the argument,) the gifts we must have, or else unity and membership are gone. This is not correct. There was unity (as is twice recorded) before the Spirit's gift was given: Acts i, 14; ii, 1. And while the gifts bestowed the especial and heavenly offices or *functions* of the members, *the members existed before the functions were given*; as at Pentecost and in Samaria. An eye is an eye, and a member of the body, whether it is closed or open, and whether we can see with it or not.

We have not then either the baptism, the anointing, the sealing, the manifestation, or the gifts (distributions) of the Holy Ghost: for all these (different names of the same thing) were miraculous, and infallible, and necessarily so.

And now I would present to you an evident inconsistency which has more than once struck me very forcibly.

When endeavouring to prove to the Dissenters and Church of England how unscriptural is the ground on

which they stand, you plead—that *we have the gifts of Spirit remaining among us*. But when you are arguing with any who hold that the Spirit's gifts ought to be possessed by us still, miraculous as they were of old, you plead—that *the gifts have ceased*.

This inconsistency I put to one who holds an eminent place among you, and his reply was as follows—"Scripture distinguishes between gifts which are signs distributed sovereignly by the Holy Ghost, wrought of God; and gifts ministered by Christ as the head, for the actual edification of the body. As a fact, these [latter] have not (I believe) ceased; however feeble they may be. The *sign-gifts*, the church's ornaments, are gone, or as good as gone."

1. This cannot stand. That the gifts of Eph. iv are of the very same class as those of 1 Cor. xii—xiv may be most clearly shown. The gifted ones are the same in both, and hold the same places in rank. Apostles stand first in both, and secondarily prophets in both lists: 1 Cor. xii, 28; Eph. iv, 11. And "teachers" follow in both. The difference of givers is only apparent. It seems, indeed, as if *Christ* alone gave in Eph. iv, and as if *the Spirit* gave in 1 Cor. xii. But the whole Trinity is noted as conjoined in the bestowal of the endowments of grace (1 Cor. xii, 4—6) just previously. The endowments in question are called indifferently "the promise of the *Father*," "the gift of *Christ*," "the gift of the *Holy Ghost*."

2. But especially in this case, the evidence that the gifts, whether attributable to the Holy Spirit or to Jesus, are the same, is most plain, from considering the time and manner of their bestowal. When was the Spirit given but when Jesus was glorified by his *ascension*? John vii, 37—39; Acts ii. This then identifies the gifts of Acts ii, and Eph. iv. "*When he (Jesus) ascended up on high . . . . he gave gifts:*" Eph. iv, 8. At Pentecost Peter says—"Ye shall receive the *gift of the Holy Ghost*." "*Jesus . . . . being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost hath poured out (ἐξέχεσθαι) this which ye now see and hear.*" And yet "They began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance:" Acts ii, 4, 33, 38. The gifts of Pentecost then may be called indifferently the gift of the Holy Ghost, or the gifts of Christ.



3. Again, as to the distinction between ordinary gifts and *sign-gifts*. First, the word is not scriptural. Secondly, it sinks the argument, even if admitted. For, on this supposition, since we have the gifts of Eph. iv, but not the gifts of 1 Cor. xii—xiv, the gifts of Eph. iv ought not to be miraculous. But the “apostles” of Eph. iv were “sign-gifted” as truly as the “apostles” of 1 Cor. xii, 28. Without these gifts they were liars, to be rejected, if they pretended to apostleship. And let me notice in passing, that the distinction sometimes set up between Eph. iv and 1 Cor. xiv, that the first speaks of *persons*, the other of *gifts*, is vain. For 1 Cor. xii speaks not only of *gifts*, but of the *gifted* as characterized by the gifts: v, 28—30. And again if Eph. iv describes the gifted as *persons*, it cannot be fulfilled to us by the legacy of the apostles’ *writings*; but *apostles in person* should be found among us still. The original inconsistency, therefore, stands in its full breadth. What but miraculous and Pentecostal gifts is Christ ever spoken of as giving?

4. But, moreover, the very distinction set up overthrows the argument. For it is said, there is a distinction between the gifts of 1 Cor. xii—xiv (which presents to us the *Spirit’s* gifts,) and the gifts of Eph. iv (which offers to our notice the gifts of *Christ*.) But if so, *then* 1 Cor. xiv *cannot be the ground of the saints’ meeting now*: for that chapter gives rules for the regulation of the *Spirit’s* gifts, and *these, it is confessed, we have not*. The plea for liberty of ministry, is rested wholly on 1 Cor. xiv; and yet the gifts, to which it gives direction, it is confessed, we have not!

What can it be but grieving to the Spirit to call the prayers, and expositions, and singing of hymns in your assemblies, *his* acts?

*Is he responsible for what is spoken?* Or what can we think of such words as these? “Glorious privilege indeed, for the *Holy Ghost himself to be the teacher in the congregation, speaking now by the mouth of one, now by the mouth of another, as seemeth good to himself*, and exercising the various powers himself has bestowed!” *God’s System of a Church*, p. 9, 6. “*I deny the right of any one [to speak] save God the Holy Ghost!*” *Ministry in the Word*, p. 1.

This is sad presumption; and must bring with it weak-

ness, and the withdrawal, in a measure, of the grieved Spirit of God. It was once true, when inspired men spake as the Holy Spirit put words into their lips. It is true no longer. You yourselves shrink from the naked consequences of your principles. Can it be that God the Spirit speaks in your meetings and acts there, and *yet is not responsible for his speaking and acting*? Can it be that he speaks, and yet not *infallibly*? No. If so, "it is *not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you*:" Matt. x, 20. Then for what is spoken the Holy Spirit is responsible, and the words are inspired and infallible. If you declare that the Spirit speaks, be consistent, and affirm (with the Quakers) that the words in your assemblies are of equal standard-value and infallibility with the Scriptures. And if the Spirit speaks, how can it be that any come away (as it is not unfrequently confessed) *unedified*? Can the Spirit speak, yet not to edification? But the whole idea is wrong. When the Spirit speaks, he speaks *with evidence*, he speaks with *authority*, and *infallibility*. Miracle attends him. *The tests of 1 Cor. xii and 1 John iv must ever suffice to prove whether he is speaking or not.* But, as I suppose you will confess, neither of these tests applies to any speaker now. Then, to declare of any speaker whatsoever, that it is the Spirit speaking, is a grievous offence against the Holy Ghost.

God spoke of old in the gifted with tongues. "With other tongues and other lips will *I* speak unto this people:" 1 Cor. xiv, 21. *The Spirit* spake of old in the gifted with tongues. "The *Spirit* gave them utterance." But tongues we have not. The Spirit spake by the *prophets*: but prophets we have not. It was promised of the Spirit, that "whatsoever he should hear, that he should *speak*, and should tell\* the things coming to pass:" John xvi, 13. But this was *new revelation*, and that you confess you have not. If he spoke, it would be with authority as imperative as the written word. "*He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches*:" Rev. ii. When Paul testified that Christ spake in him, the Corinthians *asked for proof*: and, to teach us that we may and should demand proof of such

\* *Ἀναγγελεῖ*. Spoken of personal speech as distinct from letter.

a claim, Paul promises miracle, while he also refers them to the past acts of miracle, and their own endowments as the proof: 2 Cor. xii, 27. Spiritual profit received is no proof that the Spirit speaks. Apollos profited the hearers while yet he knew only the baptism of John.

But I must notice before concluding, what I would call the Assembly Theory. It is taught by Mr. Darby and others—that the Spirit acts in two modes; the one sudden and momentary, the other permanent. That when believers are met in the assembly, they may expect that the Holy Ghost, being present then in an especial manner, may, and perhaps will, use one or other of the members, (who may have no natural qualification for the purpose,) to give forth a word of exhortation or exposition. For once in a life he might be used, suddenly acquiring, and as suddenly losing the power. And hence one or more of the tracts teach\* that every one should be waiting on the Holy Ghost, that he might feel whether he were impelled to speak or not. For the Holy Ghost himself chooses the speakers, and their speaking is his speaking.† And thus the Spirit's unhindered operation is alone true ministry:‡ and the apostacy of our dispensation is chiefly seen in the rejection of the Spirit in this matter.§

Now herein also it appears to me, that you have much mistaken the Scripture, and our present position. Even if impulse of the spirit were the rule to the gifted, it is not to us who are not so gifted. But in the very times of inspiration I can discern no such lessons as you would teach. The Church of Corinth was thrown into disorder by misuse of the Spirit's gifts. Here, then, is the very occasion to bring forth (in Paul's correction of the disorder) the mode of conducting worship. Your theory is—that the Spirit is the rightful president of every assembly of Christians, and that worship is to be left to his dictation and impulse, assured that he will preserve order, as certainly as the master of an earthly feast is able to do so,

\* *Ministry in the Word*, p. 4.

† *Choosing a Minister*, p. 5, 6. *Open Communion and Liberty of Ministry*, p. 21. *God's System of a Church*, p. 9.

‡ *Letter to Moravians*, p. 26. *Open Communion and Liberty of Ministry*, p. 8. *Christian Witness*, vol. i, pp. 8, 9, 57, 58, 154, 279, 352, &c.

§ *Thoughts on the Apostacy, &c.*, pp. 4, 7.

and will do so among his earthly guests. And your precepts are—Let the Spirit be cramped by no regulations, but direct the whole.

But are these the principles which we find presented, when we turn to the inspired correction of the disorder? On the contrary, instead of teaching them—that not they, but the impulse of the Spirit was to direct the meeting—in place of saying—The whole mischief arises from your not waiting for impulse of the Spirit, and because the flesh has taken it out of the hand of the Holy Ghost?—*he lays the whole responsibility on them.* His reproofs are to this effect: How is it that you act childishly, and without understanding? xiv, 20. Consider the effects of such want of judgment in the use of gift, both upon the *church*, and upon the *world*. He shows their conduct *unreasonable* to affect their *understanding*; and *unedifying*, to touch the grace of *love*. As to the *matter* of their addresses, there is no word of reproof, for what they spake; they spake infallibly by the Spirit's dictation, even when their gift was out of order in point of time and place. "Thou givest thanks *well*: but the other is not edified." Disorder in fact is the natural result of a heavenly gift entrusted to hands so unworthy as ours. The gifts were something as to their essence perfect, but the *use* being left in man's hand, he, and not the Spirit was responsible for that. In the practical questions arising from the subject, the motion to speak is treated of as coming from the possessor, not from the Holy Ghost. "Let the *prophets speak*." "Ye may all prophesy." We do not read—"We have sent you some prophets, that the Holy Spirit may, if he will, by his inspired utterance, confirm the matter," but, "We have sent therefore *Judas and Silas*, who shall also tell you the same things by utterance." Here was not all left free to the Spirit, but pre-arrangement, and the confirmation treated of as certain to follow, because the power to prophecy at will was lodged in the persons of Judas and Silas: Acts xv, 27. And similarly it is stated, when the plan was realized by the fact: v, 32.

*The impulse of the Spirit is not once referred to as the remedy for disorder*, but the breach of order is laid at their door, and the maintenance of it is required of *them*. If then to real inspired utterance of the Spirit, there was not superadded impulse of the Spirit as the guide to its

exercise, how much less now? If the church was not thrown on this as its safeguard then, how unwisely and unscripturally now? What is the remedy which the Apostle applies? Regulations. It is not—'Since the Spirit is a Spirit of order, he will suggest to but one at once to rise'—but a *command* is given to the *human speakers*, to speak but one at a time.

And observe the rules which are given, are not said to come from the *Spirit* as the president of the assembly, but they are "commandments of *the Lord*." And again, "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," that is, not overmastering impulse, but the judgment of the possessor was the rule of their use; and the Holy Spirit does not take the responsibility of the use.

The main principle of the chapter, the edification of the worshippers abides; and two of its deductions—that each speak "one by one," and that "all things be done decently and in order," apply now. But the special rules (except that requiring the silence of women) do not apply now, for we have not those gifts, for the regulation of which they were given. And also that authority should be exercised to preserve order, I believe to be binding still; for this was the means used by the Spirit of old, and edification and order are as dear to God, and as necessary to the saints as ever.

And now as to the sudden and momentary operation of the Holy Ghost in the assembly enabling one for the time being to speak to edification—a power which leaves no traces after the assembly is broken up. I can find no proof of any such idea in the New Testament, but rather evidence against it.

1. The Holy Ghost compares the church to a body. Now in the body each member's office and function is *abiding*. The finger never sees. The eye never hears. There are no vagrant powers in the human body. Whenever any one is called into action, its action is only of the settled character which it possessed while at rest. Let internal force be applied in any degree to an arm, yet it will only move in the directions already previously determined. And so in the church. If the Spirit of God wrought in the assembly, it was only, as far as this chapter shows, in the direction of his gifts. If he wrought on the prophet, it was in the way of prophecy, if on the

speaker with tongues, it was in the utterance of foreign languages. And again, if He uttered prophecy, it was through the prophet; if He interpreted, it was through the interpreter. We never read of the prophet sometimes (without being previously gifted) speaking with tongues, or the speaker with tongues foretelling the future.

2. It is evident that I Cor. xii—xiv recognize and treat of *abiding* gifts only, and deal with the necessary inequalities and ranks which were thereby produced. On these abiding distinctions Paul builds his whole argument, both of encouragement, and of reproof. "You are *the foot*; be not envious of the eye. God has set each of you in your place, and given you your office, as it hath pleased him." And again, to those puffed up he addresses another strain, but still his thoughts linger on the same point. "You are the eye; but be not proud: you cannot do without the foot." Quite another principle and tone of consolation must have been adopted, on the theory I am opposing. Then either the difficulty would not have arisen, for there might be no person throughout the church abidingly gifted, or if there were, the consolation would have run thus—"Fret not, the Holy Ghost may at any time use you in the assembly in the way of the highest gift. Only wait on him, and see that you be ready and obedient, should he move you."

3. Far from supposing, that these momentary actions of the Holy Ghost were either common or desirable, the Apostle directs them to *pray for abiding gifts*: xiv, 12, 13, 30; xii, 31. If there were no "*interpreter*," one already known and recognized as such, the speaker with tongues was to be silent, (and the Prophets are addressed as a known class by themselves.) Had the contrary idea been true, how would the difficulty have been met? Would the 'Brethren' have dictated such a rule? Would they not rather have said, 'The same Spirit who moved the speaker with tongues to pray in a Foreign language, will also impel one of the brethren, even if unpossessed of the gift of interpretation, and will enable him to translate for the benefit of the church?'

4. Moreover, we do not find that each went up to the assembly ignorant in what way he might be used, but each (according to the case supposed by Paul,) was, before entering the assembly, already in possession of that exercise

whereby he was to contribute to its edification. "How is it then brethren? When ye come together, every one *hath* a psalm, *hath* a doctrine." Not that the Holy Ghost might not make a sudden revelation in the midst of the assembly, but even then it was to a *Prophet*, 30.

5. And further, not every gift and energy of the Spirit was intended for the assembly. Tongues in themselves were unfitted for public worship and edification; their sphere was private individual devotion: xv, 4, 28. Women might prophesy, but not in the church: xiv, 34; Acts xxi, 9.

6. As it regards the supernatural motion and revelations of the Holy Spirit, the *individual* and the *assembly* of the believers stand upon a par. When the individual had been baptised in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit visited him in secret as well as in public, whenever he would. And so with the church; after all had been baptized in the Holy Ghost, which was the state of the Corinthian church, (xii, 13,) the Spirit revealed the mind of God when he would to them when assembled. But this is the case now neither with the assembly nor the individual.

The placing of liberty of ministry on this erroneous ground has been, I am persuaded, of much injury. Those who see that we have not the gifts of the Holy Ghost recoil from the whole doctrine, and especially from such sad statements as not a few of the tracts present.

The true ground of liberty of ministry, may, as it seems to me, be found and stated wholly apart from the assertion that we are in possession of the gifts of the Spirit.

1. The ground of prayer in the assembly.

"I exhort therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, giving of thanks, be made for all men." "I will (wish) therefore *that the men\* pray every where*, lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting:" 1 Tim. ii, 8.

2. Of ministry.

"But having† the same Spirit of faith, according as it is written, 'I believed and therefore I spoke;' *we also believe and therefore speak*:" 2 Cor. iv, 13.

\* *Τους ανδρας*. 'The male believers,' in opposition to the female (*τας γυναικας*) who are addressed in the next verse.

† *Εχουτες δε*.

## 3. To the world.

“Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went every where proclaiming the word :” Acts viii.

“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them ; and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord :” xi, 19—21.

## 4. To the church.

“Exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘to-day,’ lest any of you be hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin :” Heb. iii, 13 ; v, 12.

“Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works : Not forsaking (as the manner of some is) the assembling of ourselves together : but exhorting one another : and so much the more as ye see the day approaching :” Heb. x, 23, 24 ; 1 Thess. v, 2.

Let me add a word, as to the undue prominence given to this doctrine. It is now taught, that the recognition of this doctrine is essential to the existence of a church. “Its title [the Church of England’s] *to be called a church is denied, because it disowns and rebels against the Sovereignty of the Spirit, in the distribution of his gifts, and sets up the will of man in its stead :*” *Answers to Questions by a Clergyman*, p. 18.

Nay this is *even made a term of communion.*

“We conceive that the way of repentance . . . . . is to turn away not only from national establishments, but from every sect or party which owns any other bond of union than belief in Jesus, or *imposes any human restraint on the ministrations of the Spirit :*” *Explanation of the Views, &c.*, p. 3.

Thus then this opinion is made to range abreast with faith in Christ. Believers must acknowledge that we have now the gifts of the Spirit, and that we are to meet upon the ground of 1 Cor. xiv, or else they are to be separated from ! This is the very attitude of the Strict Baptists, which you reprobate so justly. Is liberty of ministry a truth essential to the faith of Christ ? Is it not sin to



divide the saints thereupon? Do not your own tracts bear witness against it? Is agreement of opinion on ministry, the ground of union? How far more excellent is the following passage:—

“The only Scriptural basis of communion is the requisition of unanimity upon truths *essential to discipleship*. This calls upon disciples for nothing but what *as disciples*, they must already believe:” *Answers to Questions by a Clergyman*, p. 45; also p. 8. And again—“Why then is it that Christians are gathered upon many and different grounds? . . . . . *Just because other things besides “the blood of the Lamb” have been allowed to interpose terms of communion; because something more has been made requisite for communion than that which unites to Christ, because varying judgments have been looked upon as sufficient to keep apart those who are one in Christ, and are dwelt in by one Spirit:”* *Blood of the Lamb*, p. 13.

And how does your assembly, if it takes such a basis, differ from that description of a dissenting church which you account sectarian? “A dissenting church is not really a union of believers on the *common ground of redemption by the blood of Christ, but it is a voluntary association of professed Christians, holding certain principles, by which they are distinguished from other Christians having different judgments on these points.*”

Will it bear the light of scripture, that you authorize the breaking up of church fellowship, among believers who differ as to liberty of ministry? Will it stand the day of Christ, that believers should keep aloof from Christians with whom in other respects they agree, because they do not see the scripturalness of ‘liberty of ministry?’ This is no mere fancied case.

Has not this theory made you unloving and sectarian, in aspect and feeling, towards other bodies of believers who hold it not? If any have shown sympathy and love towards believers, congregated as Independent and Baptist Christians, has he not been looked upon as strangely departing from his principles? one against whom Christians ought to be warned?

Be it granted, (and I do it most readily,) that these denominations are “utterly a fault;” yet, are they to shut up our love, or to prevent our rendering aid to believers in them? May we not worship or minister, when there is

any error? If so, I durst not worship or minister among *you*, for among you lies error, dishonoring to God, producing weakness, confusion, sectarianism. But I value you and sympathize with you as believers; and, acknowledging our oneness in Christ Jesus, feel that I can worship and minister among you, as you have permitted me, with freedom of mind, looking onward to the time when diversities of opinion shall be scattered before the cloudless brightness of the Redeemer's advent.

What then shall I say, what will you say, to such a passage as this from the pen of Mr. Darby?

"I have found where God was owned, incomparably more of his presence and blessing, than where man's arrangements have taken the place of God. There might be evils to deplore and to correct, but there was God to enjoy, because God was owned. Elsewhere I have found decent things of man, a fair shew in the flesh, but a sepulchre. *The God I found my delight in, was not there!*" *Presence of the Spirit in the Church*, p. 19. I will not trusi myself to rebuke this, as strongly as it deserves.

In conclusion I would solemnly lay upon the consciences of all believers who may read this tract, to search and inquire into this great question, which the present discussion forces on our notice:—**OUGHT NOT BELIEVERS OF THE PRESENT DAY TO BE IN POSSESSION OF THE MIRACULOUS GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST AS WELL AS THE FIRST CHRISTIANS? IF NOT, ON WHAT GROUND OF SCRIPTURE DOES THE DISTINCTION TURN? And what mean such texts as these?**

1. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: and he that believeth not shall be damned. *And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues: they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them: they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover:*" Mark xvi, 16—18. Observe, this is not the command to the apostles, but the *promise* to those who should believe in Christ through their word.

2. "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also: and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the Father:*" John xiv, 12.

3. "Follow after charity (love,) and *desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy*:" 1 Cor. xiv, 1.

4. "Wherefore brethren, *covet to prophesy*, and forbid not to speak with tongues:" ver. 39. Was this for Corinthians alone? Nay; but it is written to "*all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours*:" 1 Cor. i, 2.

It is indeed often said, that God cannot now give gifts to the church, for there is no one body that he can own as such. But even if it were so, the doctrine has an *individual* bearing: it was given to each several believer to be a fountain of water in himself (John iv, 10, 14;) a stream flowing from himself for the edification of others (John vii, 37—39;) the seal of the righteousness of faith (Gal. iii;) the good gift of our Father in heaven (Luke xi, 13;) the proof of obedience (Acts v, 32;) with many other aspects towards the individual saint.

I believe then that you are in error:—(1.) As to the nature of gift; (2.) as to our possession of it; (3.) as to the means whereby it is to be attained; (4.) and as to the use of the rules given concerning it. And as it appears to me, inconsistencies neither few nor small spring up in consequence of the original errors. The Spirit is said to work and speak among you, yet his actings, which are promised by Christ as power and miracle, are declared by you to be feeble and non-miraculous. The Spirit's gifts are possessed by every believer, yet, though in each a "manifestation," they have lain ages undiscovered, and even now are without evidence, and proof, and distinctness. The Spirit speaks, yet there is no new revelation nor infallibility among you, nor fresh prophecy, as the Savior foretold: John xvi, 13. You contend that we have the gifts, yet you do not pray for prophecy and other gifts, as the gifted were taught to do: 1 Cor. xiv, 1. You affirm that we possess the gifts, yet deny miracle, and thrust away from you any miraculous gift as evil, while you confess that of old many of the gifts were miraculous. You profess to have none but non-miraculous gifts, yet you take as the ground of the saints' meeting, a chapter which gives directions for the miraculous gifts. Not only are you intellectually in error as to the gifts, but you are morally wrong. Covet, pray for them, is the scripture teaching. You reject, disavow them. *Is not this open unbelief?* 1 Cor. xii, 31;

xiv, 1, 13, 39. And very strange it is to me, that those believers who see most clearly the utter ruin of the church, should yet affirm that we possess that glory, which was bestowed originally, but which all others confess we have lost.

In what I have written there is not, I trust, any thing contrary to the spirit of love. If there is, may our Lord forgive it, and do you! The matter is worthy of thought, search, discussion. But however it be discussed, may it be in love, without bitterness, wrath, misrepresentation, or evil surmisings!

THE END.