

# Commonwealth

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## To All Pedobaptists.

LETTER 84.  
New Church, Published the Kingdom of God and Thought Converts to Enter it and Obey its Regulations.

I SHALL now show that all the Christians in the Kingdom of God, as the Kingdom of God, are not members of that Kingdom, and in obedience to God's command. There is in the world as much prejudice in favor of popery and of baptism, and of popish and sacerdotal divinity on the subject, and in favor of church and of church principles, and such inveterate prejudices against any Kingdom at all of earth, as there is against the Kingdom of God.

None, therefore, were allowed to become members, unless they had a better righteousness than scribes and pharisees. This principle, therefore, is at war against the principle of introducing a world into the church by infant baptism. Contrary to this law it introduced thousands who are no better than scribes and pharisees. We are required daily to pray, "Let thy Kingdom come and thy will be done as in Heaven so upon earth" (Matt. vi. 10).

Church, then, was not known. Knowledge from which it derived its name is not found in God's Greek Testament. Popery invented that name 600 years later. Church principles as such were not then known. The government of God's people by a monarchy of frail and often prejudiced human beings; and the claim of a jurisdiction over his people by man would then have been repudiated as an invention of the great enemy. It would have been as soon admitted in heaven that a majority of subjects may have the entire jurisdiction and government instead of God, as in His Kingdom on earth. Republicanism, which gives the jurisdiction to the people, would in heaven be as soon admitted in heaven that a majority of subjects may have the entire jurisdiction and government instead of God, as in His Kingdom on earth.

But this lesson, impressive as it was, remains to have been forgotten by the disciples. For while the Saviour (just before his crucifixion) was distributing among them the loaves of his broken body and shed blood, and while he was with him on the table, should betray him; even then, in the midst of all this heart-rending tragedy, such was their recklessness that there was no whisper among them, which should be now gratefully remembered.

Luke, 22 chap. "And he said unto them, 'The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them, are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.'"

New, in connection with this impressive lecture, which goes on to show that behaving themselves as children, and servants, they should be honored, to sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (A sign of speech, this, indicating that they should be made the depository of Gospel truth, and should be the final arbiters of the fate of men in the great judgment day.) Christ, in order to fix his lessons still more indelibly upon their minds, proceeded to wash the feet of his disciples, as recorded by John, 13 chap. (but omitted by the other Evangelists). In conclusion he said, "If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them."

What things? 'feet washing?' No, no. He would have spoken of it as this thing. But it reads these things, viz: the various lessons of humility, which he had taken so much pains to inculcate.

When he had finished washing their feet, he said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do so, as I have done to you." But in order to do so, we must have the mind kind of subjects to operate upon—good, ambitious hearts; seeking position and pre-eminence. These, some resemblance in regard to doing, might be traced.

If Christ intended to make 'feet washing' a Church ordinance, it is not strange, that Matthew, Mark and Luke—three Evangelists who led the way in penning the Gospel under Divine inspiration—should say nothing about it—particularly as they are so minute and uniform in detailing what seems to be, minor matters!

And in the Acts of the Apostles, where baptism, and the Lord's Supper, are so frequently spoken of, why is there a dead silence in regard to 'feet washing,' if regarded as a Church ordinance?

Likewise, in all the Epistolary writings, there is no mention of it, whatever, as a Church ordinance; and 'feet washing' is only named once, and in that instance, it is classed with the other social virtues, such as hospitality, &c. If, indeed, it had been attended to, as a Church ordinance, at which all members were partakers, as in the case of the Supper; with what propriety could the widow be commended for doing that which was common to all alike?

However, if brethren want and will engage in 'feet washing,' let them do it once; then seek for Scriptural authority for its repetition, which, if they find not, they should desist!

The truth is, that from the days of Abraham, 'feet washing,' in most oriental countries, have been regarded and practiced as an act of generosity, if not of refined hospitality. This is what the widow, as well as others, should be commended for. 1 Tim. v. 10.

This position is not merely conjectural, but may be seen by the reader, who will look to the Saviour's phrase in whose house he was invited to eat; but who had furnished no water to wash his feet. Luke, vii. 44. This, at least, shows that 'feet washing' was then, still in practice, as an expression of hospitality. And if it had been observed on that occasion, would have met the approbation of the Saviour.

I could extend this article, but perhaps it is best to close by remarking that the introduction of a 'feet washing' into the Church, should always be carefully considered, because it can do so much and may be abused, by pretending strife, and unsettling fellowship. Fellowship is a matter always dear to every true follower of Christ.

## Review of 'Corrective Church Discipline.'

QUESTIONS SUGGESTED BY THE PREVIOUS DISCUSSION.

THE article which deserves our attention next commences with the question: "Suppose the aggrieved attempt to bring strictly private offenses into the church without taking 'gospel steps,' what should be done?"

Answer. It is the duty of the Pastor or other Moderator to inquire whether the Saviour's directions have been followed, and if he finds that they have not been, he should raise, as an out of order, the introduction of the case.

"If the Pastor should fail to discharge this duty, then it will be competent for any one to raise the point, and to appeal from the decision of the church; if it be in violation of the Saviour's rule. This is said of offenses exclusively that are purely personal—and not, and the object effected, 'a brother.'"

And that must be established, if established at all, by such violent interposition of God's word, such unwarlike infringements upon justice and common sense, and by attacking such fully to any church-member, pastor, or church, as is implied in the entertainment of such an offense as is not a crime against religion, or morality—deserves to be abandoned at once and forever! I but repeat what has been previously affirmed and proved; viz: that Prof. Mello's 'private offenses,' based upon Mat. xviii. 15, cannot be sustained without first torturing the words of Christ—that, if Mat. xviii. 15 does not imply a violation of religion or morality, there is no word in the Greek language of the New Testament that does. For the correctness of this criticism, I appeal to Greek scholars and writers the world over. As to 'morality' the reader will recollect that it is nothing distinct from religion—that is, a sin against morality is necessarily a sin against religion.

In the above extract the same absurdity, as often heretofore noticed, of a brother's being offended with another for an act which does not violate religion, or morality, greets us again. The error is corrected by using the terms, 'religion,' 'morality,' &c.; but the excess which is offered for discussion, is to be found in the fact, that the chief error, in Prof. Mello's series, is connected with the use of these terms. His error runs through every article that has been written, and of course, deserves to be pointed out.

As advice would be cheap, I will venture to offer a little advice. To the church-member of so little discrimination, as to render a charge against a brother for morality, simply religion, or morality, the following advice:—I desire, sir, let you lay yourself justly

dom of the heavens is also compared to treasure in a field; concealed for a time, but when discovered, it leads the discoverer to invest his all in the purchase of the field. (a) It is also compared to a pearl of great value, which, when found, he sells all he has in order to purchase it. (b) It is also compared to a net which gathers some bad with the good. (c) A scribe instructed into the Kingdom of the heavens bringeth forth out of his treasure new laws and old. (d) He taketh from the Old Testament and the New.

Giving to Peter is the same of all the subject of the Kingdom, the keys of that Kingdom, is virtually committing to them the power of examining and receiving members and of putting out improper persons. Mat. xvi. 19. In reply to an inquiry who is the greatest in the Kingdom of the Heavens?—Mat. xviii. 1. Christ says: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, I can not enter into the Kingdom of the heavens." (v. 3) Whoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the Kingdom of the heavens. (v. 4) "There are those who have made themselves counselors for the sake of the Kingdom of the heavens." Knowing their own strong propensities and danger; in order to save themselves from disgracing that Kingdom, they have disabled themselves, (chap. xix. 12. A rich and worldly man will hardly enter into the Kingdom of the heavens; v. 23.

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of the heavens is also compared to treasure in a field; concealed for a time, but when discovered, it leads the discoverer to invest his all in the purchase of the field. (a) It is also compared to a pearl of great value, which, when found, he sells all he has in order to purchase it. (b) It is also compared to a net which gathers some bad with the good. (c) A scribe instructed into the Kingdom of the heavens bringeth forth out of his treasure new laws and old. (d) He taketh from the Old Testament and the New.

Giving to Peter is the same of all the subject of the Kingdom, the keys of that Kingdom, is virtually committing to them the power of examining and receiving members and of putting out improper persons. Mat. xvi. 19. In reply to an inquiry who is the greatest in the Kingdom of the Heavens?—Mat. xviii. 1. Christ says: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, I can not enter into the Kingdom of the heavens." (v. 3) Whoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the Kingdom of the heavens. (v. 4) "There are those who have made themselves counselors for the sake of the Kingdom of the heavens." Knowing their own strong propensities and danger; in order to save themselves from disgracing that Kingdom, they have disabled themselves, (chap. xix. 12. A rich and worldly man will hardly enter into the Kingdom of the heavens; v. 23.

In chap. xi. 1, the Kingdom of the heavens is compared to a man hiring laborers at all hours in the day, even at the eleventh hour; and then, because he was good, he rewarded them all alike. In this comparison he shows that God employs laborers in this Kingdom, and that God's reward to all the members of his Kingdom are the 'rewards of grace; not of debt. God's grace and his capacity—not the merits of the laborers and subjects—are the measure of their rewards in eternity.

So Jesus says to the Scribes and Pharisees, all fall of self-righteousness and hardness of heart as they were. "The publicans and harlots (prophets) lead the way into the Kingdom of God sooner than ye." Chap. xxi. 31. He also says to the wicked Jews: "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a race (gentiles) who will bring forth the fruits of it. Yer. 43.

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ORDINATIONS & RESOLUTIONS. Ministers and Deacons... The CHURCH is not to be a passive... The CHURCH is not to be a passive...

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Medical. JONAS WHITCOMB'S REMEDY. Asthma. MRS. S. A. ALLEN'S WORLD'S HAIR RESTORATIVE... MRS. S. A. ALLEN'S STYLIAMONUM... MRS. S. A. ALLEN'S WINDLOW... MRS. S. A. ALLEN'S CHILDREN'S REMEDY...

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Medical. CANCERS CAN BE CURED. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN... THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A NET CAST INTO THE SEA... THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A NET CAST INTO THE SEA... THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A NET CAST INTO THE SEA...

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