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Author: Orson Pratt

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE KINGDOM OF GOD, PART 1 ***

The Kingdom of God

Part 1.

BY ORSON PRATT

ONE OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The kingdom of God is an order of government established by divine authority. It is the only legal government that can exist in any part of the universe. All other governments are illegal and unauthorized. God, having made all beings and worlds, has the supreme right to govern them by his own laws, and by officers of his own appointment. Any people attempting to govern themselves by laws of their own making, and by officers of their own appointment, are in direct rebellion against the kingdom of God. The antediluvians were overthrown by a flood, because they rejected the government of the Almighty, and instituted their own governments in its stead. Noah and his family were the only loyal and obedient subjects to the legal power: they alone were saved. The universal desolation and utter abolishment of all the unauthorized man-made governments of the old world, should have been an everlasting warning to all future generations to avoid the same rebellion, and to establish no governments on the earth of human origin. But, alas! the posterity of Noah soon revolted from the only legal, rightful power, and set up for themselves forms of governments of their own inventions. The rebellion soon became so general, that all the inhabitants of the earth, except Melchizedek, Abraham, Lot, and a very few others, engaged themselves in it, supporting and upholding kings and other officers in their usurped authority, and suffering themselves to be governed by human laws, instead of revealed laws from God. From that time until the present, empires, kingdoms, principalities, republics, and numerous other corrupt, illegal, unauthorized powers, have multiplied themselves in the four quarters of the globe. At various times, during the last four thousand years, God has asserted his rights, and endeavoured to establish his own authority, his own laws, and his own government among the children of men. But so great was the opposition manifested by those illegal, rebellious powers, that his government while on earth was exceedingly limited in numbers. The vast majority of mankind made war against it—overcame, killed, and destroyed its officers and loyal subjects, until not a vestige of it was left remaining on the earth. For seventeen hundred years the nations upon the eastern hemisphere have been entirely destitute of the "*kingdom of God*"—entirely destitute of a true and legal government—entirely destitute of officers legally authorized to rule and govern. All the emperors, kings, princes, presidents, lords, nobles, and rulers, during that long night of darkness, have acted without authority. Not one of them was called or anointed a king or a prince by the God of heaven—not one of them received his office or appointment by him—not one of them has received revelations or laws from him—not one of them has received any communication whatsoever from the rightful sovereign, the Great King. Their authority is all assumed—it originated in man. Their laws are not from the Great Lawgiver, but the productions of their own false governments. Their very foundations were laid in rebellion, and the whole superstructure, from first to last, is a heterogeneous mass of discordant elements, in direct opposition to the kingdom of God, which is the only true government which should be recognized on earth or in heaven.

The kingdom of God is a theocracy. And as it is the only form of government which will redeem and save mankind, it is necessary that every soul should be rightly and thoroughly instructed in regard to its nature and general characteristics. The beauty, glory, power, wisdom, and order of the kingdom of God may be more fully understood by a careful examination of the following subjects.

First.—*The nature and character of the King.*

Second.—*The character and requisite qualifications of the subordinate officers.*

Third.—*The nature and character of the laws of adoption, or the invariable rule by which aliens are admitted into the kingdom as citizens.*

Fourth.—*The nature and character of the laws given for the government of all adopted citizens.*

Fifth.—*The character, disposition, and qualifications necessary for every citizen to possess.*

Sixth.—*The rights, privileges, and blessings enjoyed by the subjects in this life.*

Seventh.—*The rights, privileges, and blessings promised to the faithful, obedient subjects in a future life.*

Dear reader, your future well-being in all time to come, depends upon your rightly understanding these seven subjects. Read, therefore, with serious attention, and your mind shall be opened to see things that you never saw before; things too of infinite importance, without which you can in no wise be saved. Let us begin by examining—

First.—*The nature and character of the King.* God is the King. In him exists all legal authority. He alone has the right of originating a system of government on the earth. He claims this right by virtue of his having made man and the earth he inhabits. Man, therefore, is indebted to God for his own formation and for the formation of the planet on which he dwells. He also claims the right of establishing his government among men, by virtue of his superior wisdom and power. If God had sufficient wisdom and power to construct such a beautiful world as this, with all the infinite varieties of vegetables and animals appended to it; if he could form such an intricate and complicated piece of machinery as the human tabernacle as a dwelling-place for the human spirit, then we must admit that his wisdom and power are immeasurably greater than that of man, and hence he is qualified to reign as king. An order of government, established by such an all-wise, powerful being, must be good and perfect, and must be calculated to promote the permanent peace, happiness, and well-being of all his subjects. The Great King is a very amiable being, full of benevolence and goodness, and never turns any person away empty, that comes requesting a favor which he sees would be for his benefit.

The King occasionally visited his subjects in ancient times, and once tarried with them for several years; but he received such cruel abuse from many of the people that he left them, and went to some other part of his dominions. Where the King is gone the people cannot tell. They have not heard one word from him for upwards of seventeen hundred years. He has been absent so long, that some of the people have doubted even his existence. They have argued that if he did exist, that some one would very likely have heard something from him in the course of so many centuries. Many millions however have some idea that he exists, and are constantly sending all kinds of petitions to him; but for some reason he sends no word back. No messengers are dispatched to the petitioners to give them any counsel upon any subject. It has become a very popular thing to send daily petitions to the King, and to appropriate one day out of seven for the especial purpose of sending in their petitions. The same petitions are frequently sent a great number of times. It is very unpopular however for any one to expect the King to make any reply to any petitions sent in. Any one pretending to have received a reply would be counted a base impostor; for, say they, the King has spoken to no one for the last seventeen hundred years; no one has heard from him since he conversed with his servant John on the Isle of Patmos. The King conversed very freely with his subjects in the early and middle ages; and some think it very strange that he has been silent so long. They have expended millions in building many costly and magnificent churches in honor of his name; but yet he has not deigned to grace one of them with a visit, neither has he condescended to send any tidings to them by a messenger or otherwise. He has not informed them whether he was pleased or displeased with their splendid edifices. His profound silence for so many centuries has caused many to think that he was, for some reason, very angry with the people; yet they could not see why he should be angry when the people were doing so much to honor him—when they were expending millions to hire learned men to preach and write in such an eloquent manner about him.

Reader, can you tell why the King should be so distant? Why he holds no communication with any of the people? Why he has not sent one sentence of consolation or counsel to them? Why he has suffered some fifteen thousand millions of the human race to fall into their graves, in the latter ages, without condescending to speak one word to any of them? There must be some cause for all this. There must be something wrong. The King never formerly served his people in this manner; and when he went away, he left word that if any of his people lacked wisdom or knowledge on any subject, they should send in their petition to him, and he would liberally send them the requisite information.

I will now tell you the reason why the King has kept silence so long. It is because he has had no subjects to converse with; all have turned away from him and advocated other governments as being the rightful and legal authority. They killed off and utterly destroyed every true subject of his kingdom, and left not a vestige of it upon the earth; and, to add to their guilt and wickedness, they have introduced idolatry in its worst forms, and utterly turned away from the true and living God. They have introduced a "*God without BODY, PARTS or PASSIONS.*" They have had the audacity to call this newly-invented god by the same name as the God of the ancient Saints, although there is not the least resemblance between them. Indeed there could be no resemblance between them; for a bodiless god, without "*parts or passions,*" could resemble nothing in heaven, on earth, or in hell. This imaginary modern god has become exceedingly popular. It is to him that a vast number of churches have been erected. It is not to the true and living God that they send forth petitions, but it is to this imaginary being. No wonder that they have received no communication from him! no wonder he has not honored them with a visit. As he has no "*PARTS,*" he could neither be felt nor seen if he should visit them. Such a being could not speak, for he has no "*parts*" to speak with.

There have been various species of idolatry in different ages of the world. The sun, moon, stars, beasts, crocodiles, frightful serpents, images of wood, of stone, and of brass, have been erected into gods, and worshipped by innumerable multitudes. But the system of idolatry, invented by modern christianity, far surpasses in absurdity anything that we have ever heard of. One of the celebrated worshippers of this newly-discovered god, in his "*Physical Theory of Another Life,*" says, "*A disembodied spirit, or, we should rather say, an unembodied spirit, or sheer mind, is NO WHERE. Place is a relation belonging to extension; and extension is a property of matter: but that which is wholly abstracted from matter, and in speaking of which we deny that it has any property in common therewith, can in itself be subject to none of its conditions; and we might as well say of a pure spirit that it is hard, heavy, or red, or that it is a cubic foot in*

dimensions, as say that it is *here* or *there*. It is only in a popular and improper sense that any such affirmation is made concerning the Infinite Spirit, or that we speak of God as *every where* present. God is in every place in a sense, altogether incomprehensible by finite minds, inasmuch as his relation to space and extension is peculiar to infinitude. Using the terms as we use them of ourselves, God is not *here* or *there*, any more than he exists *now* and *then*." This species of idolatry, according to the foregoing quotations, approaches so near to Atheism, that no one can tell the difference. Reader, can you see the difference? A god "*without a body!*" A god "*without parts!*" A god that cannot be "*here or there!*" A god that is "NO WHERE!" A god that cannot exist "NOW and THEN!" A god that exists in NO TIME! A god that has no *extension*—no "*parts*"—no conceivable relation to *time* or *space!* O, blush for modern christianity!—a pious name for Atheism! Some perhaps may think that I have not sufficient charity. But why should I have charity for a god that has no "*parts*"—no relation to space? Let him first have charity for himself. But this would be impossible; for he is a god "*without passions.*" He can have no charity nor love for himself nor any one else. There is no danger of offending him; for a passionless god is not capable of anger. One of the persons of this imaginary god is said to have been crucified. But this must be a sad mistake; for it would be impossible to crucify a portion of something that had no "*parts.*" The reason, then, why the people have not received any word from the Great King, is because they have petitioned the wrong god. Would you expect her majesty, the queen of England, to answer your petition if it were directed to some African prince? Would you expect the God of heaven to answer a petition that was addressed to a Hindoo god? If, then, your petitions are addressed to the bodiless, passionless god of modern christianity, you must not be surprised if the true God does not pay any attention to it. You need not expect that the true God will make any reply to petitions offered to any other being.

The true God exists both in time and in space, and has as much relation to them as man or any other being. He has extension, and form, and dimensions, as well as man. He occupies space; has a body, parts, and passions; can go from place to place—can eat, drink, and talk, as well as man. Man resembles him in the features and form of his body, and he does not differ materially in size. When he has been seen among men, he has been pronounced, even by the wicked, as one of their own species. So much did he look like man, that some supposed him to be the carpenter's son. Like man, He had a Father; and he was "*the express image of the person of the Father.*" The two persons were as much alike in form, in size, and in every other respect as fathers and sons are of the human race; indeed, the human race are "*his offspring,*" made in his likeness and image, not after his moral image, but after the image of his person. There is no such thing as moral image. Such an image cannot exist. Morality is a property of some being or substance. A property without a substance or being to which it appertains is inconceivable. A property can never have figure, shape, or image of any kind. Hence, a moral image never had an existence except in the brains of modern idolators.

The Godhead consists of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father is a material being. The substance of which he is composed is wholly material. It is a substance widely different in some respects from the various substances with which we are more immediately acquainted. In other respects it is precisely like all other materials. The substance of his person occupies space the same as other matter. It has solidity, length, breadth, and thickness, like all other matter. The elementary materials of his body are not susceptible of occupying, at the same time, the same identical space with other matter. The substance of his person, like other matter, cannot be in two places at the same instant. It also requires *time* for him to transport himself from place to place. It matters not how great the velocity of his movements, *time* is an essential ingredient to all motion, whether rapid or slow. It differs from other matter in the superiority of its powers, being intelligent, all-wise, and possessing the power of self-motion to a far greater extent than the coarser materials of nature. "God is a *spirit.*" But that does not make him an immaterial being—a being that has no properties in common with matter. The expression "*an immaterial being,*" is a contradiction in terms. Immateriality is only another name for nothing. It is the negative of all existence. A "*spirit*" is as much *matter* as oxygen or hydrogen. It has many properties in common with all other matter. Chemists have discovered between fifty and sixty kinds of matter; and each kind has some properties in common with all other matter, and some properties peculiar to itself which the others do not inherit. Now, no chemist, in classifying his substances, would presume to say, This substance is material, but that one is immaterial, because it differs in some respects from the first. He would call them all material, though they in some respect differed widely. So the substance called spirit is material, though it differs in a remarkable degree from other substances. It is only the addition of another element of a more powerful nature than any yet discovered. He is not a being "*without parts,*" as modern idolators teach; for every whole is made up of parts. The whole person of the Father consists of innumerable parts; and each part is so situated as to bear certain relations of distance to every other part. There must also be, to a certain degree, a freedom of motion among these parts, which is an essential condition of the movement of his limbs, without which he could only move as a whole.

All the foregoing statements in relation to the person of the Father, are equally applicable to the person of the Son.

The Holy Spirit being one part of the Godhead, is also a material substance, of the same nature and properties in many respects, as the spirits of the Father and Son. It exists in vast immeasurable quantities in connexion with all material worlds. This is called God in the scriptures, as well as the Father and Son. God the Father and God the Son cannot be everywhere present; indeed they cannot be even in two places at the same instant; but God the Holy Spirit is omnipresent—it extends through all space, intermingling with all other matter, yet no one atom of the Holy Spirit can be in two places at the same instant, which in all cases is an absolute impossibility. It must exist in inexhaustible quantities, which is the only possible way for any substance to be omnipresent. All the innumerable phenomena of universal nature are produced in their origin by the actual presence of this intelligent, all-wise, and all-powerful material substance called the Holy Spirit. It is the most active matter in the universe, producing all its operations according to fixed definite laws enacted by itself, in conjunction with the Father and Son. What are called the laws of nature are nothing more nor less than the fixed method by which this spiritual matter operates. Each atom of the Holy Spirit is intelligent, and like all other matter has solidity, form, and size, and occupies space. Two atoms of this Spirit cannot occupy the same space at the same time, neither can one atom, as before stated, occupy two separate spaces, at the same time. In all these respects it does not differ in the least from all other matter. Its distinguishing characteristics from other matter are its almighty powers and infinite wisdom, and many other glorious attributes which other materials do not possess. If several of the atoms of this Spirit should unite themselves together into the form of a person, then this person of the Holy Spirit would be subject to the same necessity as the two other persons of the Godhead, that is, it could not be everywhere present. No finite number of atoms can be omnipresent; an infinite number

of atoms is requisite to be *everywhere* in infinite space. Two persons receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, do not each receive at the same time the same identical particles, though they each receive a substance exactly similar in kind. It would be as impossible for each to receive the same identical atoms at the same instant, as it would be for two men at the same time to drink the same identical pint of water. It is these three all-powerful substances that stand at the head of all legal government. All governments not established by these three will be ere long overthrown. They hold the supreme authority and power in heaven, and in the heaven of heavens, and throughout the wide expanse of universal nature. All principalities, powers, and kingdoms, whether in heaven or on earth, must yield to be instructed and controlled by the supreme power, or they cannot stand.

Second.—*The character and requisite qualifications of the subordinate officers in the kingdom of God* are now to be considered. As the persons of the Father and Son cannot be every where present, it is therefore impossible for them to attend in *person* to all the multiplied affairs of government among intelligent beings; therefore, God, in establishing a government among such beings, has always called persons of their own number to officiate in his name. The character of these persons, previously to their calling and appointment, has generally been that of honesty and sincerity; otherwise they have not differed materially from other men.

The various officers, called of God to administer the affairs of his government, are apostles, prophets, bishops, evangelists, elders, pastors, teachers, and deacons. God has only one way of calling these different officers, and that is by *new revelation*. No person was ever authorized to act in the name of the Lord, unless called by *new revelation*. Paul says (Heb. v. 4 [ch. 5]), "*No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron.*" Among the vast number of national governments now upon the earth, where is there one that even professes to be the kingdom of God, or that its officers were called of God as was Aaron? Human authority and human calling are the only powers which any nation professes to have. But there are certain petty governments, called churches, organized within these national governments, which claim divine authority, and consider their officers authorized to act in the name of the Lord. But the great question is, Have any of them been called as Aaron was? By *new revelation* Aaron was called. By *new revelation* the duties of his calling were made known. Have any of the Roman Catholic or Protestant officers been called by *new revelation*? Has God said one word to any of them? Do they not, with very few exceptions, declare that "There is no later revelation than the *New Testament*?" If the revelations contained in the New Testament are the last ones given, then the persons to whom they were given, were the last ones called of God. When *new revelation* ceases to be given, officers cease to be called of God. When the calling of officers cease, the kingdom of God ceases to be perpetuated upon the earth. Nothing is more certain than that the church of God ceased to exist on the earth when new revelation ceased to be given. All the modern christian churches, who deny new revelation, have no more authority to preach, baptize, or administer any other ordinance of the gospel than the idolatrous Hindoos have; indeed all their administrations are worse than in vain—they are a solemn mockery in the sight of God. It is a grievous sin in the sight of God for any man to presume to baptize, unless God has authorized him by new revelation to baptize in his name. Saul, the king of Israel, lost his kingdom because he assumed the authority that did not belong to him (I Sam. xiii. 8-15.) Another king of Israel was smote with leprosy until the day of his death, because he attempted to administer an ordinance without being called and authorized (2 Chron. xxvi. 16-22.) So all the baptisms and sacraments administered by modern christian churches who have done away new revelation, are an abomination in the sight of God. All persons who shall suffer themselves to be baptized, or partake of these ordinances through the administration of these illegal unauthorized persons, after having been duly warned of the evil thereof, will bring themselves under great condemnation before God, and unless they repent of that sin they can in no wise be saved. The twelve apostles were called by new revelation, but that did not authorize Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, or any other person. Each one had to receive a separate call by new revelation for himself. No one could lawfully act under a commission given to some other person. All the commissions recorded in the New Testament were given to individuals then living, and not to any individuals who should live in some future age. If any person would have authority, let them obtain a new commission from God, as his servants always did in ancient times, and if they officiate without such new commission, then know assuredly that they are impostors.

The subordinate officers in the kingdom of God must not only be called of God, but qualified to act in their respective offices. The first qualification absolutely necessary for every officer in the kingdom is, *the gift of the Holy Spirit*. This is the most important qualification of all others. No man, without this qualification, can attain to an office in the kingdom of God; it matters not how great his other attainments are; though he has studied the scriptures from a child, and committed them all to memory—though he has carefully learned the original languages in which they were written—though he has made himself master of all sciences—grasped with a comprehensive mind all the arguments set forth in theological works, yet none of these attainments will qualify him for even the least office in the kingdom of God. The unlearned youth, who had not the knowledge of the English alphabet, if he were called of God, and qualified by the gift of the Holy Spirit, would have more power and authority, and could do more towards saving men, than all the theologians and doctors of divinity that the world affords, unless they also were called of God, and endowed with the gift of the Holy Ghost. No other qualifications whatsoever can be substituted in the stead of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the great distinguishing characteristic between the officers of the kingdom of God and impostors. Every officer sent of God has a qualification that no impostor ever had or ever can have.

The first officers placed in the kingdom of God are apostles. Let us enquire how in ancient times this office was conferred on man. Jesus said to his ancient apostles (John xv. 16) "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." Paul informs us (Heb. iii. 1) that Jesus himself was an apostle. Holding the office himself, he had the most perfect right to confer the same calling upon others; hence he first *chose* them, and then "*ordained*" them; after this he sent them forth to preach (Matthew x.) "and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans, enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." Although these apostles were chosen, ordained, and sent forth on a particular mission to the cities of Israel, with power to work mighty miracles, yet there was an essential qualification which they had not yet received. They had received power sufficient to qualify them to preach that the "*kingdom of heaven was at hand.*" But they had not yet received power sufficient to fully organize and build up that kingdom on the earth. They lacked one very important qualification, without which they could never establish the

kingdom which they had already predicted "*was at hand*." What was this further qualification which these apostles had not yet received? It was the gift of the Holy Ghost, or the other Comforter which Jesus promised them. It is very remarkable that these apostles should have such great power, and yet not have the Holy Ghost. But hear what the scripture saith (John vii. 37, 38, 39) "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood, and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: *for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified*.)" Mark the expression, "*the Holy Ghost was not yet given*." This agrees with another saying of Jesus to his apostles (John xvi. 7), "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you." Jesus calls this Comforter the Holy Ghost (John xiv. 26). After the resurrection of Jesus, and as he was about to be taken up into heaven, he said to his apostles (Luke xxiv. 49), "Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you" (alluding to the Comforter or the Holy Ghost, which he promised several days before should be sent unto them from the Father after his glorification); "but," said he, "tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Thus you see, dear reader, that these apostles had power to "heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils," although the Holy Ghost was not yet given to them. A certain power was yet lacking. Jesus had commanded them saying, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." But he would not suffer them to commence this mission until the promise of the Father—the Holy Ghost—was given them. They already had power to work mighty miracles, but had not the power to build up the kingdom of God. This power they were to tarry for in Jerusalem, and when they should receive it, they were then to commence the duties of their mission, first, in the city of Jerusalem, and afterwards extend their labours to all nations. The power to work miracles is entirely a different thing from the power to build up the kingdom of God; the latter power, however, always includes the former, but the former power does not always include the latter.

We now ask, Where is there a man among all the churches of modern times, who has been called to the office of an apostle by *new revelation*? Where is there a man among all the millions of modern christians who has been ordained to the office of an apostle, under the hands of an apostle, as the Twelve were anciently? Where is there a man to be found among all the Catholics or Protestants who has been endowed with even the power of working miracles, to say nothing of the still greater power communicated in the gift of the Holy Ghost? If the apostles in ancient days could not build up the kingdom of God, without being endowed with these two degrees of power, surely no one since their day could be authorized to build the church of God with any less qualification.

One of the important duties required of an apostle is to ADMINISTER THE SPIRIT. In 2 Cor. iii 6, we read that both Paul and Timothy were made "*able ministers*" "*of the Spirit*." The ordinance through which the Spirit is ministered is THE LAYING ON OF HANDS. (Acts viii. and xix. Heb. vi.) To the apostles were entrusted three very important administrations for the salvation of man:—

First.—*The ministration of the word.*

Second.—*The ministration of the baptism of water.*

And Third.—*The ministration of the baptism of the Spirit.*

While Jesus was with his apostles in person, they had power to minister the *word* and *water*, but not the *Spirit*, for they themselves had not yet been baptized with the Spirit; and they could not administer that which they were not in possession of. It was necessary that they should first receive the gift themselves, before they could confer it upon others. Hence we can perceive the propriety of Jesus commanding them to wait "at Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high;" for without this additional power they could neither save themselves nor others. Many persons have flattered themselves, that they can be saved without the assistance of a minister sent of God. But this is a vain delusive hope; for Jesus hath expressly said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he *cannot* enter the kingdom of God." Now as no man can be saved out of the kingdom, it is necessary that he should be "born" into the kingdom; and this would be impossible without an administrator sent of God; for the birth or baptism of water, and the birth or baptism of the Spirit, require some one legally authorized to officiate in behalf of the candidate.

Reader, have you ever received the Holy Ghost through the laying on of the hands of one sent of God? If not, you are not yet born of the spirit. You are not yet a child of the kingdom. Know assuredly, that unless you find some man who has been sent by the command of God as was Aaron, and get him to remit your sins through your faith, repentance, and baptism, and have him to minister to you the Holy Ghost, as did the ancient apostles—you need not flatter yourself that you can be saved. Do not deceive yourself upon this all-important subject. Do not suffer any man to baptize or administer unto you unless God has spoken unto him by the voice of his servants, and authorized him to minister in his name. Do you enquire how you are to know an authorized man of God from one who has no authority? I will tell you how to discern the difference. A true servant of God will never teach a false doctrine. He will never deny new revelation. He never will tell you that the canon of scripture is full, or that the New Testament is the last revelation ever intended to be given to man. He never will tell you, that miraculous gifts are no longer necessary in the church of God. He never will tell you, that inspired apostles, prophets, and other officers are not requisite in the church now. He never will tell you that the "*ministration of the spirit*" by "the laying on of hands," is done away by God's appointment. But he will tell you, that if you will receive his message, and be baptized by one having authority, that your "*sins shall be remitted*," and that you shall be filled with the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands; and that you shall know, by the teachings thereof, that his doctrine is true and of God. In this respect he will differ from all impostors; for an impostor never had power to "*minister this spirit*." An impostor dare not promise you that you shall be filled with the Holy Ghost by the laying on of his hands; for he knows that such a promise would not be fulfilled—he knows that you would detect him to be a false teacher by complying with his conditions, and failing to receive his promise. An impostor, knowing that he has no power to give the Holy Ghost as the ancient apostles had, will endeavour to persuade you that such power is not necessary now. He knows very well, that if he cannot get the people to believe that such power is not necessary in these days, that his own unauthorized pretensions will be at once detected.

An impostor, like Simon Magus, may deceive ignorant people by witchcraft and sorcery, but he can never deceive

them by pretending to give the Holy Ghost through prayer and laying on of hands. This is a power that none but a true minister of God possesses; it cannot be counterfeited by the devil. The devil can counterfeit the miracles of Christ, but he cannot counterfeit the gift of the Holy Ghost. None but the lawful ministers of Christ can minister the spirit. This then is an infallible sign by which to distinguish true apostles from false ones. But does this infallible sign exist either among the Papists or Protestants? Can any of their ministers give the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands? If not, they are not the church of God, and their ministers are unauthorized—all their administrations are illegal and an abomination in the sight of God—salvation is not among them. Not one person among all their societies has been legally baptized. Reader, are you a member of any of these societies? if so, haste to withdraw yourself from them, that you partake not of their plagues, *for the hour of their judgment is come*. If you would be saved, seek after the apostles and prophets of the kingdom of God, and receive their administrations, and you shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, and obtain eternal life.

15,

Wilton Street

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October

31, 1848

R. JAMES, PRINTER, 39 n. SOUTH CASTLE STREET, LIVERPOOL.

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