

Old Theology Quarterly

No. 31— A Helping Hand
for Bible Students

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TRACTS

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Dear Brethren and Sisters,

Members and Officers of the Church of my Association:

The Lord has of late been teaching me some wonderful things out of His Word, whereof I am glad. The Bible has become a new book to me, so widely have the eyes of my understanding been opened. God is now my Father, Christ my Redeemer, and all believers my brethren, in a sense never before appreciated.

I would not have you understand that I saw a vision or had a special revelation. I merely have God's Word, "written aforetime for our learning;" but God has recently made it clearer to my understanding through some of His servants. Nor do these servants claim special inspirations or revelations, but merely that God's due time has now come to unseal and make known His glorious plan, wisely kept secret in the past, as the Scriptures themselves declare.—Dan. 12:9.

Of these blessed things I might mention a few very briefly: I find that the Scriptures do not teach the eternal torment of all except the Saints. I there find that the full penalty of willful sin against clear knowledge will, in the language of the Apostle, be "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." But still better, if possible, I find that, while so many of our race (indeed by far the majority) have died in total or partial ignorance of God and His offer of life everlasting through Christ, God has graciously provided that during the Millennial age all such, "all the families of the earth," shall be blessed with the needed knowledge, and granted opportunity for obedience unto eternal life; and, further, I find its teachings to be that we, the Gospel Church, as joint heirs with Christ our Lord, are to be God's agents in bestowing that great

ennial blessing; and, finally, it appears that this time of blessing for which God's people have so long prayed, saying, "Thy kingdom, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," is very near at hand, and even now wheat and tares are being separated, and soon at a time of trouble will overthrow existing institutions and usher Christ's Kingdom of peace and equity.

I will be glad to furnish the Scriptural evidences of these things to any who desire to search the Word and to prove whether these things be so.

But now, dear friends, comes an unpleasant duty. I find that many of these gems of truth are in direct conflict with our views as held and taught and confessed in our denominational literature, and hence, in honesty to you and myself, I must withdraw from membership with you in this church. To remain would be to misrepresent your views and to have you misrepresent my views;—the doctrine of the eternal torment of nine-tenths of our race being now in my judgment horrible; indeed a blasphemy against the God of love, whose Word, when understood, teaches quite the contrary. Since joining I have tried faithfully to keep my engagements with you as a fellow member of this Church, and have learned to love some of you very dearly, some for social qualities and some for saintliness, Christlikeness. It is, therefore, with pain that I announce to you my withdrawal, and I owe you this explanation. Let me assure you that it is not because my love is less than formerly, for, by God's grace, I believe it is expanding toward Him and His, and, sympathetically, toward all our race. This action, therefore, is not to be understood as a withdrawal from the Church of Christ, whose "names are written in heaven," but merely a withdrawal from our unauthorized human organization whose names are written on earth.

I withdraw in order that I may be more free in my conscience toward God and man, and that I may more fully fellowship all who are the Lord's people, not only such in this congregation and denomination, but in all others as well.

I ask no letter of dismissal, for I could not hope to be better suited elsewhere. So far as I am concerned, I wish to remove every barrier between myself and fellow pilgrims. So then to all of you who are in Christ Jesus—members of His body—I still am a fellow member, a branch in the true vine (Christ) whom nothing can separate from the love of God in Christ my Lord.—John 15:5; Rom. 8: 38, 39.

Faithfully, Yours in Christ,