

# PRIESTHOOD OF LAITY

by A.R. Ryder

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*Ryder's theological treatment of the doctrine that all believers possess priestly access to God, affirming the Protestant principle of universal priesthood and the dignity and responsibility of lay believers in Christian worship and service.*

14 Chapters

## Table of Contents

1. 000 - Ryder - Priesthood of the Laity
2. A 00 - Introduction
3. A 01 - Two Characteristics of the Age
4. A 02 - What is a Layman
5. A 03 - The Great Commission
6. A 04 - The Commission in Exercise
7. A 05 - Church Officers
8. A 06 - General Priesthood All Christians
9. A 07 - What is a Priest
10. A 08 - Priesthood and Sacrifice
11. A 09 - The Catena of Proof
12. A 10 - Practical Advantages
13. A 11 - Conclusion
14. A 12 - INDEX

## 000 - Ryder - Priesthood of the Laity

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Ryder - Priesthood of the Laity: Historically and Critically considered The Priesthood of the Laity:

Historically and Critically Considered. By the Rev. A. R. Ryder, B.D.,

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E.G. MCMXI Donnellan Lectures 1907-1908

105 5 Printed By Hazel, Watson & Viney, Ltd., London and Aylesbury. TO THE PROVOST OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, TO THE LAITY OF THE CHURCH OF IRELAND, TO THE PILOTS WHO WEATHERED THE STORM OF DISESTABLISHMENT, AS A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEFINITION OF THE PRINCIPLES WHICH MAY HAVE ANIMATED THEM, WITH THANKFULNESS FOR THE PAST AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE, THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED.

CONTENTS Introduction xix I. Two Characteristics of the Age. 3 II. What is a Layman? 31 III. The Great Commission 57 IV. The Commission in Exercise 89 V. Church Officers 119 VI. The General Priesthood of All Christians in the Apocalypse 143 VII. What is a Priest? 167 VIII. Priesthood and Sacrifice 191 IX. The Catena of Proof... 205 X. Practical Advantages... 233 XI. Conclusion 267

INDEX. 281

PREFACE THE leading thought in this volume is largely occupying the minds of men at the present day. This may be seen from the following sentences in the Report of the Conference of Bishops of the Anglican Communion held at Lambeth in July 1908, issued since these lectures were delivered. The Church needs to realise in new ways the inherent priesthood of the Christian people." "At the heart of the conception of the Church which Christ has taught us is the Spirit of Service." "The Spirit of Service is awake." "The field of service is the world." "It is a significant fact, that when we review the work of the Conference and ask what aspect or idea of the Church has been predominant in our deliberations, we find that through them all in the many fields over which they have travelled has been the ever-present thought of the Church as ordained by God for the service of mankind." "By the word Church in this connection we mean the whole society of Christian men throughout the world. We shall speak later of what belongs more distinctly to our own Communion." For many years the present writer has felt that the words "ye are a royal priesthood" are much more than mere metaphor, and that the idea underlying them has a definite reality. To speak of the Priesthood of the Laity may seem to some as if one uttered a paradox, but to the present writer it seems a truth which has solid foundations in revelation and in history. An historical examination of early institutions has caused a very considerable change in the views of scholars. The well-established facts with regard to the Early Church have been often questioned, but have not been overthrown. The views of such writers as Bishop Lightfoot in his Dissertation on the Christian Ministry, Dr. Hatch in The Organisation of the Early Christian Churches, Professor

Hort in *The Christian Ecclesia*, Professor Lindsay in *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, Dr. Bright in *Some Aspects of Primitive Church Life*, are not disproved but corroborated by Professor Harnack, a dispassionate historian, in his editions of the *Didache* and *Sources of the Apostolic Canons*, and other works. Many statements once fiercely combated are now taken as commonplaces. Canon Moberly's *Ministerial Priesthood* is reverent in tone and scholarly in execution, but has been well answered by Professor Sanday in his *Some Conceptions of Priesthood and Sacrifice*. To the discussion of this most interesting question these lectures are offered as a contribution, their aim being especially to commend personal service to every member of the Christian Church.

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## A 00 - Introduction

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### INTRODUCTION

It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the Sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called, and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard.

Article xxiii.

It is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles time there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church: Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Which offices were evermore had in such reverent estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same; and also by public prayer, with imposition of hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful authority.

Preface to the Ordinal.

INTRODUCTION For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge. Titus 1:5. THE subject of the present series of lectures is the "Priesthood of the Laity" as considered historically and critically. It is an attempt to answer the following questions: Is there such a thing as the priesthood of the laity? It seems at first sight a stimulating paradox. Have we historical and critical grounds for affirming such an expression? By tracing the history of the question in the prominent moments when the idea emerges, can we observe a continuously revealed truth? If there is such a truth, has it not a supremely practical teaching? Does it not invoke a higher standard for all who share in it and a deeper sense of responsibility? Have not recent events shown that a cleavage not contemplated in primitive times has developed between clergy and laity, between Church and State, which is disastrous alike to both? If this be so, may we not find in it the due recognition of a neglected truth, and a true solution of many difficulties, which plead for the solidarity and not opposition of the necessary parts of the Kingdom of God on earth?

If it can be shown that the personal priesthood of all Christians in no way invalidates the ministerial priesthood of the Church's officers, may we not do some thing towards regaining the lost ideal? For while it would be an unwise and dangerous experiment to take a certain portion of a living organism and place it under the microscope, severing it from the channels which bring the rich blood from the heart and stimulating impulses from the brain, on the other hand it is most helpful and necessary to restore circulation to a living body which has become languid and flaccid from disuse and return to it the several purposes for which it was intended. There is no intention to concentrate attention on one portion, though it be the general body, and shut our eyes to its necessary organs and their historic functions. That way lies fanaticism. The view taken in these

lectures includes the relation of laity to clergy, ministers to people. It has been well said that it has not been that the position of the clergy has changed, but the position of the laity. To prove this we need to go back to first principles. In recent years there has been made an appeal to the First Six Centuries in order to distinguish between practices which have a claim to catholic authority. The thought is most fruitful; for it implies that all schools of thought may study and learn for themselves, apart from party spirit, the true facts of the case. So also with regard to the question before us. If it can be shown by a scientific examination of early organisation that there is a truth for all to see uninfluenced by the bias of training and prejudice, then all students of the principles of the Earliest Church can discover the truth for themselves. A criterion will be established by which each Christian body can learn the cause for its failure in the past and the means of return to the principles of the Primitive Church.

It is worth while stating that in the title "Priesthood of the Laity" no other priest hood is intended than the priesthood of all Christians the priesthood which belongs to the whole body, including alike ministers and laymen. Of that General Priesthood the share which falls to those who are not officers is the subject of our consideration. The Christian privilege of personal nearness to God, the right to plead for oneself and for others, intercession with God for a heathen world, the right to offer devotion to Him in personal self-sacrifice above

\all the free access without intermediary into the very presence of God this has been to a certain extent in practice forgotten or lost sight of. There is a deeply ingrained tendency in men to allow others | to do their devotions for them. Such a neglect has led to the lowering of the spiritual life of the main body and to the loss of the high primitive standard. There has been a cleavage between those called to minister and that portion which has no lower status, no lesser dignity, than to be members of the Kingdom of God on earth. It has been objected that while St. Jerome was right in saying that an individual layman had a personal priesthood, yet that priesthood cannot be applied to a community of laymen. It is said the priesthood of a layman is correct, but the priesthood of the laity is a paradox. It is sufficient to reply that this is the very title given to the general body of believers in Scripture. St. Peter says, "Ye are a royal priesthood" (1Peter 2:9). Justin Martyr says, "Ye are the true high-priestly race of God." The original institution by our Lord of a ministry in the Church in the persons of the apostles and its perpetuation by apostolic authority down the centuries is a fact apparent in the earliest Christian documents. It appears in these as the necessary organ of the corporate and public worship as specially responsible for handing on the tradition of doctrine and morals, and as maintaining the principles of unity and order because it acts as a necessary centre for all Christian life in the local Church or in the Church Catholic. It does not follow that the Church is a simple hierarchy. It is a hierarchy largely tempered by spiritual democracy. It was of the very essence of the New Covenant that in it the gift of the Holy Spirit should be given to all flesh that is, to the elect people as a whole. The very conception of a visible Christian Church is that of a separate community with a distinct sphere of religious life. This implies that the Society must have powers of oversight and discipline to be exercised on its members. The authority which the Church possesses is different from that which a voluntary society exercises on its members and from that of lawful civil government. The authority comes from Christ Himself. The Christian democracy is also a theocracy. Our Blessed Lord, when founding His kingdom on earth, seems to have combined two principles which seem diverse but really are mutually corrective. He appointed the Twelve, He appointed the Seventy. After His

departure the whole body of the disciples appointed Matthias and the Seven, and St. Paul says, " For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge" (Titus 1:5). (Cf. Acts 14:23; Clem. Rom. xlii.)

There is no doubt whatever that divinely appointed ministers were intended not only to discharge the duties which devolved on every citizen of the Kingdom of God, but also to shepherd the flock. On the other hand our Blessed Lord speaks directly to the whole body of the disciples, and inculcates an immediate relation between them and Himself. "Abide in Me, and I in you." "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am in the midst of them."

Although there is a divinely appointed ministry, yet there is no intermediary between the soul and God. It has been maintained, and with much force, that all the Biblical commissions were given to the body at large. By St. Paul the Church is compared to a body in which all the members are necessary. The Church is compared to a temple in which the Christians are living stones. Each Christian might, if the Spirit willed, take his share in maintaining discipline, in binding and loosing, in admitting or excluding from the Church. As it was in the apostolic times, so it is now there is on the one hand a regularly ordained ministry, and on the other a corporate body possessing powers of the highest privilege in relation to God. To the question, "Is there a priesthood of the laity? Holy Writ answers emphatically " Yes." To the question, "Has every layman in consequence an authority to officiate publicly in the congregation? the answer is emphatically " No." Those who maintain most strongly that the great commission was given to the entire body maintain also that no army can take the field without officers, and that for the purposes of order a regular ministry is necessary for the proper maintenance of worship and discipline. A body of officers which had a continuous succession from the earliest times is not inconsistent with the fact that each member of the Christian Church has individually free access to God and that to the body as a whole the promise is given, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

I have said these two principles are mutually corrective. On the one hand history has shown us that an autocratic hierarchy has been so filled with the idea of its authority that it has been led into terrible tyranny over the flock of Christ. The corrective to such autocracy is the great truth of the privilege enjoyed by each member of the community as belonging to a spirit-inspired body, and personally taught by the Spirit and possessing spiritual judgment as well as free access to God.

Quidquid delirant reges plectuntur Achivi [Hor. Ep. I. ii. 14.] has been the description of many a weary century when the universal priesthood of Christians was forgotten. On the other hand individualistic and subjective aberrations have been kept in check. Anarchy and disorder have been avoided by the other principle of a regular ministry of duly appointed and properly qualified officers. To the thoughtful mind these two elements are not in any way inconsistent. Circumstances have occurred and may occur when members of the ministry may be absent, or unexpectedly removed, and then the inalienable general priesthood of Christians supplies the need required in the emergency. Circumstances may occur when there is a tendency to disintegrating and distinctive individualism, and the situation is saved by the other principle namely, that of a regular ministry of Church officers.

Irenseus speaks of a "charisma veritatis " possessed by the succession of bishops (Against Heresies, iv. xl. 2). Dr. Lind say (The Church and Ministry in the Early Centuries, p. 227) believes this is not an argument in favour of the Infallibility of the Bishop of Rome, but a fulfilment of the

promise that the Spirit-inspired Church through its officers will maintain the truth against individual heresies.

There is a very great distinction to be made between public and private ministry. It is one thing for a member of the general priesthood of all Christians to pray for and to edify himself, his family, and his friends, in home or social life; it is quite another to take upon himself a position as public minister in the congregation, to which he has not been regularly chosen, called, and appointed. To those who cavil at the doctrine of the priesthood of the laity as infringing upon the duties and privileges of the clergy, it is a sufficient answer that as in an army so in the Church: discipline is absolutely necessary to efficiency. The teaching of St. Paul is at one with that of St. Clement and St. Ignatius in enforcing order, obedience, and submission to a rule which can at any moment be tested and compared with the will of Christ. To say that each member of the Christian community should have his place and work and be encouraged to take an intelligent part, is in no way subversive of the truth that there is in the Christian Church a regular provision for the maintenance of order and the discharge of public functions. To say that there is a succession of regularly appointed ministers, is to be clearly distinguished from saying that these ministers possess that relation to God and man which is described as sacerdotal. They do not act instead of the people; they act as representing the people. The function is representative and not vicarial. In the language of Scripture it is the Church entire and complete, not any class or rank or caste of persons in it, which is spoken of as the Spirit-bearing body of Christ the holder of power and privilege in Christ; nay, even as Christ Himself on earth. As we read, "As the body of a man is one and hath many members, and all members of the body, though they be many, are one body, so also is Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:12). This great saying applies to the Church at large; not to apostles and clergy alone, but to the entire Church, including its members, whether clerical or lay. We believe with St. Augustine and Cyprian, that when Christ promised to St. Peter the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven He promised them to the Church at large, whose faith and unity St. Peter on that occasion represented. Cyprian says: "And although He gave equal power to all the apostles, and says, As the Father sent Me so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit. To whomsoever you remit sins, they shall be remitted unto him; to whomsoever you retain them, they shall be retained, nevertheless, that He might manifest unity, He arranged by His authority the origin of the same unity beginning from one person. The rest of the apostles were certainly what Peter was, endowed with equal share in honour and power, but the beginning proceeds from one that the Church might be known to be one" (St. Cyprian, *De Unitate Ecclesie*, c. 4). See Benson, *St. Cyprian*, p. 203.

It is the Church at large, in the case of the admission of a converted heathen or a child into the body of Christ by baptism, who takes as a mother the newly made member of the body. It is the whole body at Holy Communion which commemorates the life-giving sacrifice of Christ, and in unity and holiness feeds on the meat and drink indeed of His holy Body and Blood. It is the collective Church, with reference to excommunication, to which the sin is to be told and whose voice is commanded to be heard. It is more or less faithfully representing the entire Church that a Council makes decrees in matters of faith. It does not overrule the Church nor issue laws to the Church upon its own authority. In the Church in its entirety, in all its members not in some only dwells the fulness of the Holy Spirit. In the Church is that ultimate authority which nothing but the indwelling of the Holy Spirit can give. This is one half of the truth, never to be forgotten.

There is another not less important half, which is entirely compatible with it. There exists in this Spirit-bearing body a divinely appointed ministry. This ministry, ordained by imposition of hands in due succession from the apostles, is authorised to represent the entire Church in its various functions. Some functions are committed to them alone to exercise, yet even in these they wield powers which are ultimately the powers of the whole body. In other functions they ask in various degrees the joint action of other members of the Church besides themselves. To constitute a true representation it is not necessary now, as at first, that universal choice and delegation should select and empower them. The custom of reading the "Si quis" is a trace of early selection by the people. Nor is it necessary to have a renewal of reference to the universal will for the continuance of this representation.

It is necessary that the whole should have some power to act in some manner and degree, as the representatives are only men, and liable to the infirmities of human feeling and passion. The whole body should not be excluded from contributing its sanction, and if its sanction, its possible refusal of sanction even in the highest instances of the exercise of these powers. Roman writers destroy while they acknowledge this truth, for they limit the power to the episcopate united to its centre, i.e. the Papacy. Cardinal Manning says: "The pastoral authority of the episcopate, together with the priesthood and the other orders, constitute an organised body, divinely ordered to guard the deposit of faith. The voice of that body, not as many individuals, but as a body, is the voice of the Holy Ghost. The pastoral ministry cannot err, because the Holy Spirit, who is indissolubly united to the mystical body, is eminently above all united to the hierarchy and body of its pastors. The episcopate united to its centre is, in all ages, divinely sustained and divinely assisted to perpetuate and enunciate the original revelation." But these lectures, on the one hand, maintain that the Spirit-bearing Church in all its members is the ultimate possessor of every sort of privilege in Christ the Head, so that those who exercise office are the representatives of the body at large. On the other hand they are descended from those appointed by the apostles. They have been set apart by the laying on of hands; they have had prayers offered that they might receive the Holy Spirit to discharge aright those powers which they discharge in the name of the whole Church as its ministers. At the very outset the conditions of Church Government exhibit the existence of two sets of authority side by side. On the one hand the apostles and other officers, with their commission received from above; on the other the whole body of the Church, with the authority of the indwelling Spirit. At first, through the brotherly love and enthusiasm of the new-born Christianity, no friction will be felt. But sooner or later the two authorities will come into conflict, and then to preserve the balance between them will be the problem of the Church.

"Our apostles also knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be strife on account of the office of the episcopate. For this reason, therefore, inasmuch as they had obtained a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed those [ministers] already mentioned, and after wards gave instructions that when these should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed them in their ministry. We are of opinion, therefore, that those appointed by them, or afterwards by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole Church, and who have blamelessly served the flock of Christ in an humble, peaceable, and disinterested spirit, and have for a long time possessed the good opinion of all, cannot be justly dismissed from the ministry. For our sin will not be small if we eject from the episcopate (or oversight) those who have blamelessly and holily fulfilled their duties [lit. presented the offerings]. Blessed are those presbyters who, having finished their course before

now, have obtained a fruitful and perfect departure [from this world], for they have no fear lest any one deprive them of the place appointed them. But we see that ye have removed some men of excellent behaviour from the ministry which they fulfilled blamelessly and with honour" (Clement of Rome, xlv.).

"These things, therefore, being manifest to us, and since we look into the depths of the divine knowledge, it behoves us to do all things in [their proper] order, which the Lord hath commanded us to perform at stated times. He has enjoined offerings [to be presented] and service to be performed [to Him], and that not thoughtlessly or irregularly, but at the stated times and hours. Where and by whom He desires these things to be done He Himself hath fixed by His own supreme will, in order that all things being piously done according to His good pleasure may be acceptable to Him. Those, therefore, who present their offerings at the appointed times are accepted and blessed, for as much as they follow the laws of the Lord, they sin not. For his own peculiar services are assigned to the high priest, and their own special ministrations devolve on the Levites. The layman is bound by the laws that pertain to laymen " (Clement of Rome, xl.).

"Let every one of you, brethren, give thanks to God in his own order, living in all good conscience, with becoming gravity, and giving regard to the rule of the ministry presented to him. Not in every place, brethren, are the daily sacrifices offered, or the peace offerings, and the trespass offerings, but in Jerusalem only. And even there they are not offered in any place, but only at the altar before the temple, that which is offered being first carefully examined by the high priest and the ministers already mentioned. Those, therefore, who do anything beyond His will are punished with death. Ye see, brethren, that the greater the knowledge vouchsafed to us the greater also is the danger to which we are exposed" (Clement of Rome, xli.).

"The apostles received the Gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ was sent forth from God. So then Christ is from God, and the apostles are from Christ. Both, therefore, came by the will of God in the appointed order. Having, there fore, received their orders and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and established on the Word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, they went forth proclaiming that the Kingdom of God was at hand. And thus preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first fruits [of their labours], having first proved them by the Spirit to be bishops and deacons of those who should afterwards believe. Nor was this any new thing, since indeed many ages before it was written concerning bishops and deacons, For thus saith the Scripture in certain places, I will appoint their bishops in righteousness and their deacons in faith (Clement of Rome, xlii.).

Isaiah 60:17, where R.V. correctly renders the original, "I will also make thy officers (lit. magistrates) peace and their exactors (i.e. task-masters) righteousness "; i.e. there shall be no tyranny or oppression. The LXX departs from the original, and Clement has altered the LXX. By this double divergence a reference to the two orders of the ministry is obtained.

"But what is the bearing of all this for us? So you will ask when you read these words, Ambrosius, thou who art truly a man of God, a man in Christ, and who seekest to be not a man only, but a spiritual man. The bearing is this. Those of the tribes who offer to God through the Levites and priests, tithes and first fruits; not every thing which they possess do they regard as tithes and first fruits. The Levites and priests, on the other hand, have no possessions but tithes and first fruits, yet they also in turn offer tithes to God through the high priests, and I believe first fruits too. The

same is the case with those who approach Christian studies. Most of us devote the greater part of our time to the things of this life, and dedicate to God only a few special acts, thus resembling those members of the tribes who had but few transactions with the priests, and discharged their religious duties with no great expense of time. But those who devote themselves to the Divine Word, and have no other employment but the service of God, may not unnaturally, allowing for the difference of occupation in the two cases, be called our Levites and priests. And those who fill a more distinguished office than their kinsmen will be perhaps high priests according to the order of Aaron, not that of Melchizedek. Here, too, some one may object that it is somewhat too bold to apply the name of high priest unto men when Jesus Himself is spoken of in many a prophetic passage as the one High Priest, as Hebrews 4:14, We have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God. But to this we may reply that the apostle clearly defined his meaning and declared the prophet to have said about the Christ, Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchizedek, and not according to the order of Aaron. We say accordingly that men can be high priests according to the order of Aaron, but according to the order of Melchizedek only the Christ of God "(Origen's Commentary on St. John, bk. i. 3). The antinomy of an official ministry side by side with the doctrine of the priesthood of all God's people must be acknowledged. Much has been written concerning the former truth. An endeavour is now made to show that the latter truth is also part of the Primitive Ideal.

After the last returns the first, Though a wide compass round be stretched.

What began best can't be worst, Nor what God blessed once prove accursed.

## A 01 - Two Characteristics of the Age

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Ryder PLHC: 01 Two Characteristics of the Age TWO CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AGE

Almighty and Everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified; Receive our supplications and prayers, which we offer before Thee for all estates of men in Thy holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Second Collect for Good Friday.

Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:5. As we look out on the trend of religious thought at the opening of the twentieth century, we find that one of the subjects of most urgent importance is the position of the laity in the Christian Church.

If at the outset we deal with the position of the laity in some branches of the Christian Church, it is because their position in every land and in every age will be found in the last analysis to be dependent on the doctrine held as to the Priesthood of the Laity.

Christianity exists in the world as a law of love and truth. It is love and truth that inspire these two factors of modern civilisation, science and democracy. That we may make that civilisation Christian we welcome them, seeking to make them our own without reserve, without fear, appealing from the past to a past older still.

There are two characteristics of the present time which seem to call for an earnest and careful examination of an expression which is being heard with in creasing frequency, namely, the Priesthood of the Laity. Of these two characteristics, one is critical and the other is social. The first is critical.

We find in the last few years that the Old Testament writings have been subjected to severer tests than ever before, as literary criticism, archaeology, Egyptology, and con temporary history have dealt with each fact, date, and turn of expression. In the Old Testament the influence of the religion of Babylon has recently begun to loom large. The clay tablets also and the monoliths of Assyria tell their story, as well as the papyri, tombs, and temples of the Valley of the Nile. What the result has been does not enter into our consideration, except to this extent, that well - ascertained facts have emerged, and are recognised as having a value which is irrespective of all particular views and creeds.

Similarly the books of the New Testament have been weighed word by word, letter by letter. After Textual Criticism has ascertained the original reading, as far as it is possible, the phrases of each writer are freely handled by the Higher Criticism, which appears to decide on subjective grounds what was the original teaching of Jesus as to Himself and His work, and what elements were added by His followers. The latest instance is the Syllabus of Pius X. against Modernism, and the reply, "An Open Letter," from a group of priests. Slowly but surely the effects of the Higher

Criticism are making themselves felt in every Christian community alike, irrespective of its peculiar tenets. In a third department of knowledge new light has fallen on the very grammar and vocabulary of the New Testament. Similar constructions and expressions are found in the papyri discovered amid the dust-heaps of Egypt. What was once considered bad Greek is now shown to be the vernacular of the ancient world, as it was Hellenised after the conquests of Alexander. In Egypt wills, contracts, private letters are found written in the vernacular Greek of the people. Thus the Greek of the New Testament falls into its place among the historic dialects of the world. The new linguistic facts now in evidence show with startling clearness that we have before us the language in which the apostles and evangelists wrote. The papyri exhibit a variety of literary education even wider than that observable in the New Testament. We can match each sacred writing with documents that in respect of Greek stand on the same plane.

Biblical Greek was simply the vernacular of daily life. The language of the New Testament is now shown to be that of the common life of the time.

It is thus a protest against the refusal of the use of the Scriptures to the men of our time in their vernacular tongue. The New Testament writers had little idea that they were writing literature. The Holy Spirit spoke absolutely in the language of the people, as we might surely have expected Him to do. The writings inspired by Him were those Which he may read who binds the sheaf, Or builds the house, or digs the grave, Or those wild eyes which watch the wave In roarings round the coral reef.

Here, too, a scientific basis to a true interpretation of the words used in the New Testament is established, quite irrespective of theological bias. Contemporary language, history, and philology all help to settle the exact sense of each word in the context.

I ask, "Can we not go a step farther? Is there not another field where both historic inquiry and recent discovery have been active, and are producing results, which have gradually won acceptance among scholars? Have we not the field of the early organisation of the Christian Church?" It remains that the same colourless, impartial, scientific sifting should be applied in turn to the primitive polity of the earliest Christian communities. In the present year we have received, as a New Year's gift, an entire new treatise of St. Irenaeus. It fills us with astonishment, and with larger expectancy with regard to similar discoveries. In Eusebius Ecclesiastical History, book v., section 26, we read: " Besides the works and epistles of Irenaeus above mentioned, there is another also, which he dedicated to his brother Marcian, as a Setting forth of Apostolic Teaching. " Not a fragment of it was known to survive. We now possess it complete from beginning to end. It was found in a church in Erivan, and is edited, with a German translation, by two Armenian scholars the archimandrite Karapet, who discovered it in 1904, and Dr. Ervand Minassiantz. Dr. Harnack adds notes. The work forms vol. xxxii. of his Texts and Studies.

It is interesting to mark that as the long-lost Apology of Aristides was mentioned in the History of Eusebius, and for centuries remained but a title, and then the book itself was discovered, so in this case also Eusebius mentioned a work which in its turn has been found. The History of Eusebius has proved, and may again and again prove, a veritable mine for the titles of valuable works now hid in the dust of the ages. This is the latest, but there have been other discoveries more directly bearing upon primitive church polity. Our present revival of interest in the subject of the history of early Christian life, though not originated, may be said to have been quickened and accelerated by

the discovery of the Didache "the missing link," as Harnack calls it, in the history of early church organisation. It is the most significant document in its bearing on primitive doctrine and practice which eighteen centuries of church history have as yet revealed to us. This find was followed by a succession, which is nothing less than phenomenal, of similar discoveries. Among them may be enumerated: The Testament of our Lord, The Apology of Aristides, Tatian's Diatessaron, Some Apocryphal Gospels, and especially the fragments or recensions of the Sources of the Apostolic Canons, splendidly edited by Dr. Harnack. This last work confirms conclusions derived from the Didache. The Sources of the Apostolic Canons manifests an ampler knowledge of the general subject of ecclesiastical organisation or rather, the want of it as it existed in the Christian community. Special light is thrown on the office of Reader and of the purely didactic, as distinct from the sacerdotal, mission of the Church.

Several writers, such as Dr. Harnack, Dr. Wernle, Dr. Weizsacher in Germany, and Dr. Lightfoot, Dr. Hort, Dr. Hatch in England, have made early church organisation their particular study. The scientific criticism, so long occupied in handling the Biblical records, is going behind the mediaeval practices, and those introduced at the time of Constantine and subsequently. Men are trying to realise what was the organisation of the Earliest Church.

What would we not give to possess an account written by a contemporary writer of the services in the Primitive Church on a Lord's Day, say, at Pella after the Fall of Jerusalem! What controversies would be for ever laid to rest! But we can reconstruct these early services in thought, as we read St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, the directions given in the Didache and in the Sources of the Apostolic Canons, and the famous description of the Lord's Day Service in the writings of Justin Martyr. A careful examination will bring with it a conviction as to the facts which will command acceptance. We can thereby see what an important part development has contributed to the organisation and ritual of the Early Church.

It will be my endeavour to show how by a careful examination of the words of the New Testament, by scrupulously questioning early documents, by laying aside prejudice in favour of preconceived views as to Christian ritual, it is possible to get behind controversy and party spirit. Scholars belonging to all Christian bodies may yet be able, though starting from different standpoints, to reach a truth which shall be acknowledged by all. The special study of early Christian organisation, like the critical study of the New Testament itself, may prove to be a common ground on which may meet the members of Christian bodies which are now, and have been too long, unhappily sundered. For we have seen in our own day the growth of a method of treating historical questions which at least limits, if it does not abolish, controversy. This method deals with the facts of history by processes similar to those successfully applied to the phenomena of Nature. Methods of research have proved their accuracy by becoming methods of discovery. Historical science has arisen. A habit of mind has been formed, which stands in the same relation to the facts of history as the mind of a practised judge in relation to evidence in a court of law. The subtle balance of a matured experience has taken the place of a roughly generalised rule. The historical temper has emerged. We should not read present meanings into the original institutions, but examine them in their true surroundings.

We are apt to conceive of the New City of God as coming down bodily from the sky, invisible to carnal sight, but to the eye of faith the only reality in a world of shadows. But when we descend

from poetry to fact, we see the forces which welded Christian societies together. It is no derogation from its grandeur to say that it was out of antecedent elements of human institutions, by the action of existing forces of Christian society swayed by the breathing of the Divine Breath, controlled by the Providence which holds in its hand the wayward wills of men, no less than the courses of the stars that there came into being that widest, strongest, and most enduring of institutions which bears the sacred name of the Catholic Church. At the time when the majority of the sacred books were written that polity was in a fluid state. It has the elements of an ecclesiastical monarchy in the position which it assigns to the apostles. It has the elements of an ecclesiastical oligarchy, because the rulers of the Church are almost always spoken of in the plural. It has the elements of an ecclesiastical democracy, because St. Paul appeals in the case of the Corinthians on a question of ecclesiastical discipline, not to bishops or presbyters, but to the community at large. The notices of early church life offer a sanction to episcopacy in the fact that bishops are expressly mentioned and their qualifications described. The books of the earliest writers support the proposition that the Church should have a government, in the injunctions which they give to obey those who rule. They support, on the other hand, the claim of the Montanists of early days, and the Puritans of later times, in the pre-eminence which they assign to spiritual gifts.

We see the democratic element gradually fading out, and leaving a monopoly of power and influence to an oligarchy and even to a monarchy. In the rise of the monastic orders, and in their aims and early history, we may observe a curious recrudescence of democracy. Again and again by their influence they intimidated and coerced the Papacy.

We shall see the officers of the Church gradually formed into a class, standing apart from the mass of the Christian community, invested with a reputation for special sanctity, and living, or supposed to live, by a higher rule of life than those to whom they ministered.

I ask, Which was correct? The earliest spiritual democracy, or the latest infallible monarchy?

If an appeal were made to the first six centuries, or to the Ante-Nicene Age, or to the very earliest accounts of church life, they would show, first, that it is possible to mark the human and historical forces which moulded the Church; secondly, that the loss of the ideal of a spiritual democracy is the loss of the primitive ideal. The first consideration, then, is the desire for the scientific sifting of established views, which is to be found in every department of knowledge. This critical inquiry is slowly and surely bringing to light a doctrine which in some form is held by all scholars namely, the Priesthood of the Laity. This brings us to the second characteristic, which makes the examination of the doctrine of the Priesthood of the Laity a specially urgent one at the present day. As we look around us we see signs of unrest in every nation in Europe. In some places it takes the form of revolt of the State against the Church, the Secular against the Religious, the Laity against the Clergy. At first sight it may seem part of a democratic movement. Nowadays, no man is contented to be merely governed. He is not satisfied if he be not given the power of expressing his own opinion on each subject as far as it touches his life and liberty. Even those who approve of an autocratic form of government, either in religion or politics, seldom succeed in winning much enthusiasm in its support. It is from indifference on the part of its members, as much as from attacks of its enemies, that the Christian Church is now suffering. To speak first of the Church of Ireland. Our Church has at least the distinction of possessing a spiritual democracy modelled on the primitive ideal. The franchise might be extended to all communicants, irrespective of sex, and

the tests of participation in the Holy Communion might be more systematically enforced; but still it is, I believe, nearer to the primitive ideal than many branches of the Anglican Communion. It is very interesting to read the Preface of the Bishop of Salisbury's Bampton Lectures, delivered at the time of the Irish Church Disestablishment in 1869. Although in his admirable lectures he supported in theory the doctrine of the Priesthood of the Laity, in his Preface he speaks doubt fully of giving power to laymen. He holds that it is not a matter of benevolence or bounty, but a matter of debt and duty; that it is both necessary in practice and in theory indispensable to the full powers and efficacy of the Church. He says: "No doubt since the publication of these lectures the march of events has exhibited in a very marked way the opposite danger. We are now called upon, not so much to prove the propriety of admitting the lay element into some proportion of counsel, as to protest against its swallowing up and overwhelming the clerical by mere supremacy of numbers and social weight. God forbid that any words of mine should seem to sanction so fatal a danger. If the encroachment of sacerdotalism is full of evil on the one hand, the tyranny of lay usurpation is certainly not less to be dreaded on the other. Our brethren in Ireland are called upon to deal with the practical questions arising out of the subject very suddenly, and under circumstances of great difficulty and discouragement. May the Holy Ghost of God direct and sanctify their counsels, so that the grace and wisdom of the whole body, clerical and lay, may be united in due proportion to guide and govern its anxious course, suddenly deprived, as it has been, of the orderly but somewhat enervating direction of State Control."

I have mentioned this remark incidentally as a voice from the past. The tyranny of lay usurpation, which Bishop Moberly of Salisbury dreaded in practice, though he supported in theory the co-operation of laymen, has by the blessing of God proved to be in many respects the loyal support and loving care towards the Church of Ireland on the part of her sons and daughters. His fears have been falsified by facts. May we not rather say that his prayers have been answered?

Though hopes be dupes, fears may be liars, It may be in yon smoke concealed;

Thy comrades chase e'en now the fliers, And but for thee possess the field.

Bishop Moberly states it as his opinion: "I will venture to say, looking to the theory, as well as to the earliest practice of the Church of Christ, that while the office of teaching belongs specially to the ordained clergy, giving them the prerogative voice in matters of faith, yet the authority even in those great things belongs in such sort to the universal body, as that lay people too in their place and degree have the right and duty of sanctioning (and therefore, of course, of refusing to sanction) the determinations of the ordained clergy. In other subjects, more or less secular, their influence and counsel are of the greatest interest and importance. That they should be freely elected by the members of the Church; that they should be not members only, but communicants; that they should have authority real in all cases; that they should at least when required vote separately in their own order all these seem to be of the nature of principles, secondary no doubt to the main principle, but fundamental and necessary.

"The great and pressing object, painfully pressing and immediate in Ireland hardly less pressing though less immediate in England, is that the Church should prepare itself to act as a united body gathering together its corporate strength, clerical and lay alike, in due proportion, so as to be ready, whether established or unestablished, to work with the full powers of the Holy Spirit, who, dwelling in the Church as the soul dwells in the body, giveth to every man severally as He willeth."

These fundamental principles now realised in exact detail in the Church of Ireland are the aspiration of the Church in many lands. In England, though on the subject of education and similar matters a lamentable cleavage is observable, yet a House of Laymen has been recently established. After careful consideration by strong committees of the Canterbury and York Houses of Laymen the rules for lay franchise were adopted on July 3, 1907. By these rules every elector has to be qualified in two ways.

First, he must have the communicant status that is to say, he must be an actual communicant, or else have been baptized and confirmed, and not belong to any other religious body not in communion with the Church of England, and he must sign a declaration that he is so qualified. Secondly, if a male the voter must be a resident within the parish or area, but if a female the voter must be both resident and also in the position of one entitled by ownership or occupation to vote at a vestry for the particular parish or area. This curious difference (a property qualification as well as residence being required for women but not for men) was framed to allow a number, but only a reasonable number, of women to vote. These electors send delegates who must be communicants to the Ruridecanal Conference, which in turn sends delegates to the Diocesan Conference, and the latter body selects the delegates to the Church Council. The volume Church Reform, edited by the present Bishop of Birmingham, is a powerful pleading for lay representation. In Russia the Emperor is about to summon a Council of the Russian Church in Moscow to make a change in her government. It has been finally agreed that the coming National Synod or Council shall consist of bishops, clergy, and laity, who will all sit together. Whatever may be said of this constitution, it is at least an honest endeavour that the National Synod should represent every interest in the Church. In France the story of the religious life is a distressing one. We have there the spectacle of a nation openly, ostentatiously, and of set purpose defying God. The cause, I believe, is that the realisation of the ideal of the Primitive Church has been too long delayed, and the delay has led to disastrous results. Two great forces are perpetually struggling for the mastery in France, the lay spirit and the sacerdotal spirit. The contest between them has rarely been so keen as it is now, though it is conducted without any other violence than occasional violence of language, and even this bears no proportion to the vastness of the contest, which is often silent or conducted with much propriety of form. The object which the lay movement has in view is to secure the political and scientific independence of laymen, so that they may manage their intellectual pursuits without asking the permission of Rome. The object which the sacerdotal regime has in view is to establish such a domination over laymen that they may not venture on any course of action or upon any course of intellectual study without being authorised by the priesthood. The Law of the Associations Culturelles, followed by the Separation Law, has disestablished the Roman Catholic Church in France. An offer that the Church should be recognised as a "Society for Worship" has been rejected, and the grounds of the rejection seem to be that power would be given to the laity.

M. Briand on the Separation Law, December 9: "Three words (Les associations culturelles) express the new regime, to which all the religious bodies in France (tous les cultes) must shortly conform. These three words seem alarming to the Roman Church, for they announce that which is nothing short of a revolution the intrusion of a lay element into the direction of ecclesiastical affairs. Protestantism receives these three words without serious misgiving, because they belong to an order of events which our forefathers, as it were, saw and realised some centuries ago, so true is it

that they were forerunners in all that concerns social and religious liberty" (Foi et Vie, no. du 1 aout 1905). The Archbishop of Besançon writes: "As to the association with statutes proposed by the bishops, the Pope decided that he could not authorise the experiment, so long as he should have no certain and legal guarantee that in these associations culturelles the constitution, the rights, the hierarchy, and the property of the Church should be fully safeguarded. The bishops were unable to give this guarantee. The State would not. There lies the difficulty."

There is no country in which unbelief is so strong and so vindictive as in France so much a passion of hate, a fanaticism, if not against religion, against that Church which claims to be its authoritative vehicle and exponent. The Anti-Clericals of the twentieth century are more extreme than those of the eighteenth. The resolute and rough-handed antagonism of the senate and workshop has superseded the free criticism of the study and the well-spiced raillery of the salon.

It was when Domitian's tyranny interfered with the safety not of the nobles, but of the man in the street, that he was assassinated.

Sed periit postquam cerdonibus esse timendus, Coeperat: hoc nocuit Lamiarum csede madenti.

JUVENAL, Satires, iv. 153-4. In Portugal swiftly and suddenly a monarchy has given way to a republic, and the cause has been proved to be an ecclesiastical one by the fresh laws passed by the new Government. In Belgium the conflict is going on under our eyes, political on the surface, religious beneath it. In Spain political aspirations are wedded to denials of ecclesiastical authority. In Italy, where thought is most active, the claims and dogmas of the Church are handled most freely. Senor Fogazzaro has published three connected books (of which *Il Santo* is one) which witness to an up rising of intelligent and cultured laymen. In one of his works he says: "The Church is not the hierarchy alone, but the universal assembly of the faithful (*gens sancta*). The Church is not the hierarchy with its traditional concepts, but she is also lay society, perpetually in contact with the reality of things, and perpetually reacting upon official theology."

Again, in a passage of great interest, Fogazzaro not only pleads for the right of personal initiative and independent action, but even points to the possibility of certain changes in the administrative system of the Roman Church. He says: "The worst is the suppression of the ancient liberty, the desire to force admissions that are contrary to conscience the desire, the moment a group of men combine for a good work, to assume the command of them, and if they decline dictation to refuse them countenance the tendency to extend religious authority beyond the religious domain. Italy knows something of this, and the whole Catholic world too." From such words it would appear that both in the circumstances of the time and in the nature of Latin religion there are forces which make strongly for the realisation of the ideal of faith without superstition, and obedience without servility, which leaders like Fogazzaro set before the whole Catholic Church. In pursuing this ideal they are hourly working to promote the visible Kingdom of God, for whose coming the Lord taught His people to pray. The Kingdom of God is a kingdom of spirits, in that its rule is founded on the free consent of the governed. None are coerced, nor are any excluded, save by their own act. Liberty is the rule, but in its divinely ordered and disciplined society service is the condition of liberty. Christian liberty is not licence, and does not by any means exclude authority. Our obedience is not servile. Our authority is not tyrannical. Authority is but the means of safeguarding and securing liberty. It is to liberty in this sense that such Roman Catholics aspire, namely, the heritage of the citizen rights of the City of God. The second consideration, then, is that this unrest

among European nations points to a failure in carrying out the ideal of the Church. Something is wrong. Some truth has been forgotten or ignored. It is the great truth of the Priesthood and Primitive Position of the Laity. It is the solidarity of all those called to be saints. The teaching of Christ, and the safety of the Church, both require us to realise the high position of all members of the Body of Christ. All are called to holiness. There are not two standards of spiritual life in the Christian community. The secular has been too long divorced from the sacred. All have their place in working harmoniously to advance the Kingdom of God. As it is in the human body, so it is in the corporate body of the Church.

Let us not always say "Spite of the flesh to-day I have made head, Gained ground upon the whole." As the bird wings and sings, Let us say "All good things Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more Than flesh helps soul."

## A 02 - What is a Layman

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Ryder PLHC: 02 What is a Layman? WHAT IS A LAYMAN?

Although we are all priests, it is not seemly in any one to thrust himself forward of his own accord and exercise this office: just because all have the same power, no individual may bring himself forward to discharge this office without the consent and choice of the Church.

Ordination signifies nothing else than as if the bishop instead of, or impersonation of, the whole Church should take out of the multitude one of those who have all equal power and command him to administer the same powers to others. That for this there should be selected particular persons, namely, those who are aptly qualified, is in no contradiction to the principle of faith and the universal priesthood, for precisely where some thing belongs to all together, not every one who considers himself taught of God is at liberty to take upon himself this office. No one is at liberty to thrust himself forward and take upon himself what belongs to all.

LUTHER, quoted by Dr. Dorner, History of Protestant Theology, vol. i. p. 172. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the hand maids in those days will I pour out My Spirit. Joel 2:28-29.

LORD MACAULAY, in his Essay on the History of Von Ranke, describes an enthusiast fervid with zeal for God, who would be glad to be admitted among the humblest ministers of the Church of England. He has no quarrel with the Church or its government. But when he offers to assist, he is rejected. There is no room for such a man within its pale. If he is resolved to be a preacher, he must begin by being a schismatic. A congregation is formed. In a few weeks the Church has lost a hundred families, not one of which entertained the least scruple about her articles, liturgies, or her government.

Far different is the policy of Rome. The enthusiast whom the Anglican Church makes an enemy, the Roman Catholic Church makes a champion. She covers him with a gown and hood of coarse stuff, and sends him forth to teach in her name. He costs her nothing. To devout women she assigns spiritual functions and dignities. In our country, if a noble lady is moved by more than ordinary zeal for the propagation of religion, though she may disapprove of not one doctrine or ceremony of the Established Church, she will end by giving her name to a new schism. At Rome the Countess of Huntingdon would have a place in the Calendar as St. Selina, and Mrs. Fry would be Foundress and First Superior of the Blessed Order of the Sisters of the Gaols.

Place Ignatius Loyola at Oxford: he is certain to become the founder of a formidable secession. Place John Wesley at Rome: he is certain to become the first general of a new society devoted to the interests and honour of the Church. In this way the Church of Rome unites in herself all the strength of Establishment and all the strength of Dissent. With the utmost pomp of a dominant hierarchy above, she has the energy of the voluntary system below.

These caustic words have in them the ring of truth. But I look on the matter from a widely different standpoint. I hold that such lay and special ministrations should be effectively recognised, not in consequence of a "profound policy," as Lord Macaulay describes it, but as being agencies of that selfsame Spirit who gives to every man severally as He willeth as charismatic gifts as in the earliest days of the Church, as functions of the Body which is Christ, as inalienable privileges in the priesthood of all Christians. In my first lecture I showed that Christianity exists in the world as a law of love and truth. In the present lecture I desire to give (before proceeding to further proof) a general view of the title and content of the Doctrine of the Laity. As to the title of Priesthood as given to the main body of God's people, the earliest mention of it occurs in Exodus 19:5, on the eve of the promulgation of the Ten Commandments. Jehovah is stated to have commanded Moses to announce to the assembled Israelites:

"Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me from among all peoples: for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." The title "kingdom of priests" is here given to Israel, but St. Peter applies the term to all Christians, as being the ideal Israel of God: "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. But ye are... a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession" (1 Peter 2:5; 1 Peter 2:9). The author of the Apocalypse also applies these words to all Christians. "He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father" (Revelation 1:6). "Over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ" (Revelation 20:6). On this passage St. Augustine says, that This is not at all said solely concerning bishops and presbyters, who are now appropriately called priests in the Church." So much has been said to show that the title is one used in Scripture. But it is no mere title.

It is my object in these lectures to prove that the title represents a reality which is in accordance with the continuous teaching of the Scriptures, the earliest Christian writers, and primitive Liturgies.

Attention has been drawn by Bishop Lightfoot to the view that the Priestly Tribe held their peculiar relation to God only as representatives of the whole nation. Thus as delegates of the people they offered sacrifice, and made atonement. To signalise the escape from Egypt and the deliverance of the first-born, the eldest son of each family became the property of God. In Numbers 3:40 the statement is made that God commanded that for the first-born of each family a special tribe should be substituted, and, as the number of the first-born slightly exceeded the number of persons in the tribe, that the excess of persons should be redeemed by offerings of money. The view presented in the Book of Numbers is that the whole community was regarded as a kingdom of priests a holy nation. The account distinctly states that the sons of Levi were set apart, not in consequence of any inherent sanctity, but by an act of delegation on the part of the people. "The children of Israel shall lay their hands upon the Levites: and Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord for a wave offering, on the behalf of the children of Israel, that they may be to do the service of the Lord." The nation thus deputed to a single tribe the priestly functions which properly be longed to it as a whole. It has been objected that this section is part of what is known as the Priests Code and represents the thoughts of later times.

Baudissin says that in Numbers 8:5 a ceremony for the installation of the Levites is described. This ceremony, he says, was not literally performed, but simply gives expression to a theory. Now, it will be found to be an important admission if we can show that the theory of the Chroniclers of Israel was the doctrine of the priesthood of all God's people.

Baudissin says: "As everywhere in the history of religion, there may be recognised also in the beginning of Hebrew history a period when no special priestly class existed. It is an artificially constructed basis upon which the view presented in the Priestly Writing of the Pentateuch rests, according to which neither sanctuary nor sacrificial rites had any existence before the divine revelation given to Moses. Even in the narratives of the Jehovistic book relating to the preMosaic period there are scarcely to be discovered any reminiscences of the then conditions of the cultus, but these narratives will scarcely be wrong in representing the relations which still persisted at a later period as when they describe the head of the family in the patriarchal house as exercising the priestly function of offering sacrifices."

It is a fact that sacrificing was not the exclusive privilege of a priestly caste. Gideon of the tribe of Manasseh, Manoah of the tribe of Dan, offered sacrifice. Under Saul the Israelites poured out the blood of captured animals, without any priestly interposition. A relic of the ancient priestly prerogative was preserved down to the very latest times of the Jewish cultus, in the slaughtering of the Paschal lamb by the father of the house.

Dr. Driver says, in contrasting the Jehovistic writing with the Priests Code, that in Judges and Samuel sacrifice is repeatedly offered in places not consecrated by the ark, and that laymen are repeatedly represented as officiating in both cases, without any hint of disapproval on the part of the narrator, and without any sense, even on the part of such men as Samuel and David, that any irregularity was being committed. The legislation of the Jehovistic writer is in harmony with and sanctions the practice of the Judges and early Kings as to the place of sacrifice and the persons who offer it. A priestly class is presupposed by the oldest book of the laws, the so-called Book of the Covenant (Exodus 22:6), and yet in an enactment later prefixed to it the general right to sacrifice is assumed in the demand made of Israel as a whole (Exodus 20:24): "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto Me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in every place where I record My name I will come unto thee and I will bless thee." These words, says Dr. Driver, were addressed to lay Israelites. The underlying theory of the general priesthood of God's people was in accordance with the facts. The view that the people delegated their duties to the sons of Aaron was the theory accepted by later writers. A light is thus thrown on the views of St. Peter and of St. John, of the author of the Apocalypse, and of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as we retrace the histories with which they were acquainted. We best understand the thoughts of the New Testament writers by studying the literature in which their expressions were formulated.

Thus, even in accordance with any critical view as to the fact of the delegation by the people to the tribe, we gain insight as to the theory by examining the context of these quotations and observing the ideas indissolubly intertwined with them. The idea, therefore, in these Christian writers is the restitution of this immediate and direct relation to God? which was partly suspended, but not abolished, by the appointment of a sacerdotal tribe. The Levitical priesthood, like the Mosaic law, had served its temporary purpose. The stage of childhood had passed. The Church of God had

arrived at mature age. The whole Covenant People had resumed their sacerdotal functions. The privileges of the Covenant were no longer confined to the limits of a single nation. Every member of the human family was potentially a member of the Church and as such a priest of God. In our survey of the development of this doctrine the next important moment is the announcement that Israel was the Kingdom of God.

Samuel, the seer, reminded the people of the divine reign of God. In his pathetic address as he resigned the office of judge he protested: "And ye say, Nay, but we will have a king to reign over us. Whereas God was your king." He seems to deprecate any intermediary between the subjects and their sovereign. This divine reign, happily named by Josephus a theocracy, had a spiritual as well as a political aspect. It is closely connected with the later development, which assumed such overwhelming importance in the teaching of the parables of Jesus, and of the Sermon on the Mount, as to the Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of God is a reign rather than a realm. It is a state of things in which the will of God reigns supreme. It is an order of things which, from being inward and spiritual, tends to become outward and social, until at length it shall take possession of the entire domain of human life, and appear as a distinct epoch in history. Since this glorious state as yet exists only in a perfect manner in a higher sphere, it is called the Kingdom of Heaven. When in St. Luke we read that "yours is the kingdom of God," this denotes partial present possession and a right to future perfect possession. It is offered to all members of the Christian community. There is no distinction of class among those of whom it is said, "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Our Lord leaves it indefinite whether the term refers to the Christian society, as an institution, or whether it exists by an inward qualification. Perhaps intentionally he wished that the outward, social aspect should be elevated by the spiritual and inward aspect, and that the inward and spiritual should be realised in the outward and social form.

"The kingdom of God is at hand," was the message of John the Baptist. "The kingdom of God is among you" or "within you," is the message of Christ. "He made us a kingdom and priests," is the message of the Apocalypse. When Christians are described as reigning, it means they enter into the principles and take their share in advancing the divine reign. Thus the ideal Israel is at once a kingdom and a priesthood, as expressing at once the union of purpose and communion of soul with the Infinite.

Another important moment in the development of this idea is the rise of the prophets. The prophetic order, as opposed to the priesthood, cherished a confident expectation of the establishment on earth of the Kingdom of God. They sounded a trumpet-call to a more intense realisation of personal responsibility. They turned men's attention from ritual to heart obedience. The divinely touched prophets were in the eyes of Israel laymen. They, being called of God, warned men of being kept at a distance from God.

1. Micah (6:6) called men's minds to a purer ideal: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?... Shall I give... the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:7-8).

2. Isaiah emphasised the danger of reliance on ceremony, ritual, and sacrifice. "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me.... Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil

of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil: learn to do well; seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." In Isaiah 8:5 a marked stage is seen in the ministry of Isaiah as he withdraws from political Israel. He waits upon God. Here is the germ of the church idea proper. Dr. Robertson Smith says: "The formation of this little community was a new thing in religion. Till then no one dreamed of a fellowship of faith, disassociated from all material forms maintained without the exercise of ritual service, bound together by faith in the Divine Word alone. It was the birth of a new era, for it was the birth of the conception of the Church, the first step in the emancipation of spiritual religion from the forms of political life a step not less significant because its consequences were not seen till centuries had passed away."

Isaiah revealed the great truth: "All thy children shall be taught of God."

Habakkuk (2:14) foretold that "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Jeremiah (31:34) spoke of a day when "they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." An inspired writer of later date, probably about A.D. 68, could say of our Lord Himself: "If He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, seeing there are those who offer the gifts according to the law" (Hebrews 8:4).

Thus from Aaron to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, the provisional and temporary institution of the Jewish priesthood is noticed as continuing, but a more spiritual worship and an outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh was an ideal which never faded from the minds of the prophets, as is most clearly expressed by Joel (2:28): "It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit."

It is most significant that it is St. Peter the apparent recipient of the Great Commission, "On this rock will I build My church" it is St. Peter who is the first to recognise the priesthood of all Christians at the moment of Pentecost: "This is that which hath been spoken by the prophet Joel;... I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all flesh." It is he also who in his Epistle says: "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices."

Again, it is St. John who records the Great Commission after the Resurrection, "Whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them" who says of all Christians, "As for you, the anointing ye received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any teach you." When Christ came the great ideal was realised. Though not of the tribe of Aaron, he became the One Great High Priest of Christianity. Dealing with God as a Son, he encouraged men to address the Father as sons. The Jewish priesthood in its exclusiveness had been superseded by a wider priesthood which God had in view from the first. Of this general priesthood the share possessed by the main body, who are not members of the ministerial priesthood, is what I now desire to define. The first use of the word "layman" occurs in the following passage of St. Clement of Rome, where he is speaking of the arrangements under the Mosaic law: "For unto the high priest his proper services have been

assigned: and to the priests their proper office is appointed: and upon the Levites their proper ministrations are laid. The layman is bound by the layman's ordinances." [St. Clemens Romanus, xl. 5:6 laikoj anqrwpoj toij laikoiij prostagmasin dedetai] The word "layman" points us back to laoj, the special title of the chosen people of God, as distinguished from the nations around. laoj is used 1,500 times in the Septuagint as the connotation of God's people. It is contrasted with the "goyim," eqnh, "gentes." Therefore to speak of the laity is to speak of the community of the chosen and privileged people, the ideal Israel of God.

It is an inspired word, and recalls the early history of God's call and choice. The word "laity" is a nobler word than people imagine. It is a word of most positive spiritual privilege. It implies the possession of the glory of covenanted access to God and intimacy with God. It is apt to be thought of as a merely negative term, used to describe one who is not a clergyman, not a lawyer, not a medical man, not an expert in some science or art. This may be the modern use of the word. But for ancient Israel it was to be one of the people, which God had made His own. It was predicted as of the very nature of the New Covenant, that in it the gift of the Holy Spirit should be given to all flesh, to the elect people of God as a whole. In a sense never realised by the Jews, Christians were to be collectively a royal priesthood and individually kings and priests. They were not to depend simply on a few official teachers of truth, but all were to know God, from the least to the greatest.

"Certainly," says Canon Liddon, "if Christian laymen would only believe with all their hearts that they are priests, we would get rid of some of the difficulties which vex the Church. For it would be seen that in the Christian Church there is only a difference of the degree in which spiritual powers are conferred, that it is not a difference in kind.

"The Christian layman was thus, in early days, in his inmost life, penetrated through and through with the sacerdotal idea, spiritualised and transfigured as it was by the Gospel. If the temple of the layman's soul can again be the scene of spiritual worship, he will no longer fear lest the ministerial order should confiscate individual liberty. The one priesthood will be found to be the natural extension and correlative of the other." The layman's admission to his privilege is by St. Paul affirmed to be Baptism. St. Jerome says: "Sacerdotium laici id est baptisma." In later times the rite of Confirmation was considered to be the beginning, as marking the time when the Holy Spirit was definitely conveyed. But still this principle of the priesthood of all Christians was maintained as a doctrine of the Church in interpretation of the unction which in early times accompanied the rite of Confirmation, with laying on of hands. That was considered as each man's and each woman's ordination to a personal share in the kingship and priesthood of Christ. The holy oil, say the mediaeval writers, is stamped on the forehead to remind each Christian child that he must wear the diadem of kingship and the dignity of priesthood. Which things are an allegory. The priesthood of the laity consists in the privilege of personal nearness to God, in the right to plead for oneself and others with confident intercession, to stand for God before a heathen world, the right to offer self devotion to God; above all, the free access, without any intermediary, into the very presence of God! The doctrine of the priesthood of all Christians is of the greatest importance in the spiritual and moral growth of each individual believer. It emphasises his free access to the presence of God for himself and for others. It implies that his whole life should be an offering well-pleasing to God. It leads to the practice of the realisation of the presence of God in reverent communion of the soul with Him. But it has a wider aspect. It raises the view of the position of others in God's sight. It has

been instrumental in the emancipation of the degraded and oppressed, in the removal of artificial barriers between class and class, and in the diffusion of a philanthropy untrammelled by the fetters of party and race.

Consciously or unconsciously the idea of a universal priesthood of the religious equality of all men (which, though not untaught before, was first embodied in the Church of Christ) has worked, and is working, untold blessings in political institutions and social life.

It has been forgotten, ignored, and obscured; but throughout the history of the Church it has been struggling for expression. Yet its results are but a small indication of what it shall be when the primitive ideal shall be restored and it shall be allowed to have free course in the lives of men and nations.

There is an ingrained tendency in human nature for men to allow others to do their devotions for them. Such neglect has led to the lowering of the spiritual life of the main body and to the loss of the primitive ideal. There has been a cleavage between those called to minister and the main portion, which possesses no lower status, no lesser dignity than to be members of the body of Christ on earth.

Tertullian protested against such a difference of standards. "We greatly err," he said, "if we think that what is not allowed to priests is allowed to laymen. Are not we laymen priests? Is it not written, He hath made us priests to God and His Father? "

"The true greatness," said Bishop Westcott, "of the Day of Pentecost lies in the power which stirred human souls with a sense of the divine fellowship. That power is still unexhausted. The wind fell: the flames died away: the voices ceased: but a life was quickened a Church was sent forth conquering and to conquer. The gift of Pentecost was a common gift. It was the endowment of a body representative of all believers. In this form the gift of the Spirit was not for the apostles alone, or for any one class, but for all who had embraced the message of the Resurrection. It is our inheritance as Christians, and we need to remember that it is the inheritance of all, to be administered by all.

"If hitherto laymen have done little in the active service of the faith, it is because little has been required of them. We have not pressed upon them boldly enough the duty of prophetic ministry. We have not charged them to stir up the grace that is in them. The clergyman cannot trace on every side the Gospel's rich harmonies with its many strains of life.

"We cannot fulfil our sense of office, we cannot gain our end, till every Church man and Churchwoman is a church worker. Our National Church has not striven to inspire each of her children with the enthusiasm of service. She has not pressed home the fact that in spiritual things, as in temporal, we are in danger from what is called the slow suicide of idleness.

"She has wronged the brotherhood, and wronged the world. But God has promised to pour forth His Spirit on all flesh, and your young men shall see visions, visions which shall bring back a lost glory to the earth. And your old men shall dream dreams dreams which are the foreshadowings of that better order of things which God hath prepared for us."

## A 03 - The Great Commission

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Ryder PLHC: 03 The Great Commission THE GREAT COMMISSION

O Almighty God, who hast built Thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner-stone; Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple acceptable unto Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collect for SS. Simon and Jude. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Petros, and upon this petra I will build my ecclesia; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. ST. Matthew 16:18.

THESE words were probably spoken on a path where the overhanging rocks were inscribed with the symbols of a licentious worship. Close by was the city of Caesarea Philippi, where a short time before Herod Philip had built a temple to the deified Augustus, and where the emperor was worshipped as a god. Amid scenes of nature worship, and near the site of a temple raised by Roman statecraft to a human being, Jesus made the promise which has been so marvellously fulfilled.

Nature-worship in its lustful passion, and the divine honours paid to deified emperors, were to disappear before the new community here promised by Christ. The word "ecclesia" had its roots in the past.

Two advantages are gained by using the Greek word "ecclesia" instead of the English word "church." In the first place we can put aside the associations which have gathered round the word "church." But this is but part of the advantage. We not only clear our minds of modern associations, but we gain a true insight into the real significance of the Christian community as we examine the ancient associations of the word "ecclesia." The ecclesia of the New Testament takes its name and primary idea from the ecclesia of the Old Testament. The word itself was a common word in classical Greek, and was adopted in the Book of Deuteronomy and onwards by the Septuagint translators as the usual rendering of the Hebrew word "qahal."

There are three words deserving of notice:

1. "Am" is generally translated laoj, "the chosen people of God."
2. "Edhah," generally translated sunagwgh, "the gathering of the people together."
3. "Qahal," which appears in the Greek Bible as "ecclesia." It may be difficult to distinguish between "synagogue" and "ecclesia," but Dr. Schürer is inclined to think that "synagogue" refers to the assembly of Israel as a matter of fact, whereas "ecclesia" is always more or less idealistic. "Ecclesia," the word with mystic more than mortal references, was thus singularly appropriate to become the title of the society indwelt by Christ.

Most interesting are two other shades of meaning. Vitringa says "synagoge," like "edhah," always means a gathering, a crowd, although united by no common bond; but "ecclesia," like "qahal,"

signifies any assembly whose constituents are a people, internally connected by common laws and bonds, although they are not forced nor can be forced. St. Augustine says "ecclesia " is a nobler word than "synagoge," the first being the calling together of men, the second a mere gathering together, even of cattle.

There is no foundation for the widespread notion that "ecclesia" means a people or a number of individuals called out of the world or out of mankind unto the Christian society. To the Jew the ecclesia meant the assembly of the congregation of Israel, summoned to meet not man but God at the door of the tabernacle in accordance with the promise, " There will I meet with thee." The congregation of Israel summoned by the silver trumpets was the earliest ecclesia. St. Stephen says of Moses, "This is he that was in the ecclesia in the wilderness in the Mount Sinai." To the Greek the ecclesia was an assembly of citizens summoned to the Legislative Assembly. It was the sovereign assembly of the Greek free state. To the Christian it was to be a congregation of the redeemed (and therefore of the free) summoned by His messengers, the "sent men" (as apostles were called), to appear in the presence of the Lord, who had promised to be in the midst of them. In a word, it was to be a theocratic democracy.

We shall refer later to the twofold use of the word, either as the title of an actual local assembly or the ideal body of Christ.

It is most instructive to observe that in classical Greek "ecclesia" is never a hierarchy or an oligarchy. It is never a council or committee, but a popular assembly, even if it happens to be a disorderly one. Dion Cassius uses the word to denote the Roman Comitia, the ruling popular assembly of the Populus Romanus.

It is significant to note that this old classical sense reappears appropriately enough in connection with the Greek city of Ephesus in Acts 19:32; Acts 19:39; Acts 19:41. At Ephesus the silversmiths who manufactured silver shrines of the goddess Diana aroused the people against St. Paul and created a tumult. The description is very noteworthy: " Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the ecclesia was in confusion; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together." The town clerk made an adroit speech, in the course of which he said: " But if ye seek anything about other matters, it shall be settled in the regular ecclesia (en th ennomw ekklhsia). And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the ecclesia." On Christ's lips the emphasis lay on the word "My." The words "My ecclesia" recalled the past. The Psalmist had prayed, "Remember Thy congregation (" edhah," "synagoge") which Thou hast purchased of old to be the tribe of Thine inheritance." St. Paul at Miletus quoted these words, changing "synagoge" to " ecclesia," and linking the Israel of old with the Israel of Christ, when he said to the elders of Ephesus, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the ecclesia of God, which He purchased with His own blood."

Thus we learn the associations of the word "ecclesia." These are: on the one hand the assembly of a self-governing Greek republic; on the other the theocratic state of privileged Israel. As to the choice of the word, Dr. Hort believes that "qahal" was translated ekklhsia on account of the apparent similarity in form between " qahal " (derived from an obsolete root) and the word kalew, or rather ekkalew), "to summon to a meeting." The original meaning, how ever, was not that of special individuals called out of the world, but an assembly summoned from their homes by crier or by silver trumpet.

Dr. Schmiedel thinks that the word could not have fallen from the lips of Christ, because "ecclesia" is never used in the Gospels except in St. Matthew, and there only twice: "On this rock I will build My ecclesia." "If he refuse to hear the ecclesia." Christianity, it is said, came into the world as an idea rather than an institution. Our Lord sought rather to change the hearts of men than to reform external organisation. The words, "I will build my ecclesia," seem unlike our Lord's usual setting forth of an ethical or spiritual truth. In reply it may be said that the word was used in Christian writings before the Greek text of St. Matthew. This use may have come from Christ Himself. The date of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Thessalonians lies between A.D. 49 and 53. In 1 Thessalonians 2:14 we read, "Ye became imitators of the ecclesiae of God which are in Judaea in Christ Jesus." Galatians, written A.D. 58, has (Galatians 1:13), "How that beyond measure I persecuted the ecclesia of God." This shows that St. Paul in A.D. 53 and 58 recognised the Christian community as an ecclesia. The trend of modern criticism has been to place St. Matthew in its Greek form in a period of distress close to the destruction of Jerusalem say A.D. 68 to 70. In St. Paul's writings we have the words "ecclesia," "baptism," "eucharist," all implying a religious community and all in common use within a score of years from the death of our Lord.

It certainly was in use before St. Matthew's Gospel was written. In any case Dr. Hort thinks an early interpolation of the word *ekklhsia* in the second century for polemic purposes most unlikely. The term "ecclesia" is found 110 times in the New Testament, and of these 86 occur in the Epistles of St. Paul and the Acts of the Apostles. We turn to St. Paul to help us in expanding the thought contained in this word.

There are five fundamental ideas: (1) The New Testament ecclesia is a fellow ship with Jesus and with the brethren through Him. (2) This fellowship is permeated with a sense of unity. (3) This united fellowship is to manifest itself in a visible society. (4) This visible society has bestowed upon it by our Lord a divine authority. (5) Finally, it is to be a sacerdotal society.

1. St. Paul emphasises the thought that a fellowship with Jesus makes the ecclesia. If he writes to the ecclesia of God in Corinth, he is careful to define it "To the ecclesia of God in Corinth, even them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." The individual believer is never lost in the society, and he is never alone and separate. The bond of union is not an external framework impressed from without, but a sense of fellowship springing from within. The fellowship appears in the way he speaks of gifts of grace. These various gifts are bestowed on different members of the Christian society for the edification of all. They serve to show that it is one organism, where the whole exists for the parts, and each part for the whole and the other parts.

2. The second characteristic is unity. There was one assembly of the congregation of Israel, one sovereign assembly in the Greek city-state yet out of the 110 times in which the word "ecclesia" occurs in the New Testament 100 passages refer to the local Christian society. St. Paul alone (if we except the first passage in St. Matthew) uses the word in its universal application, and he does it in two Epistles only that to the Ephesians and that to the Colossians, both of them dating from his Roman captivity. It has been ingeniously suggested by Dr. Ramsay that a development in the ideas of St. Paul went hand in hand with his geographical environment. Thus when he says "the ecclesia of the Thessalonians," it corresponds to the ecclesia of the Greek city-state. When he speaks of the ecclesia in Corinth, it suggests the existence of an ecclesia elsewhere than in Corinth. He hints at an all-embracing organisation in spiritual matters like the Roman Empire in

political affairs. But finally he writes his Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians from Rome, and the world-wide idea becomes permanent. Writing from Rome, St. Paul could not divest himself, even if he would, of a sense of speaking from the centre of all earthly affairs. He was himself a Roman citizen, and proud to hold such a place in the empire. In Rome he was reminded of the unity already existing which comprehended both Jew and Gentile under the bond of subjection to the Emperor at Rome. Both similarity and contrast would alike suggest that a truer unity bound together in one society all believers in the Crucified Lord.

3. The Ecclesia of our Lord's promise was to be a visible community. The congregation of Israel and the sovereign assembly of the Greek city-state had been visible things. His Ecclesia was set over against the Israel that denied Him. One visible community was set over against another. When St. Paul made havoc of the ecclesia he persecuted more than an abstraction. He haled living men and women to prison and confined them within real walls.

4. To this visible society Christ gave authority. Jesus, in three well-known passages, states that He gives authority to His Ecclesia.

(a) The first is in St. Matthew 16:18-19: "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Petros, and upon this petra I will build My ecclesia; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

I have already referred to the fact that the word "ecclesia" occurs only twice in the Gospels, and on both occasions in St. Matthew. This fact has given rise to doubts as to the trustworthiness of the record here. The usual explanation is that St. Matthew had access to materials not available to the other evangelists. It has been urged that these two passages have the appearance of being thrust into the text to support the growing authority of the Ecclesia. Such a suggestion may be dismissed as most unlikely at such an early period as that to which the MSS. bear witness. The first promise was made to St. Peter in very special circumstances. Our Lord had asked a question, "Who do men say that I the Son of Man am?" St. Peter answering in the disciples name, made himself their representative. He replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This confession contained in germ all future confessions of the Ecclesia.

It had been revealed to him by the Father. It was the prelude to the voice of a great multitude, and to the voice of many waters, and to the voice of many thunders of the acclamations of brethren who were to bear testimony to Jesus. St. Peter answered as spokesman for the Twelve. The promise was made to St. Peter as representing the multitudes, who through the long vistas of time were to make the same confession.

There is a celebrated passage in St. Cyprian's *De Unitate Ecclesie*, in which he gives a very remarkable reason for the fact that the commission was given to a single individual. Archbishop Benson, in his *Life of St. Cyprian*, tells the strange story of the subsequent interpolation of this passage, to which I will refer again. In the original text of St. Cyprian the sentence runs thus:

"The Lord said unto Peter, Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build My Ecclesia. Although after the Resurrection He gave equal power to all His apostles, nevertheless in order to make this unity manifest He made the origin of that very unity to begin from one person. Certainly all the apostles were that which Peter was, endued with equal share both of honour and office; but the beginning

sets out from unity, that one Ecclesia of Christ may be pointed out." In this historic passage St. Cyprian sets himself to account for a commission to an individual, which in its fullest content he believed to be shared with others.

Origen, in his Commentary on St. Matthew on this passage, goes farther. He states that this promise, though given to Peter, was also given to all believers. Origen writes: " But if any one says, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, not by flesh and blood, but through the Father in heaven, he will obtain the things which are spoken, according to the letter of the Gospel to that Peter; but as the Spirit of God teaches, it was spoken to every one who believes as Peter did.

"As members of Christ, deriving their name from Him, they are called Christians, so from Christ, the Spiritual Rock, they are called Peters. If you would suppose that upon that one Peter only the whole Ecclesia of God is built by Christ, what would you say about John, the Son of Thunder, or each of the apostles? Shall we say that the gates of hell shall not prevail against Peter in particular, but they shall prevail against the other apostles or the perfect?"

Origen evidently maintains that to those who, inspired by the Father, make Peter's confession, the promise is made.

Dr. Hort says: "I believe that the most obvious interpretation of this famous passage is the true one. St. Peter himself, yet not St. Peter exclusively, but the other disciples also of whom he was spokes man, formed the rock which Christ had in view. Some other image than that of the ground under a foundation must have been chosen if that had been meant. Still less was it a question of an authority which should be transmitted to others. The whole was a matter of personal or individual qualifications for individual work. The out burst of keenly perceptive faith had now at last shown St. Peter to have prime qualifications for the task which his Lord contemplated for him." The rock on which the Church was to be built was a man confessing not the man apart from the confession (as Romanists insist), nor the confession apart from the man (as many Protestants argue). Long fellowship with Jesus, and the revelation of the Father, had created a personal trust in Christ's Messianic mission. This commission whatever it was, was given again to the disciples, and a third time to all assembled in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. This surely proves that a commission first given to one, then to the Twelve, then to the assembled disciples, was given to the whole Ecclesia, though first, from the circumstances of the case, to the earliest representatives. The promise is a quotation from Isaiah 22:22. The reference is to the substitution of Shebna for Eliakim in the time of Hezekiah. Dr. George Adam Smith points out that Eliakim, too, was superseded. The promise was one of authority to bear the key of the household of God. These words were Jewish terms of delegated authority. It implied that our Lord had appointed Peter and those whom he represented as stewards of the household to bind and to loose, to prohibit or permit, to admit or exclude.

Jesus had called attention to the scribes and Pharisees who sat in Moses seat. They had the keys, we are told, and had to be obeyed, but they used them to shut the door of the Kingdom of Heaven against men. Jesus said, "Woe unto you" for administering the keys in this way. Their shutting out evidently was not ratified in heaven. From this we infer that the mere official position of bearing the keys did not always ensure that what was done on earth should be ratified in heaven. The ratification depends on Christlike use. The Spirit of Christ is the necessary condition for the fulfilment of the promise. In the message to the ecclesia in Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7),

Christians were taught that the real bearer of the keys was the unseen yet ever-present Christ. "These things saith He that is holy, He that is true... He that openeth, and none shall shut, and that shutteth, and none openeth." It is only when He admits, that there can be any true admission; it is only when He excludes, that there can be any real exclusion.

Mere dependence on official authority without the Spirit of Christ or the faithful obedience of Peter, has been shown in history to have led to disaster.

(b) The second saying is recorded in St. Matt, 18:17. The disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" In the course of His reply He said, " If thy brother refuse to hear thee in the presence of two or three witnesses, tell it to the ecclesia: and if he refuse to hear the ecclesia also, let him be unto thee a heathen man and a publican. [The margin of the Revised Version here suggests "congregation" for the Greek ekklesia.] What things soever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and what things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Grammatically the word "ye" refers back to the beginning of the chapter, "And the disciples came unto Him."

Thus the commission is now given to the disciples. But further, it is impossible to separate the promise from the words which immediately follow: "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father. For where two or three are gathered together... there am I in the midst of them." This confirmation of the promise previously given to St. Peter is, like it, conditional on prayer to the Father and on the presence of Christ. The authority is given to the society of believers. It is not entrusted to any official class. It is not given to any human officers independent of the faithful as a body. It is given to the visible fellowship according to the measure in which they have been living in communion with Christ. In the present passage our Lord is not speaking of the future, but of the present. He is instructing His disciples how to deal with an offending brother. Dr. Hort says: " There are three stages of *elegxij*, or bringing his fault home to the offender, first to him when alone, then with two or three witnesses, thirdly in the presence of the ecclesia, the whole brotherhood. The principle in a measure holds good for all time. The actual precept is hardly intelligible if the ecclesia meant is not the local community, the local Jewish community to which the injured person and the offender both belonged." The meaning of the passage surely is that such an obstinate offender may be rightly excluded from the local Christian society. In such cases of unchristian obstinacy the deliberate decision of the ecclesia will be ratified in heaven.

(c) The third promise seems to have been made to the infant church in Jerusalem. This post-Resurrection promise is recorded in St. John xx. 19-23. " He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

If we compare this passage with St. Luke 24:33, we shall find that other disciples were present on this occasion besides the apostles. The two disciples returned from Emmaus to Jerusalem and found the Eleven gathered together and them that were with them.

Bishop Westcott says: " The recognition of the fact that both records refer to the same occasion is not questioned, but is overlooked or suppressed. St. John speaks of the disciples. This may mean the apostles, or may also include others not of their number. St. Luke says expressly that the

Eleven and them that were with them were gathered together when the Lord appeared in their midst. St. John seems to distinguish between the Twelve and the other disciples. He says: Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them. The other disciples therefore said unto Him. It is not only perfectly arbitrary, but against the whole tenor of the record, to suppose that the particular commission may have been given to a part out of the whole company."

Dr. Hort says even if we grant that our Lord spoke directly or principally to the Eleven, it was in their representative capacity. He elsewhere says of the Lord's Supper (The Christian Ecclesia, p. 30): "Of whom, then, in after times were the Twelve representatives that evening? If they represented an apostolic order within the Ecclesia, then the Holy Communion must have been intended only for members of that order, and the rest of the Ecclesia had no part in it. But if, as the men of the apostolic age and subsequent ages believed without hesitation, the Holy Communion was meant for the Ecclesia at large, then the Twelve sat that evening as representatives of the Ecclesia at large; they were disciples more than they were apostles."

Dr. Westcott says: "The main thought which the words convey is that of the reality of the power of absolution from sin, granted to the Ecclesia, and not to the particular organisation through which the power is administered. There is nothing in the context to show that the gift was confined to any particular group (such as the apostles) among the whole company present. The commission must therefore be regarded as properly the commission of the whole society, and not simply that of the Christian ministry.

"The promise, as being made not to one apostle, but to the Christian society, carries with it as of necessity the character of perpetuity. The society never dies. The exercise of the power must be placed in the closest connection with the faculty of spiritual discernment consequent on the gift of the Holy Spirit.

"In saying this I do not touch on the divine necessity by which different persons and channels through which the manifold graces of the Christian life are administered were subsequently carried out. I only wish to insist on the apostolic ministry of all Christians which no subsequent delegation of special duties can annul.

"As the Father hath sent Me, so send I you. The first word, *apostalke*, marked a definite work to be done; the second word, *pempo*), a personal relation between the sender and the sent. If only every Christian would have the courage to confess what he has found in his faith, without affectation and without reserve, if (that is) our apostles were multiplied a thousand fold, we should not wish so sadly as we do for the final triumph of Christ."

It is surely most remarkable that St. John, by whom the commission is recorded, and St. Peter, to whom representative power was given, stand out among the writers of the New Testament as dwelling on the priestly character of all Christians. May we say that the inferences drawn by those who heard the words were elaborated in the passage in St. Peter (1 Peter 2:5), "Ye are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices," and in St. John (Revelation 1:6), "He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father," and again (1 John 2:20), "And ye have an anointing from the Holy One, and ye know all things"?

All Christians, as such, were apostles envoys of their heavenly Lord. To ministers and people, while they were yet undistinguished, He directed the words of sovereign power in His

announcement of His victory over sin and death. "Peace be unto you: as the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.... Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

These three passages, taken in their context, and as interpreted by the writings of those who might have some special privilege in consequence of them, but who instead of claiming it maintained that it was a gift to the society, prove the priesthood of all Christians.

5. Lastly, the Ecclesia is a sacerdotal society. The Ecclesia of Christ is the ideal Israel. The special function of ancient Israel was to approach God. This central idea was connected with special times of approach, a special place of approach special men who made the approach on behalf of their fellows. The Ecclesia of Christ has the same central thought and the same connected idea. The main function of the Christian Ecclesia is to approach God. Just as in the Old Testament system the Jewish priests approached God and presented sacrifices to Him, so in the New Testament economy gifts are to be presented to God, and these offerings bear the name of sacrifices.

1. Our bodies (Romans 12:1). We are commanded to present our bodies as "a living sacrifice, holy, well-pleasing to God, which is our reasonable service (qusian zwsan again, euareston tw qew thn logikhn latreian umwn)."

2. Our praise (Hebrews 13:15). "Through Him let us offer up a sacrifice of praise (anaferwmen qusian ainesewj) to God continually."

3. Our faith (Php 2:17). St. Paul was poured out as a drink offering (spendomai epi th qusia kai leitourgia thj pistewj umwn) upon the sacrifice and service of the Philip pians faith.

4. Our almsgiving (Php 4:18) "a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God (osmhn euwdiaj, qusian dektjn, euareston tw qew)."

5. Our doing good (Hebrews 13:16). "To do good and communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased (toiautaj gar qusiaj euarestetai o qeoj)." To distinguish these sacrifices well-pleasing to God from the Old Testament offerings, they are called spiritual or living sacrifices (1 Peter 2:5, anenegkai pneumatikaj qusiaj euprosdektouj qew dia Ihsou Cristou); and in Romans 12:1 a living sacrifice (qusian zwsan). The labours of St. Paul to bring the heathen to a knowledge of God is called an offering (Romans 15:16 leitourgon, ierourgounta to euaggelion) ministering in sacrifice the Gospel of God, that the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified in the Holy Ghost. The Christian Ecclesia is the ideal Israel. The limitations only have disappeared. "The Christian ideal," says Bishop Lightfoot, "is a holy season extending all the year round, a temple confined only by the habitable globe, a priesthood including every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ." God can be approached at all times, in every place, by every one among His people. There may be a ministering (that is, a representative) priesthood; there cannot be a vicarious (that is, a mediating) priesthood in the Christian society.

Christ is the one Mediator, and all have access into the presence of God, and in this sense all are priests. As to the Eucharistic Service Luther says: "There our priest or minister stands before the altar, having been publicly called to his priestly function. He repeats publicly and distinctly Christ's words of institution. He takes the bread and the wine and distributes them according to Christ's words. We kneel beside him and around him, men and women, young and old, master and

servant, mistress and maid all holy priests together, sanctified by the blood of Christ.

We are there in our priestly dignity. We do not let the priest proclaim for himself the ordinance of Christ. But he is the mouthpiece of us all. We all say it with him in our hearts, with true faith in the Lamb of God who feeds us with His body and blood."

Thus the Holy Supper (as we shall see in the earliest liturgies) the very centre of all Christian worship, where Christ gives Himself to His people, and where they dedicate themselves to Him in body and soul and spirit was always a sacrifice in the sense that prayers, praises, and almsgiving were a sacrifice. The Ecclesia of Christ was a sacerdotal society; its members were all in this sense priests and its services were all sacrifices.

Each member had a right of direct access to the throne of God, bringing with him the sacrifices of his prayers, his praise, his means, and of his life.

Dr. Bright, in *Some Aspects of Primitive Church Life*, shows that in the Liturgy of St. Basil the words of 1 Peter 2:9, "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation," are quoted shortly before the words of institution.

He points out that in the Canon of the Roman Mass the words occur: "Wherefore, O Lord, we Thy servants and also (sed et) Thy Holy People (plebs sancta), being mindful, do offer to Thy Glorious Majesty, out of (de) Thine own gifts, a pure sacrifice." In the Book of Common Prayer there is an offering of the whole life: "And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reason able, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee."

We need criticism of the past as well as exhibition of the past; and we need to sift what is really catholic and permanent in organisation and rites, with more discrimination than has been often used among us, from what is local and transitory. My own determined conviction is that the fairest hope for days to come is to be found in the spread of Anglican principles, both in our own communion and in the churches which exist around it. Our ideal is not to absorb but to leaven; to penetrate with healthy life, not to lord it over God's heritage. The practical conclusions must surely be: (1) that while some form of regular ministry is always necessary, it need not exclude a charismatic ministry; and (2) that while episcopacy must be a marked feature of the church of the future, it need not everywhere have exactly the same relation to the presbyterate.

BISHOP OF SALISBURY, *The Ministry of Grace*.

## A 04 - The Commission in Exercise

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Ryder PLHC: 04 The Commission in Exercise IV THE COMMISSION IN EXERCISE And He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ:... that we may grow up in all things into Him, which is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love. Ephesians 4:11-12; Ephesians 4:15-16.

I HAVE seen a picture in the Ducal Palace in Venice which commemorates the triumph of Venice in the battle of Lepanto in the seventeenth century. The leading thought in the picture is most impressive. At first the only thing which you can perceive is a magnificent figure of our Saviour, arrayed in royal robes, sitting crowned, with His sceptre in His right hand and the orb in His left, while above Him and around Him extends the blue expanse of heaven. As you draw nearer, you gradually begin to see next in order two kneeling figures, one being that of the Doge of Venice, the hero of Lepanto, the other that of the victorious general who was killed in the battle. Behind them stand the naval commanders, the troops, the captives. The spoils of war and captured treasures are heaped in the rear. This mode of pious commemoration was doubtless suggested by that passage in the Psalms (Psalms 115:1) "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory" which was the war-cry of the Venetians in the Crusades. It is most suggestive that the attitude which commends itself to this most Christian city in the hour of its greatest glory is that of the deepest humility. The truth is forcibly taught that it was in the name of Christ that they fought, they conquered, they died. The service only was theirs, but the glory was His alone.

I have often thought that the Book of the Acts of the Apostles is very like that painting. It, too, places most conspicuously the majestic form of the Risen and Ascending Christ amid the clouds of heaven, uttering his parting commission "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The Risen and Ascending Christ, sending down power from on high, occupies the whole field of the volume, and all that follows only fills in the details. The passage before us says, "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." He gave the precious assets of gifts of the Spirit, and the Spirit inspired men. The words of the text are emphatic, " And He Himself gave (kai autoj edwketouj men apostolouj)." Thus whatever theory we hold, the authority is theocratic. The power and qualification come from above. There are two truths, both necessary, both complementary, and mutually corrective. It is true that the commission was given to the Ecclesia as a whole. It is also true that it was given from above given by Christ through the Holy Spirit. But it was a charismatic ministry. Function and not office is what is spoken of in the passage before us. The candid student will remember that the Church was built on the foundation of the prophets as well as of the apostles. These were Christian prophets, as is evident; for St. Paul in the previous chapter says, "as it hath now been revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit" (Ephesians 3:5).

These Christian prophets occupy a most important place in the Didache; cf. xiii. 4, " Every first-fruit of the produce of thy oxen and thy sheep thou shalt give to the prophets, for they are thy high priests." The apostles themselves were prophets, the earliest but not the last of the holders of the primitive charismatic gifts. Their source of success was Christ; their power was through the Spirit. The object of the present lecture is to trace in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles of St. Paul, in a few important moments, the Ecclesia in the exercise of its divine commission. There is no foundation for the notion that our Lord gave special unrecorded instructions as to the organisation of the Church during the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension. The recently discovered Testament of our Lord purports to give in detail the things which He spoke concerning the kingdom (cf. Acts 1:6). It has been shown to be a book written in Asia Minor in A.D. 350, containing obsolete customs. But from internal evidence we can see that it is apocryphal, for it does not correspond to the facts.

We are met on the threshold of the Acts by the earliest instances of ecclesiastical appointment in the orphaned Church. To fill the vacancy caused by the defection of Judas the disciples, to the number of one hundred and twenty, were gathered together. The whole body of disciples put forward two names, that of Barsabbas and Matthias, as those of men suitable for apostleship. The prayer was offered, " Thou Lord, who knowest the hearts, show of these two men whom Thou hast chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship." Two tablets, one bearing the name of Matthias, the other the name of Barsabbas, were placed in a vessel. The name on the tablet which first leaped to light was to be accepted as the name of the man chosen by God. The main body of the disciples nominated. God was asked to choose. It is very noteworthy that this system of election by sortilege is not again mentioned. It occurs significantly between the Ascension and Pentecost, when the disciples were orphans. Stier regards this election premature and unwarranted, the outcome of St. Peter's impetuosity. He holds that St. Paul was the true successor of Judas, chosen, like the other apostles, by our Lord Himself. On the other hand, St. Luke, the beloved friend of St. Paul, endorses the election; for though he speaks of the eleven apostles before the election " Matthias was numbered with the eleven " (Acts 1:26) he speaks of the Twelve after the election at the appointment of the deacons " The twelve called the multitude unto them " (Acts 6:2). I refer to this incident to note that thus early in the history of church organisation does the main body of Christians obtain a certain recognition in the Ecclesia. The Day of Pentecost was the birthday of the Ecclesia in its full powers. The promise was, " Ye shall receive power (dunamij, vital power) after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." That power is still unexhausted. The fire fell; the flames died away; the voices ceased. But a life was quickened. The Ecclesia was sent on its way conquering and to conquer. Of that life we are all heirs. Of that Ecclesia we are all members. The recipients of that gift were not the apostles only, or the one hundred and twenty only, but all the believers in Christ then assembled for the season of the Feast in Jerusalem. The apostles received the Holy Spirit, not as representatives of the Ecclesia, but as fellow recipients with the assembled disciples. The gift of tongues was not the permanent acquisition of new languages, but an ecstatic utterance perhaps unintelligible to the speaker himself. For there was the separate gift of interpretation of tongues. St. Peter identified the earlier and later glossolalia. At the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10:46) the centurion and his household spoke with tongues. St. Peter compared this incident with Pentecost (Acts 11:15): "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them even as on us at the first." The gift of tongues was, after Pentecost, granted to St. Paul and others. It was given at Pentecost to all the disciples present, for St. Peter recognised it as

a fulfilment of Joel's prophecy that the Spirit should be poured out upon all flesh. This administration of the Holy Spirit was the basis of difference between one Christian and another in the Early Ecclesia. It was not office that imparted function, but function that led to office. This is evident in the case of St. Stephen. Dr. Harnack says the appointment of the Seven "is the earliest datum of ecclesiastical organisation." In that incident we observe the recognition of the main body of the Ecclesia. The name in the Acts seems to be to plhqoj, "the multitude." What St. Cyprian calls "plebs Christiana" St. Luke calls to plhqoj. The Twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, "Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good repute filled with the Spirit, whom we may appoint over this business." The saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen and the others, "whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them."

We next learn the truth that as to the higher order, that of presbyter, it is to the synagogue, and not to the temple, that we must look if we wish to understand the duties, the status, the office of the Christian presbyter.

Such an examination will reveal the fact that the ministerial office possessed no special sacerdotal associations in the Primitive Ecclesia. In the earlier chapters of the Acts we read of Jewish elders or presbyters. The accusers of Stephen in the sixth chapter stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes. But in Acts 11:30 the title is next assigned to officers in the Christian Ecclesia. The disciples sent relief for the brethren in Judea to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Paul. We read in Acts 14:23 that Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every ecclesia (in Lycaonia).

Bishop Lightfoot remarks on Acts 11:30: Now at all events we read for the first time of presbyters in connection with the Christian brotherhood in Judea. The Christian Church was regarded in its earliest stage by the Jewish people as nothing more than a new sect springing up by the side of the old. The sects in the Jewish Church were not, properly speaking, nonconformists. Each sect could have its own synagogue. The Christian congregations in Palestine long continued to be designated by the name of "synagogue." St. James says, "if there come into your synagogue a man with a gold ring" (St. James 2:2). But the name of "ecclesia" took its place from the very first in heathen countries. With the synagogue itself they would adopt the normal government of the synagogue. A body of elders or presbyters would be chosen to direct the religious worship, and partly to watch over the temporal well-being of the society.

Hence the silence of St. Luke. When he first mentions presbyters he mentions them without preface, as though the institution were a matter of course.

Two persecutions, of which St. Stephen and St. James were respectively the chief victims, mark two important stages in the diffusion of the Gospel. They were also connected with the internal organisation of the Church. The first resulted from the establishment of the lowest order in the ministry, the diaconate. To the second may be ascribed the adoption of the next higher grade, the presbyterate. The later persecution was the signal for the dispersion of the Twelve on a wider mission. Since Jerusalem would be no longer their home as heretofore, it became necessary to provide for the permanent direction of the Church there. For this purpose the usual government of the synagogue was adopted. From this time onward all official communications with the mother church were carried on through their intervention.

Jewish presbyters existed already in all the powerful cities of the Dispersion. Christian presbyters would early occupy a not less wide area. In the apostolic writings "presbyter" and "bishop" are only different designations of the same office. The term "bishop" is used only of the office among Gentile Christians, as a synonym for "presbyter." At Philippi, in Asia Minor, in Crete, the presbyter is called "episcopos."

St. Clement, voicing the Greek Church at Rome, used the title when writing to the Greek Church in Corinth: "And our apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife over the name of the bishop's office" (St. Clement, xliv.). The word is Hellenic. Directors of religious and social clubs among the heathen were properly so called. Gentile Christians and Gentile heathens would naturally give this name to the presiding members of the new society. The infant Church, which appeared to the Jews as a synagogue, would be regarded by the heathen as a confraternity. When the term "bishop" was appropriated to a higher office in the Church, "presbyter" became again, as it had been before, the sole designation of the Christian elder.

I desire to emphasise that the words for ministerial office in the New Testament are "president," "overseer," "pastor," "elder," "minister" ("those that have the rule, those that labour") but never *iereuj*, whereas *iereuj* and *ierateuma*. are used of the main body of Christians considered as the ideal Israel. The only priesthoods known in the Christian Ecclesia in the New Testament are the priesthood of all Christians and the priesthood of Christ.

We shall next inquire who were present at, and took part in, the deliberations of the First Council in Jerusalem in Acts 15:1-41.

Dr. Hort says, "It can hardly be doubted that the Ecclesia at large was in some manner present."

St. Irenaeus says, "Cum universa ecclesia convenisset." The apostles and elders came together to consider of this matter. When there had been much questioning (*pollhj de zhthsewj*) St. Peter arose. The word *zhthsij*, says Grimm, from "examining" came to mean "mutual questioning, disputing, discussion." This indicates the possibility of different views and opinions, not only of the apostles and elders, but of the multitude. When Paul and Barnabas spoke all the multitude kept silence (*Esighse de pan to plhqoj*). We may infer from the words "all the multitude kept silence," as compared with the previous statement, that there was "much questioning," that lay members of the Church (the *plhqoj*) had not only been present, but had taken part in the discussion. To this may be added what has often been forgotten that light is thrown on this meeting in Jerusalem by the Epistles of St. Paul, in which subjects of the deepest importance are referred to the whole body of the Ecclesia to search out and judge the utterances of truth.

St. James, brother of our Lord, and mentioned by Eusebius as first Bishop of Jerusalem, took part in this debate. The very exceptional nature of the conference and its early date lead us to believe that his position was that of an honoured counsellor. Alford says: "There does not seem to be in St. James's speech any decision *ex cathedra* either in the hear me (*akousate mou*) at the beginning or in the I judge (*egw krinw*). The decision lay in the weightiness, partly of the person speaking, but principally of the matter spoken by him. St. James was the representative of the strictest adherence to the pure standard of legal morality. He, as guardian of the traditions of the house of Israel, cast his influential vote on the side of liberty. His opinion was specially valued in this discussion. The sense of *ego prinw* is, 'This is my vote; I for my part thus judge (*sic censeo*).'

When his judgment, as well as that of Peter, was given in favour of the freedom of the Gentiles, the disputers even of the Pharisaical party are silenced. May we conjecture that he answered (apekriqh) the objections of the laity, who were always, as in the time of Cyprian, adverse to change or to leniency, and favourable to the side of strictness? For in the announcement of the decision there is no mention of St. James. \* Then it seemed good to the apostles and elders with the whole Church (sun olh th ekkhhsia) to choose men out of the company to send to Antioch/ The salutation in the letter is very remarkable: 'The apostles and elder brethren unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, greeting.'

While the Ecclesia is not specially mentioned, there is the unusual phrase "the elder brethren." Such is the correct reading and punctuation. Alford says: "In this, the first official mention of presbuteroi, it is very natural that the import of the term should be given by attaching adelfoi to it."

Thus this reading would mark a transition stage between the name "brethren," given to all Christians, and the distinctive title of "elders" attached to Christian office-bearers. Those who held office were but elder brethren in the great family of brethren. The letter concludes: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay on you no other burden than these necessary things."

We infer that in this binding and loosing by the first Council in Jerusalem there was a substantial share given to the main body of the Christian Ecclesia. The presence of laity in councils was decidedly primitive. No one who reads the Epistles of St. Cyprian, written in the year A.D. 250, can be ignorant how constantly he recognises the share of the "plebs Christiana" in the power of the Church. "From the beginning of my episcopate," he writes, "I have resolved to do nothing without your counsel [he is writing to the presbyters and deacons of Rome] and with out the consent of the lay people." The clergy of Rome write back, "In so great a matter [that is, the question of the lapsed] the same thing approves itself to us, viz. that an exchange of counsels be made with the bishops, presbyters, and lay people who have not lapsed (pariter cum stantibus laicis)."

Cyprian desired some of the penitent lapsed to be restored to church membership. The laity objected. Thus we often read that he gained his point with difficulty (vix extorqueo) owing to the opposition of the laity (plebe obnitente),

Eusebius (H. E. v. 16) says: "For the faithful held frequent conversations in many places throughout Asia, and examined the novel doctrines and pronounced them vain, and rejected their heresy; then they were expelled and prohibited from communion with the Church." The faithful thus decided, A.D. 180, on the question of the Montanists. This points to the inclusion of the laity in the primitive Councils. It is this majestic consent, this universal adhesion, which gives to the Creeds of the first four Councils their full, grand, and irresistible authority. In St. Paul's discourse to the elders of Ephesus summoned to meet him at Miletus he said, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to the flock, in the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." No one now doubts that the overseers and presbyters referred to here are the same persons under different titles. He uses the word eqeto ("placed") of the Holy Spirit. He repeats this word twice when comparing the Ecclesia to a human body: "But now hath God set (eqeto) the members each of them in the body" (1 Corinthians 12:18). In ver. 28 he speaks of the Ecclesia, "And God set (eqeto) some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets." This points to functions performed by all the parts of the body, and not to ecclesiastical office. The salutation in Philippians is unique: "to all the saints, with the episcopoi and the diaconoi." It may be used in a general sense: "To all the saints, with those that

superintend and those that serve." Elsewhere the salutation is "to all the saints," except in the Pastoral Epistles. The expressions, "take heed unto the flock," "act as shepherds to the ecclesia," point to a shepherd's duties. The relation between people and ministers is best described by the word "pastor." It comes from the shepherd life in Eastern and Southern Palestine, in which a shepherd wandered with flocks of almost innumerable sheep over almost boundless tracts of undulating moorland. The fundamental idea is that of tending, guarding the strong, healing the weak, binding up the wounded, bringing back those wanderers who had gone astray. The records of the New Testament give us no ground for the association of sacerdotal ideas in connection with the titles of Christian ministers. With the exception of the Epistle to the Philippians and the Pastoral Epistles, St. Paul addresses his letters to the whole Christian community in each city. To the Romans the salutation is, "to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints." St. Clement, A.D. 95, voicing the Roman Church, begins in the same grand style: "The church of God dwelling in Rome to the church of God dwelling in Corinth, elect and consecrate." In Corinthians the salutation is still more striking. It is a definition of the Church. In apposition with the singular "ecclesia" comes the plural "sanctified persons." "Unto the church of God which is in Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints." In 1 Corinthians we read of a grievous moral sin which the Corinthian Church was tolerating in one of its members. Here surely we might expect either that the apostle would deal with it autocratically or delegate the punishment of it to the local leaders. Instead of either of these methods he writes to the whole body of believers in Corinth. While he is insistent that the incestuous person should be excluded from the community, he is equally determined that it shall be the act of the entire Christian ecclesia in Corinth: "Put away that wicked man from among you" (1 Corinthians 5:13). In this early case of binding and loosing the whole ecclesia is called upon to act: "Ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Corinthians 5:4).

It is interesting to note the Greek in 2 Corinthians 2:6. "This punishment, which was inflicted by the many (h epitimia auth h upo tw n pleionwn)" is by some explained as the sentence passed by the votes of the majority. Alford, however, thinks it means that the guilty person was shunned by the greater part of the church. When giving directions as to the Lord's Supper St. Paul's words are addressed to all the brethren. It is, to say the least of it, significant that all reference to the celebrant is withheld: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come" (1 Corinthians 11:26).

It is the whole church that offers and officiates: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? Seeing that we who are many are one bread, one body, for we all partake of one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:16). In Didache ix. directions are given to the whole body of believers as to the form of celebrating the Eucharist: But as touching the Eucharistic offering, give ye thanks thus: We give Thee thanks, O Father, for the life and knowledge which Thou didst make known to us through Thy Son Jesus Christ. As this broken bread was scattered on the mountains and being gathered together became one, so may this thy Ecclesia be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom.

"And after ye are satisfied thus give ye thanks [a beautiful Form of Thanksgiving is prescribed]. But permit the prophets to offer thanksgiving as much as they will."

Two other general directions are noteworthy: "Thus baptize ye," "Appoint for yourselves overseers and ministers worthy of the Lord, for they perform for you the service of the prophets." In early liturgies, as we shall see, and in our Book of Common Prayer reference is made to the whole body of Christians as making offerings at the Eucharist. "Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee."

St. Paul makes a distinction between the Jewish altar and the Christian Lord's Table: "Behold Israel after the flesh. Have not they which eat the sacrifice communion with the altar?" (1 Corinthians 10:18). He then speaks of idol sacrifices: "Ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of devils." He purposely avoids calling the Lord's Table of the Christian Eucharist an altar. Bishop Westcott, on the Epistle to the Hebrews, xiii. 10, on the words "we have an altar," says that never until the time of Cyprian (A.D. 250) is *quasi* altar used of the Lord's Table. He explains the passage as meaning our altar is the Cross; or if it means an enclosure for worship, as it frequently does, it means here the Christian congregation assembled for worship. Polycarp calls the Order of Widows the altar of God, because they receive the alms of the faithful and lead lives of prayer. St. Ignatius says of the arena where he was about to die, "My altar is now ready."

Bishop Westcott concludes a lengthened examination in these words: "In this first stage of Christian literature there is not only no example of the application of the word *quasi* altar to any material object, such as the Holy Table, but there is no room for such an application. Not until the time of Cyprian, and from that time on ward, does the phraseology of the Levitical law become transferred to the Christian institutions so carefully do the New Testament writers and Early Fathers avoid any suggestion of sacerdotal ideas. On the other hand we read of the body and its members. Christ is the Head and His disciples the members. In one passage Christ has a more striking position still, for Christ and His Ecclesia are described as the Christ: For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of the body being many are one body, so also is the Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12). This is in exact correspondence with the image employed by our Lord Himself: I am the Vine, ye are the branches.:

There are four lists of the gifts of the Spirit. In Ephesians 4:11, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (5). In 1 Corinthians 12:28, apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, healings, helps, governments, and tongues (8). In 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, wisdom, knowledge, faith, healings, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, kinds of tongues, interpretations of tongues (9). In Romans 12:8, prophecy, miracles, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling, showing mercy (7).

Dr. Hatch points out that ruling was a charisma as much as speaking with tongues, but that the gift of ruling, like Aaron's rod, swallowed up all the rest.

St. Paul gives us four lists of the gifts of the Spirit. In some he chooses to mention the gift in the abstract; in others the man possessing the gift as a precious asset to the Church; in other cases still he glides from the concrete to the abstract. Because two lists begin with the words "apostles and prophets" efforts have been made to force the words to mean orders among the clergy. Dr. Hort says much profitless labour has been spent in trying to force the various terms used into meaning so many definite ecclesiastical offices. Not only is the feat impossible, but the attempt carries us away from St. Paul's purpose, which is to show how the different functions are those which God has assigned to the different members of the human body. In Ephesians and Corinthians apostles come first, as those able to bear witness to the Resurrection; next prophets,

whose outpourings were regarded as specifically inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Dean Armitage Robinson in his Commentary on the Ephesians says: " We shall be disappointed if we come to this passage, or any of the parallels, in the expectation of finding the official orders of the Church's ministry." The three familiar designations, bishops, priests, and deacons, are all wanting. The evidence of the Acts of the Apostles, which employs two of these designations in reference to the leaders of the Ephesian Church, together with the evidence of the Epistle to Timothy, which employs all three in dealing with the organisation and discipline of this same church at Ephesus, forbids the suggestion that such officers are not mentioned because they did not exist or because the apostles attached but little importance to them. The reason for the silence must be sought in another direction. The most intelligible explanation is that bishops, presbyters, and deacons were primarily local officers, and St. Paul is here concerned with the Church as a whole.

Apostles, prophets, and evangelists are divinely gifted men who serve the Church at large; and if a local ministry is alluded to at all, it is only under the vaguer designation of pastors and teachers. The official ministry rises in importance as the first generation of apostolic and prophetic teachers passes away. The recovery of the Didache throws a fresh light on apostles and prophets. It shows us a later generation of apostles who are what we would call missionaries. They seem to correspond to evangelists in St. Paul's catalogue. This establishes that wider use of the word "apostle" as equal to "missionary," a point for which Bishop Lightfoot strongly contended. The Didache gives us an interesting picture of Christian prophets. They are pre-eminent in any community they choose to visit. They celebrate the Eucharist with special liturgical freedom. They receive the first-fruits of the tithes, "for they are your high priests." And when at the close of the Didache bishops and deacons are mentioned for the first time, honour is claimed for them in these significant terms: "For they also minister unto you the ministration of the prophets and teachers therefore despise them not, for they are your honourable ones along with the prophets and teachers." In this primitive picture it is instructive to see that the ministry of office is in the background, overshadowed for the present by the ministry of enthusiasm, but destined to absorb its functions and survive its fall.

We have examined the records of the Ecclesia in action, in the exercise of its divine commission, and we find evidence of the recognition of all the members as taking their share in the ministry in accordance with their gifts. We find a ministry of charismatic gifts a ministry of enthusiasm, not confined to officers, but shared by all Christians. No thoughts that to the world belong

Had stood against the wave

Of love, which set so deep and strong

From His still open grave.

## A 05 - Church Officers

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Ryder PLHC: 05 Church Officers CHURCH OFFICERS The Arabian Nights tell us of the fortunate possessor of a magic carpet who, when seated on his treasure, had only to wish to be carried anywhere in space he desired. Historians might long to be owners of a similar mat to carry them backwards and forwards throughout the past centuries. A visit to the mission field is the magic carpet which transports one back to the times of primitive Christianity. PROF. LINDSAY, D.D., The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries.

Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men out of their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, and they wrote thus by them. Acts 15:22. THE great question which presents itself to the student of early church organisation is this: Are we to conceive of the Christian ministry as originating by devolution from above, or by evolution from below?

It is by following the history of the ministry in its earlier stages, and at each step of the process endeavouring to determine which of the two theories fits the facts most satisfactorily, that we can attempt the solution of the problem.

We shall find that there are elements of truth in both, and we must try to discover what these elements are, and how they are to be considered. However, when we speak of devolution and of evolution, as applied to the ministry, we may mean one of two things. We may have in our minds either (a) the commission to minister given to the holders of that office, or (b) we may be thinking not so much of the holders of the office as of the offices themselves as they emerge in history.

Bishop Lightfoot, in his sketch of the growth of the Christian ministry, refers mainly to the latter. The question whether the Church did or did not create a new form of ministry seems to be a question of historical fact which can be answered as such. If it can, it ought to be answered independently of any further principle which may be involved in it. The problem has been stated thus: Must true ministerial character be in all cases conferred from above? or, may it some times, and with equal validity, be evolved from below? Is uninterrupted transmission from those who had the power to transmit a real essential? Or can the Church originate, at any point, a new ministry whose commission should exceed or transcend what had been ministerially received?

What is meant by evolution in such a connection as that before us? What a Christian means by evolution is only a particular method, and, as it would seem, the usual method of the divine working. Behind it, in it, and through it there is always the Providence of God shaping the course of human events in accordance with His sovereign will. "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalms 121:4). If the God of Israel, watching over His people, slumbered not nor slept, neither can we suppose that the author of the New Testament slumbered or slept. The New Covenant was to be conveyed throughout the world. We can see His direction in every step which led to its successful advancement. The process of revelation is an illustration of other parts of the divine working. In revelation of truth the Spirit of God was immediately present. Yet God's

revelation of Himself is made to us through men. These men prophets, apostles, evangelists, poets did not lose any of their attributes as men by becoming vehicles of truth. They wrote down naturally what they thought. Their thoughts have personal qualities, with which the divine action upon them did not interfere. Yet the result is not what would have been attained by any unassisted natural process. The preaching of St. Paul was a genuine human product and the expression of the mind of the apostle, but it was not therefore in any way less the word of God speaking through him. Thus he says in 1 Thessalonians 2:13: " For this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe."

Precisely in the same way we may be prepared to find the forms of Christian ministry growing out of human minds, the creation of successive experiences, yet all the time carrying out a divine plan in a divinely appointed way. It is in this sense that we speak of evolution in the growth of the Christian ministry.

We will begin with the case of the apostles. Is it the case that the twelve apostles received a formal commission of authority for government from Christ Himself?

We too often think that the title "apostle" was far more freely given to the Twelve than it really is in the Gospels, and that they were from the first invested with powers of which there is no trace. The name was given to them with a very special meaning. Our Lord appointed twelve whom He also called apostles that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth (ina apostellh autouj) to preach, and to have authority (exousian) to cast out demons. The word "apostle" seems to have its proper sense of "missioner." They were fitted for their mission by their nearness to the person of Jesus. In their Master's life this mission was small and limited. It was not until the moment of our Lord's Ascension that there was unfolded to them the greater commission to go and make disciples of all nations.

There is nothing in the Gospels which might not be accounted for by the providential outgrowth. The three great passages usually described as giving the Apostolic Commission we will discuss separately.

It was inevitable that those who stood nearest to the person of the Lord, who were able to tell more than any one else about Him, should take the lead. The function of the apostles was that of witnesses to Christ and His Resurrection. The deference paid to them was natural and spontaneous, and this is shown by the fact that Peter and John, who possessed natural ascendancy of character, came to the front, while the rest seem to remain in the back ground. St. James, the Lord's brother, was probably not one of the Twelve, and his position, though outside the apostolic circle, supports the view that it was not any fixed hierarchic authority which gave the apostles their status. The result of the Conference at Jerusalem led to action taken by the apostles and the elders, "with the whole church." The apostles act as leaders, but these resolutions go forth with the authority of the church as a whole. The letter is addressed to the Gentile Christians of Antioch by the apostles and presbyters. The apostles (the missionaries of Christ), the presbyters (the elders of a church anxious to solve a difficulty), jointly write in their representative capacity. Behind them they have the assembly of the whole church. It is interesting to note that the rules laid down in this letter (though the direction of the Holy Spirit is claimed for them) rapidly fell into desuetude and were dropped. In this way they supply a warning that the Providence of God works

more by the active teaching of history than by any process of formal authentication. In the church of Antioch we hear much of prophets, nothing of apostles. It is the "disciples" who send Paul and Barnabas to the churches of Judea. When Paul and Barnabas are sent to attend the Conference, the word used is *etaxan*, without subject expressed. The letter in reply is addressed to "the brethren in Antioch." In the following verses "brethren" is used in connection with *plhqoj* as a description of the church. There is no doubt that at this time the apostles did not enter into the organisation of the church of Antioch.

There remain the three great passages St. Matthew 16:19; St. Matthew 18:18; St. John 20:22. In the first instance the recipient is without doubt St. Peter in his single person, as a representative of the disciples. In the second passage the disciples may mean the Twelve, but may also mean a greater number than the Twelve. In the third passage it is not clear who were addressed. If we take the narrative of St. Luke to supplement that in St. John, those present are "the Eleven" and "those that were with them" that is, the nucleus of the church in Jerusalem. The two wayfarers from Emmaus were added to the number just before the appearance of our Lord. In Acts i. we read of a company assembling in the Upper Room. If the place of meeting were the same on both occasions, there would be an additional presumption that the gathering was not confined to the Twelve. On the whole, a calm consideration will lead to the conclusion that it is more probable than not that others besides the Twelve were included in the commission conferred. Even if the apostles had a certain prerogative, it was less as a personal right than as being representatives of the whole body of the Church. In Ephesians 2:20 it is said that the Church is built on the apostles and prophets. The fact that the New Testament prophets are mentioned takes away from the exceptional position assigned to the apostles. In the *Didache*, as in 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11, the word "apostles" is used in a wider sense and is not confined to the Twelve. In Matthew 19:28 it is said that the twelve apostles shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. In Revelation 21:14 the wall of the City is described as having twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The sacred number twelve was deeply fixed among the religious associations of Israel. St. Paul, in Acts 26:7, speaks of Israel as "our twelve tribes." St. James addresses his Epistles to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. As the Jews looked back to the Twelve Patriarchs as the origin of their race, the Christians gratefully referred to the Twelve as the first human teachers of their religion. These expressions imply grateful honour and a certain dignity but there is nothing to show that this dignity included a direct commission to govern. St. Paul cannot be quite strictly incorporated in the number of the original apostles. The three places where he speaks of his apostleship all seem to have the missionary character strongly impressed upon them. The seal of his apostleship to which he points consists in the converts he has made. The Judean apostles accepted the actual success of his missionary labours as the proof of his apostleship. It was his being the spiritual founder of his churches, and his ascendancy of character, that gave him the authority which he exercised, and not so much his succession to any express prerogative given to the Twelve. In 2 Corinthians 8:23 delegates from the churches were called "apostles of the churches," translated in the R.V. "messengers of the churches." This leads us to the consideration of the wider use of the word "apostle."

Dr. Lightfoot suspected that there was a wider use of this word than was usually conceived. The discovery of the *Didache* proved his suspicion true. There the wandering apostle takes precedence of the officers of the local church. This wider use makes it ambiguous who are meant

when the word "apostles" is mentioned. If it includes St. Paul, does it also include St. Barnabas and St. James, the Lord's brother? If it includes these, does it not include the class of wandering apostles referred to in the Didache? If it includes the whole class, why were any called apostles beyond those who received the two commissions given by our Lord before and after His Resurrection? The name "apostle" was given to some persons after our Lord's Ascension. This title brings into serious difficulties the exclusive claim of authority which is made for the Twelve. There is no doubt that, as apostles are classed with prophets, it was spiritual gifts and not succession or delegated powers that gave them their position as fit persons for the work of missioners. In the appointment of the Seven we see the principles of evolution and devolution.

Dr. Sanday says: "May I say that the view which I am taking of the origin of the Christian ministry as a whole may be regarded as modelled upon this passage." The appointment of the Seven arises out of what might be called ordinary natural causes, yet they may be none the less carrying out a larger divine purpose. The Twelve, moved by higher expediency, took the initiative. Some parts of the formal appointment are discharged by them. It does not appear whether they claimed this as a right, or whether it was spontaneously left to them by the Church. The Church as a whole also takes an active part. It gives a willing consent to the proposal. It selects the candidates, examines their qualifications, and presents them for laying on of hands. If practical questions were handled in the same spirit, we should see how difficulties would be solved without formal constitution or established rule, on the one side by spontaneous deference and good feeling, and on the other side by the enlistment of willing service and practical judgment. A word must here be said about the much disputed phrase "laying on of hands."

It is used at the ordinations in the New Testament as a solemn setting apart for office. But it has been often pointed out that it was used on other occasions. It accompanied any act of blessing. We read of it when Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh. We read of it when our Lord took the little children in His arms, "laying His hands on them." Ananias laid his hands on St. Paul when he restored his sight. St. Paul laid his hands on Publius when he healed him. The most curious case is when the prophets and teachers laid their hands on Paul and Barnabas, when they were sent out on their new work of carrying the Gospel to the Gentiles. According to later theories surely we should have expected that this would have been done by some of the Twelve. This is the only formal ordination of St. Paul which is mentioned. In the case of so eminent a man, who laid his hands on many presbyters, we should have expected apostolical succession to show itself here. May we say that the act of the prophets and teachers was the accompaniment of a prayer for charismatic gifts by the direction of the Holy Spirit?

Contrasted with this is the case of the early Confirmation by the apostles in Samaria. Philip the evangelist did not himself lay hands upon his Samaritan converts, but waited for the coming of Peter and John. This case of St. Paul shows that the rite of laying on of hands was not reserved solely for apostles, not even in the case of so eminent a man as St. Paul. In the case of Timothy the exhortation runs: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with (meta) the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (1 Timothy 4:14). Alford explains that either at the first conversion of Timotheus, or at his ordination to the ministry (most probably the latter), the Holy Spirit spake by means of a prophet. The case of Paul and Barnabas is precisely analogous. The gift in their case was directed by the Spirit no doubt by the lips of a prophet, and "the prophets and teachers" laid their hands on them. In the case of Timothy also this was accompanied by the

laying on of the hands of the body of elders who belonged to the congregation in which he was ordained. Among those present was St. Paul. "I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through (dia) the laying on of my hands" (2 Timothy 1:6). The apostle was probably chief in the ordination and the presbyters were his assistants, as is the case with bishops in the present day.

St. Paul uses the word dia ("by means of") in the case of his own action as well as meta ("accompanied with") in the case of the action of the presbyters and justly, for the laying on of hands was the effective sign of Timothy's being set apart. It would make the case still more interesting if St. Paul himself could be considered not only the presiding officer, but the prophet through whom Timothy was marked out for special service. We may remark that the act did not denote the transmission of a power from one who had it to one who had it not, for this would not apply either to the case of Ananias or to the prophets and teachers at Antioch sending Paul and Barnabas on a mission. It was rather a symbolical act, appropriate to the invoking of blessing from on high, making more solemn the prayer which it accompanied.

St. Augustine saw that the prayer was the essential thing: "For none of His disciples gave the Holy Ghost. They prayed indeed that He might come upon those on whom they laid their hands; they did not give Him themselves. A custom which the Church in case of its officers retains to this day" (De Trin. xv. 26-46). The case of the office of presbyter is instructive. In this case the standing office of the Jewish synagogue was transferred to the Christian Church.

It might have happened that a whole synagogue or the majority of the congregation came over to Christianity. It would naturally retain its constitution. If one holding the office of Jewish elder was converted he would not cease to be regarded as a presbyter because he became a Christian. We read of Paul and Barnabas appointing elders (xeirotoneisantes presbuterous) in the churches of Lycaonia and Pisidia. Newly founded Gentile communities were arranged upon the Jewish plan at least as regards the presiding officers. With regard to the remaining order of episkopoi or bishops, probably if we could trace the order of events we should find that each stage of the history grew out of the last by a natural process.

We know that during the period referred to in St. Paul's speech at Miletus, the Epistle to the Philippians, the Pastoral Epistles, the Epistle of Clement of Rome, and the Shepherd of Hermias, there were a number of episkopoi in each church. The terms episkopoi and presbuteroi were applied to the same persons. On the other hand, we know that at the time of the martyrdom of Ignatius, i.e. about A.D. 110, there was already established a monarchical episcopate in the later sense. Many attempts have been made to account for this change. The most probable theory is that of Hort and Loofs, that episkopoi was primarily not so much the name of an office as a descriptive term. This accounts for the fact that two words are used to describe the same minister. Thus presbuteroi would be the name of the office, and episkopos tells us that the duty of the presbyter was to oversee. The words episkopein, episkopos, episkopos are used far more commonly in early inscriptions and literature in a general sense than as designations of a particular office.

Quite distinct from this is the question why the plural episkopoi, representing a college of presbyters, was replaced by the singular episkopos, with rights superior to the rest.

Different explanations have been given, but they do not mutually exclude each other. Perhaps all these causes and others not yet discovered were at work.

1. Harnack and Loofs believe the title was given to the presbyter who took the lead in worship, especially in the Eucharist.
2. Ramsay believes the position naturally was taken by the presbyter whose duty it was to correspond with other churches, as in the case of St. Clement of Rome: "Clement shall send to the foreign cities, for this is his duty" (Hernias, Vision ii. 4).

Rothe believes the title naturally was given to the successors of the president of the Council at Jerusalem; others that the episkopos was the apostolic delegate. One thing, however, seems certain, that the apostle and the prophet seem to owe their position to marked charismatic gifts, whereas the bishop, teacher, and deacon were local officers for administration. Possibly if we had lived in those days, from A.D. 70 to A.D. 110, we should have seen the episcopate growing up around us. It did not drop from the sky. It was not instituted by a voice from heaven. Due to special causes, like the appointment of the Seven, it was none the less a divine ordinance. The Bible may not have been directly dictated to its human authors, and yet be essentially the Word of God.

We must remember the important part assigned to spiritual gifts in the New Testament and in the Didache. These gifts were often communicated through other than the authorised channels. Not only St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John, but the nameless author of the Epistle to the Hebrews spoke in the Spirit, and their words are read as Spirit-inspired to the present day. In the Old Testament Elisha succeeded Elijah but the succession of prophets was not always observed. The prophet Amos said to King Amaziah, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdsman and a dresser of sycomores: and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go and prophesy unto My people Israel." Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel the very greatest prophets were called in this way. The point is that God does not confine Himself to only one way of working. He sends His Spirit through the regularly defined channels, and also through new channels as occasion requires. Often His greatest working has been of this unprecedented kind.

It may be said that we run the risk of allowing a claim to inspiration because the claim is made. We must be on our guard against this danger. Yet we cannot deny that God in the past has been pleased to act in this manner. He has done so also in more recent times. We shall know the successful servants of God by their fruits. The case of the Society of Friends has often been quoted. Apparently they do not acknowledge what seem essentials of a living church. They dispense with the Sacraments; they have no regular ministry; they have no visible organisation. Yet in spite of all this they have upheld a high and consistent standard of Christian practice. They have made strenuous efforts to abolish slavery, war, and the barbarous conditions of prisons. They have, in proportion to their numbers, done more than any other party to advance practical Christian principles around them. This may be an anomaly. But room must be left for many such paradoxes. Men are led to believe that the enabling power of those who desire to work for God must come from God Himself.

## A 06 - General Priesthood All Christians

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Ryder PLHC: 06 General Priesthood of All Christians in Apocalypse THE GENERAL PRIESTHOOD OF ALL CHRISTIANS IN THE APOCALYPSE JOHANNES APOOALYPTISTA

Volat avis sine meta

Quo nee vates nee propheta

Evolavit altius:

Tam implenda quam impleta

Nunquam vidit tot secreta

Purus homo purius.

### Chapter VI THE GENERAL PRIESTHOOD OF ALL CHRISTIANS IN THE APOCALYPSE

Unto Him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins by His blood; and He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father. Revelation 1:5-6. THE Apocalypse of St. John the Divine may be compared to a vast cathedral, dim, mysterious, solemn, containing symbols of the deepest obscurity, well-nigh, if not altogether, incomprehensible. But this cathedral is entered by a portico, fair and clear, adorned with pillars of white marble, polished with consummate art.

It may be asked why this mysterious cathedral of the Apocalypse is entered by the portico of the Letters, or Messages, to the Seven Churches of Asia.

Many have failed to find the answer because they have regarded the first three chapters of the book, which describe the spiritual life in the Seven Churches, [1] as detached from the main body of the book.

[1] The apocalypticist does not use the *ekklesia* to denote the whole Church as St. Paul does (Colossians, Ephesians). When St. John wishes to express the ideal unity of Christendom he does so by means of a symbolical female figure, the mother (Revelation 12:1), or the Wife or Bride of Christ (xix., xxi., xxii.). It is interesting to note that the apocalypticist writes *taij ekkhlsiaij* not to the aggregate, *th ekkhlsia*. *Ai ekkhlsiaj* are not the Seven Churches only, but the Christian societies throughout the world known in the next generation as *h kaqolikh ekkhlsia* (Ignatius, Smyrna, viii. 2).

I have studied with the deepest interest the latest book on the Apocalypse, by the Regius Professor of Divinity in Cambridge, and the answer which Dr. Swete gives seems to remove the difficulty. He notices that not only are the Seven Churches mentioned in the first chapter (Revelation 1:11, "What thou seest, write in a book, and send it to the seven churches"), but they seem to be also referred to in the last chapter (Revelation 22:16, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches").

Thus the whole book may be regarded in substance as an unfolding of the divine purpose; in form, an Epistle in reality, a Pastoral. At the time when the Book of Revelation was written (A.D. 95, in the reign of Domitian) a blasphemous claim was made by the emperors of Rome. The worship of emperors, deified and dead, or licentious and living, was the abomination against which St. John wrote. Temples were erected, priests ministered, cities vied as *vewKopoi* or subservient adherents of the imperial cult. Living emperors were worshipped in their lifetime as gods. City after city, to gain favour with the Government, asked permission to erect temples to the reigning emperor. [1]

[1] The city of Pergamum possessed in A.D. 29 a temple dedicated to Rome and Augustus; a second temple was erected in the time of Trajan, when Pergamum acquired the title of *dij newkopoj*. The practice led to the persecution of Christians. All citizens were commanded to offer worship to the emperor on pain of death. To refuse was not only rebellion, but heresy. Eusebius makes this clear in the story of the martyrdom of Polycarp (see Eusebius, Eccles. Hist. bk. iv. c. xv.). It was absolutely a choice between Caesar or Christ. The Christians refused to offer sacrifice either to the old pagan gods, or to the new deities enthroned in heaven by a subservient Senate. For this they were banished, or thrown to the lions, or burned alive.

What were the blasphemous titles assumed by the heads of the Roman Empire in the first and second centuries may be learned from the imperial letters found by J. T. Wood among the inscriptions of Ephesus (see Hicks, Ephesus, p. 150): *autokratwr Kaisar Qeou Traianou Parqenikou uioj, Qeou Neroua uiwnoj, Traianoj Adrianoj Sebastoj*

["autocrate Ceasar, God of Gods, Only Begotten Son of God, Nero son of Trainos Adrian Reverend" -David Cox editor I am not sure of the translation Trainos Adrian, it is a name I believe] The honours decreed to the emperor (Hicks, p. 162) were to *autokratori qew qeojj sebastojj* (ib., p. 169). Martial (v. 8) says of Domitian, "*edictum domini dei que nostri.*" No Christian, none at least of Jewish origin, could have read such inscriptions day after day without a shock to his inbred monotheism.

Suetonius (Domitian, xv.) says a formal edict began with the words "*Dominus et Deus noster fieri jubet.*" The whole Book of Revelation is a trumpet-call to steadfastness, with a veiled reference to the worship of the deified emperors. It is true that the later portion of the book speaks of the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven and the City of God in heaven. This comes as an encouragement and reward, showing the faithful that if they were rejected from the citizenship of the Roman Empire in martyrdom, they were thereby enrolled as honoured and blessed citizens of the City of God, eternal in the heavens. On this view the mark of the Beast, the chief puzzle of the book, becomes intelligible. As three was the number of heaven, as four was the number of earth, so seven became the number of the relation of God to men the number of sacrifice, the perfect number. The number which fell short of perfection, not once but three times, was 666. In Hebrew letters the name would read " Nero Caesar."

Dr. Swete says: " Certainly Nero Caesar suits the context well: the beast or persecuting world might fitly be named after the emperor who began the policy of persecution, and was himself an incarnation of its worst characteristics. Nor is this unsuitable as applied to Domitian, for the Romans themselves called him "Nero redivivus."

Juvenal (iv. 37), writing of Domitian, says:

Quum jam semianimum laceraret Flavius orbem Ultimus et Calvo serviret Roma Neroni. His own Rome called Domitian a " bald Nero." Tertullian (Apology, v.) calls Domitian "portio Neronis de crudelitate." The Seer of Patmos had his feet on earth, with seven existing churches before his eyes across the blue Mgean Sea, as his spirit reached to the invisible. The Apocalypse is the supreme example of Christian prophecy. The visions permitted to the spirit of St. Paul, the outpourings of the charismatic ministry, are made vocal and surpassed by the Seer of Patmos in the Apocalypse so fortunately preserved to us. In this light the book has some important references to early church organisation. It has not often been remarked that there are seven Beatitudes in the Book of Revelation (cf. Revelation 1:3; Revelation 14:13; Revelation 16:15; Revelation 19:9; Revelation 22:7; Revelation 22:14). The first Beatitude refers to the early Christian congregation assembled for worship: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy of this book" (Revelation 1:3). Dr. Harnack, in his Sources of the Apostolic Canons (p. 76), has much to say on the office of reader in the Early Church.

"The Revelation of St. John, as it lies before us, begins (Revelation 1:1-2) with a short announcement of the contents, origin, and communication of the book; then it says (Revelation 1:3): makarioj o anaginwskwn, kai oi akouontej touj logouj thj profhteiaj. The distinction would have been an empty pedantry if the reader had not then possessed a peculiar and prominent position in the congregations. Thus the verse is of significance for the date and for the original position of the reader. There were certainly readers about the year A.D. 100, and at that time congregations could, in view of edification, be divided into reader and hearers.

"But what we seek the Second Epistle of Clement provides for us. This writing, now that it has been made known to us by Bryennios, claims, as is well known, to give us the copy of a sermon, and that of the oldest sermon which we possess, not later than the middle of the second century. That it was not delivered by a bishop or a presbyter is to be seen from xvii. 3, and still plainer from xix. 1. And let us not think to give heed and believe now only, while we are admonished by the presbyters; but likewise when we have departed home (xvii. 3). There fore, brothers and sisters, after the God of truth hath been heard, I read to you an exhortation to the end that ye may give heed to the things which are written, so that ye may save both yourselves and him that readeth in the midst of you (xix. 1).

"On the strength of this passage I had in my edition (1876) ascribed the sermon to a 4 teacher. As I was certain that a presbyter or the overseer could not have preached the sermon, and as I then knew nothing of the readers of the oldest time, there remained to me no other alternative. But even then I remarked that the author read his sermon, and that the statement was contrary to what had elsewhere been conjectured on the oldest sermons.

"Now, for the first time after the reader has come into clearer light, is it possible to decide on this passage.

"The author announces (1) that before his sermon he read a portion of the Holy Scriptures; he remarks (2) casually that he also read his sermon, relating to this portion, and he calls himself (3) he that readeth among you, 5 and makes the same distinction ( you the hearers he who is reading among you ) which we have found in the Revelation of St. John."

Dr. Harnack then quotes from the original sources of the Sources of the Apostolic Canons, 16-28 (p. 15):

"For reader, let one be appointed after he has been carefully proved of plain utterance, and capable of clearly expounding, mindful that he rules in the place of an evangelist: for whoever fills the ear of the ignorant will be accounted as having his name written with God."

Thus we may conclude that we have in the Second Epistle of Clement not the unrestrained speech of a spiritual teacher, but the elaborate sermon of a congregational reader, like those which Source A has made known to us.

Dr. Harnack goes on to say:

"A completely organised congregation at the end of the Apostolic Age possessed (1) prophets and teachers, who were awakened by the Spirit, and announced the Word of God; (2) a circle of elders, who in all emergencies which affected the congregation would come forth to guide them, and who had watch over especially the life, or the evangelical character of the congregation, and hence admonished, punished, and comforted; (3) the administrative officials bishops and deacons who possessed the charisma of government and public service, and who had to act especially in divine service in the care of the poor. But besides these were active in the congregations the most varied charismata (1 Cor. xii.) 4 powers, gifts of healings, kinds of tongues.

Each individual gift or talent, which aimed at the edification of the congregation, was considered as a charisma of the Holy Ghost, but among these only the apostles, prophets, and teachers held a special rank in the congregation. Among the various "men of gifts" there were even in the earliest times readers and exorcists. The public reading of the Old Testament formed an integral part of the service. Also other writings, apocalypses, epistles, and soon even gospels, were to be read in the church. Many highly esteemed prophets and teachers who could edify by free speech were not able to read the Holy Scriptures. Thus readers were necessary, and the existence of such we find presupposed even in the Apocalypse of St. John. The art of reading and of delivery for the object of the edification of the congregation was considered a gift of the Holy Spirit. Dr. Schiirer says:

"By the side of the elders, who had to direct in general the services of the Jewish congregation, special officers had to be appointed for special objects. But the peculiar thing here is, that just for the ordinary divine service, reading of the Scriptures, sermon, and congregational prayer no special officers were appointed. These acts were performed more often by the members of the congregation alternately." The reader, then, according to Dr. Harnack, was essentially what we should call a lay reader, possessing a charismatic gift for edifying the congregation in that way. Afterwards, reader, doorkeeper, exorcist appear among the minor orders of the Church.

Passing on we find in the Apocalypse the following statements as to the general priesthood of all Christians: "He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests into his God and Father" (Revelation 1:6).

Dr. Swete discusses the question whether "kingdom" in this passage means a nation under the government of a king or a nation of kings. He says: "The Apocalypse is largely a protest against the Caesar cult and the attitude of the empire towards the Church, and at the outset it places the divine kingdom in sharp contrast to the imperial power. As Israel, when set free from Egypt, acquired a national life under its divine king, so the Church, redeemed by the blood of Christ,

constitutes a holy nation, a new theocracy." The members of the Church, a kingdom in their corporate life, are individually priests. Baptism inaugurates this priestly service (Ephesians 5:26, Hebrews 10:22, Titus 3:5), which is fulfilled by the offering of living, reason able, and spiritual sacrifice (Revelation 12:1, Hebrews 13:15, 1 Peter 2:5). The Church, like Israel, is a great sacerdotal society. That there are special ministries within the body which belong to an ordained "clerus," a ierourgia tou euaggeliou, committed to apostles and their successors (Rom. xv. 16), in no way conflicts with the reality of the priesthood of every baptized member of Christ. On Rev. v. 10, "and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests, and they reign on the earth," Dr. Swete makes the interesting remark: "The fact that this chord is struck thrice in the Apocalypse seems to imply special familiarity on the part of both writer and readers with the words as well as the thoughts: possibly they entered into a primitive hymn, which may have run:

Epoihsaj hmaj basileian

iereij tw qew kai Patrisou

kai basileusomen epi thj ghj

"In the passage before us the present is used they reign on the earth, and the more difficult reading basileusousin is to be preferred. The reign of the saints had begun in the life of the Spirit, though in the fuller sense it was still future."

Christ, by a supreme act of self-sacrifice, has purchased men of all races for the service of God, founded a vast spiritual empire, and converted human life into a priestly service and a royal dignity. The third passage (Revelation 20:6), "But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years," is explained thus: The destiny purchased by the Christ for all Christians will be realised in those who partake in the first resurrection: for their priestly service, in the glory of its ideal perfection, is an accomplished fact. The inclusion of Christ with God in the object of divine service is peculiar to the passage, but it agrees with what has been said in Revelation 5:8 as to the joint worship of God and of the Lamb by heavenly beings, and with the general tendency of the book to regard Christ as an equivalent of God.

There is another reason for the Beatitude of the martyrs and confessors: they shall reign with the Christ during the thousand years (mentioned in 20:4). Priesthood and royalty are the mutually complementary service of God ("cui servire est regnare"). As to the millennium, it is important to notice that no hint is given as to where this service is to be rendered and this royalty to be exercised. The words, "on the earth," of Rev. v. 10 have no place either in xx. 4 or in xx. 6, and must not be read between the lines. St. John does not commit himself to a reign on earth. We have symbolised the victory of the principles for which the martyrs died and the confessors endured hardship and loss.

Dr. Swete says: "Blessed and holy indeed were those who by their brief resistance unto blood secured for the Church so long a continuance of peaceful service: they would live to reign with Christ as kings and priests in the hearts of all succeeding generations of Christians, while their work bore fruit in the subjection of the civilised world to the obedience of the faith." That the age of the martyrs, however long it might last, would be followed by a far longer period of constant supremacy, during which the faith for which the martyrs died would live and reign, is the essential teaching of the present vision. When, under what circumstance, or by what means this happy

result should be attained St. John does not foresee, and does not attempt to explain. It might have been well if students of his book had always followed the example of this wise reserve.

Passing to other notes of Christian organisation, we turn to Rev. i. 10, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The exile of Patmos, shut out from the weekly breaking of bread in the Christian assembly in Ephesus, finds the Lord's presence in his solitude. This early reference to the Christian Sunday as the Lord's Day is in keeping with the language of 1 Corinthians 11:20, "It is not possible to eat the Lord's supper." In the Didache (xiv.), written but a short time afterwards, is the injunction: "Being assembled on the Lord's Day to break bread." In Revelation 1:20, "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches," Archbishop Trench sees the presiding bishop, and labours to prove that Polycarp may have been the Bishop of Smyrna at this time. Dr. Weymouth, in his interesting book, *New Testament in Modern Speech*, renders "the seven stars are the ministers of the seven churches," "To the minister in the Church of Smyrna write."

Dr. Swete says: "The Apocalypse uses *aggeloi* some sixty times (excluding the expression angel of the church or ('churches')), and always in the technical sense of a superhuman being employed in the service of God or Satan. There is, therefore, a strong presumption that the angels of the churches are angels in the sense which the word bears elsewhere throughout the book. In Daniel 10:13 angels preside over particular nations. That John should have extended this conception to churches is not surprising, especially in view of the highly developed angelology of the book. It is hardly possible to prove from this expression the establishment of diocesan bishops at so early a period."

There is an interesting reference to the power of the keys in Revelation 3:7. We learn that the power of the keys is reserved for divine hands. "These things saith he that hath the key of David, He that openeth and none shall shut, and that shutteth and none openeth." In Revelation 8:3 another angel stood over the altar, having a golden censer. The celestial messenger takes the place of the priest and offers the incense. The altar here is the altar of incense. For there is an altar in heaven, and thither our prayers and oblations are directed; but the only sacrifice is the Lamb, who was slain. In Revelation 6:9: "I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." This is the altar of burnt offering, and the victims which have been offered on it are the martyred members of the Church, who have followed their Lord in the example of His sacrificial death. In Revelation 21:3: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His peoples, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

One important and deliberate change has been made in the terms of these prophecies. The writer has substituted *laoi* for *laoj* the many peoples of redeemed humanity for the single elect nation, the world for Israel. In Leviticus the promise was: "I will set My tabernacle among you... and will be your God, and ye shall be My people" (Leviticus 26:11). In the sublime description of the heavenly city many of our most precious privileges are superseded by the enjoyment of the divine reality. "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple thereof." The passport to that heavenly city is character and the testimony to Jesus. Only "they shall enter which are written in the Lamb's book of life." The river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb. The tree of life is not only for the service of the citizens of the New Jerusalem, but its leaves are for the healing of the nations. The functions of the

Church on earth are twofold: she builds up her own children, and, so far as she fulfils her true office, she is the healer of the diseases of humanity. The Seer repeats, like a refrain, the absence of night in the Ideal City and the supersession of light natural or artificial by the revelation of the glory of God. His servants shall reign, not for a limited period implied by a thousand years, but for ever and ever. Neither the age of the martyrs nor the age of Constantine witnessed the full revelation of the kingdom of God, which is reserved for the Church in her perfect state.

Perfect service will be accompanied by perfect sovereignty. Already the many colours of the New Jerusalem and the flashes of its crystal light may be seen by those whose eyes are not closed against the heavenly vision. Men already slake their thirst in the river of life, and nations find healing in the leaves of the tree of life. It is noteworthy that even in the visions of this book, which came to him when he was apparently alone in Patmos, St. John associates himself with the whole body of the Christian prophets. The esprit de corps thus revealed is interesting. At the same time it is to be observed that he does not isolate the prophetic order from the rest of the Christian society. If in the first place it comes to the prophets only, it comes to them for the benefit of the Church at large; it is their duty to communicate it to all the servants of God. "The Lord Himself is the Spirit of the prophets." The angel says, "I am a fellow-servant with thee, and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book." The Apocalypse, like the Epistle to the Hebrews, shows us all sacrifices consummated by One Sacrifice, all priesthoods in One Priest. The priesthood of all Christians is asserted and yet when it says (Revelation 7:15), "His servants shall serve Him," the priestly word *leitourgein* is not used, but *latreuein*. The conception is that of one vast worshipping multitude. The use of *leitourgein* would have rather suggested that of an exclusive priesthood admitted to the sanctuary while the great majority were content to pray without. The Israelite who was not priest or Levite did not proceed beyond the *ieron*, one tribe alone having access to the *naoj*. But in the Eternal Temple the Seer sees the whole Israel of God admitted to the *naoj*, and the occasion for the *leitourgia* of a tribal or special priesthood has disappeared, all being priests and all serving in the presence of their God. But the vision of ceaseless worship is realised only when life itself is regarded as a service. The consecration of all life to the service of God is the goal to which our present worship points, and is symbolised by the apocalypticist's words: "Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall spread His tabernacle over them."

## A 07 - What is a Priest

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Ryder PLHV: 07 What is a Priest? WHAT IS A PRIEST?

It was asked on the eve of the great French Revolution, "What is the Tiers État?" The answer was "The Tiers État is the nation, less the clergy and the noblesse." So to the question "Who are the laity?" the reply must be "They are the body of the Church, less the clergy, or, as St. Paul expresses it, marking union and not separation, "They are all the saints (with the bishops and deacons)." The inference to be drawn from the French answer no doubt was that the two privileged classes were exotics, existing only by the will of the people, and liable to be swept away at any moment. The inference would be utterly inadmissible in relation to the Church of Christ. There is a primitive distinction between clergy and laity, and it will continue to the end of the age in which we live. But by distinction is not meant separation. There is no reason to regard the distinction as anything more than a provision for the purpose of developing the fullness of the corporate life of the Church, which is Christ's body, and for maintaining in it the fullness of the truth.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having a great priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our body washed with pure water. Hebrews 10:19-22.

Now we have such a high priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. Hebrews 8:1-3.

Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, seeing there are those who offer the gifts according to the law. Hebrews 8:4.

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, even Jesus. Hebrews 3:1.

Having then a great high priest, who hath passed through the heavens,... Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need. Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 4:16. THE word "priest" is the storm-centre around which the tempest of controversy revolves. It is most important at the outset to make clear the meaning of the word. A priest is one who is a representative of the people before God, and sometimes the representative of God to the people. As one who propitiates God by appointed sacrifice he represents the people before God; as one who blesses and absolves he represents God to the people. It is a word so often used in the Old Testament and in pagan literature that we must acknowledge that as a rule it implies one who by the sacrifice of slain victims propitiates the Deity and gains pardon for man from God. The words "cohen," "hiereus," "sacerdos" have a connotation which in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin cannot be set aside or explained away. The word

in Hebrew and classic writers is usually associated with animal sacrifices and dread rites. According to the Mosaic law, with out shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. It is closely connected with sin and reconciliation. Yet in the Greek title "hiereus" itself the simple significance is one who is busied about "hiera" sacred things. But we must insist that this word has a special connotation. Thus in the New Testament the word "hiereus" is properly used of Jewish or pagan priests. Most accurately and consistently this use is observed in the New Testament books. It meets us first in our Lord's words, "Go, show thyself to the priests." It meets us again in the title of those who demanded St. John the Baptist's credentials: "The Jews sent unto John priests and Levites to ask him, Who art thou?"

5: It meets us in the Jewish sense in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, seeing there are those who offer the gifts according to the law." In the pagan sense we meet with the term on the occasion of St. Paul's visit to Lystra: "And the priest of Jupiter, whose temple was before the city, brought oxen and garlands to the apostles, and would have done sacrifice." The term "hiereus" thus is well known, and used in the New Testament, but known only to be rejected when reference is made to any human Christian minister. In this dispensation it is only used in the singular, and of Christ alone, of whom it is said, "Having boldness to enter the holy place, and having a great priest (megaj iereuj) over the house of God," and in a quotation from the Psalms, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." Similarly in the Epistle to the Hebrews Christ is called High Priest, because by undergoing death He offered Himself as an expiatory sacrifice to God, and has entered the heavenly sanctuary, wherein He continually intercedes on our behalf: " Wherefore it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people " (Hebrews 2:17). When we have examined the use of the word as applied to Jewish and Pagan high priests and the references to Christ, we have exhausted all its applications. After this there is a significant silence. This word, so common, so necessary in the past for the very existence of religion, never occurs as a title for any human Christian minister. We can trace its rise in history and Christian literature, but the silence of Scripture, so marked, so startling, might have been wisely observed. The reticence observed in the application of the title extends also to the words which describe the action of the priest. *lerateuein* ("to act as priest ") we find once only when Zacharias executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course. In the whole New Testament the word never occurs again, and so remarkable a limitation cannot be without significance. Lastly, we come to the word *lerateuein* ("to minister in the manner of a priest, to minister in priestly service). Here at last a verb derived from *iereuj* is applied to an apostle. Yet the special use is a stronger proof of the reticence on this subject than actual silence. St. Paul says: " But I write the more boldly unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of the grace that was given me of God, that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles (*ierourgounta to euaggelion*); that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."

What is here required to make this word a sacerdotal term in the modern use of the word is any reference to gifts, or oblations, or the Eucharist. There is no reference to the elements of bread and wine. There is no reference to the body and blood of Christ. The object of the verb is the Gospel of God. The only offering specified are Gentiles brought to the feet of Christ. St. Paul plainly states that the sphere of action he refers to is the Gospel message souls won for Christ he

offers in thanksgiving and humility. The very fact that a verb of this kind is once used is more significant than silence, for it specifies the new sphere in which such offerings are made.

Over against this withholding of the term "priest" from the offices of the Christian Church stands the collective title *ierateuma*. This word is defined, the office of priest, the order or body of priests. To the ministerial office this is never applied. But, as if to enforce recognition of the reticence in the case of the ministerial office, the word is used twice of the Christian body: "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood (*ierateuma*), to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ " (1 Peter 2:5); "Ye are a royal priesthood " (1 Peter 2:9). In the same sense the plural of *iereuj* is used: "Thou didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth" (Revelation 5:9). "He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father" (Revelation 1:6). "Over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6). It must be reiterated that there is an entire silence about priestly functions. A definition of terms is here necessary. On no subject has more serious error arisen from confusion of titles. The word "priest" in English has two different senses. In the one it is the only equivalent in English to the Latin "*sacerdos*," the Greek *iereuj*, the Hebrew "*cohen*" the offerer of animal sacrifices, the performer of mediatorial offices between God and man. In the other it is a true derivative of the word "presbyter" or "elder," and is the title of the minister who presides over and instructs the Christian congregation. The confusion between these two meanings has greatly influenced the history and theology of the Church. The word "priest" in this lecture will be used in the former sense only, so that "priestly" will be equivalent to "sacerdotal" or "hieratic." However, according to etymology, the word "priest" is a shortened form of "presbyter." The confusion arises from the fact that the English language has only one word to translate *iereuj* on the one hand and *presbuteroj* on the other. In this lecture, when the Christian elder is meant, "presbyter" will be used. The etymology seems to have been thus derived: Greek "*presbyteros*," French "*pretre*," German "*priester*," Anglo-Saxon "*preost*," English "*priest*." We may remark two things in this etymological survey. First, that by derivation "priest" is the same word as "presbyter," and that this is the only valid reason for the retention of "priest" in the Book of Common Prayer. Milton, in his Sonnet on the Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament in 1649, writes: When they shall read this clearly in your charge, New Presbyter is but old priest writ large.

He spoke no doubt of the doctrinal pretensions of some presbyters in his day, but he stated an etymological fact, and conversely he might have said, "New priest is but old presbyter writ small." The misfortune came in the utterly wrong use of "priest" for *iereuj*. The second point to be noted in this connection is, that if "priest" originally meant "elder" the sacerdotal idea has been imported and was not original. The Greek word *presbuteroj*, while by phonetic decay it has changed into French "*pretre*" and English "*priest*," should have kept its meaning, "an elder in the church," like the Anglo-Saxon "*alderman*," "an elder in the city." Truly in this case it has happened that words from being counters have been regarded as money! Because it happened that the English word "presbyter" was shortened into the word "priest," and because the word "priest" was the term also used to translate a widely different title, namely, *iereuj*, when used in a Jewish or pagan sense, therefore (at a period which can be dated and marked) all the ideas of the word *iereuj* in the Jewish sense became gradually transferred and imported into the context of the word "presbyter"

in a Christian sense. There had to be a victim, a material sacrifice, an altar, physical flesh and blood, and, as a corollary, transubstantiation. The retention of the word "priest" in the English Book of Common Prayer has much to answer for; for not every one knows or remembers the etymology of the word, i.e. that it was originally "presbyter." But every one knows that the English word is also employed to translate the word for the Jewish "priest" and the term for the office of Christ in heaven. It cannot be denied that unreflecting persons have attached certain ideas to the word; priest," which we shall see are opposed to the Christian polity, as seen in the New Testament writings, and of those of the Christian Fathers who, as they lived closest to apostolic times, have preserved the Christian tradition best. This is conceded by Hooker (Eccles. Polity, v. 78, 2-3):

"Seeing then that sacrifice is no part of the Church ministry, how should the name of Priesthood be thereunto rightly applied? Surely even as St. Paul applied the name of flesh unto that substance of fishes which hath a proportionate correspondence to flesh, though it be in nature another thing.... The Fathers of the Church with a like security of speech call usually the ministry of the Gospel Priesthood, in regard to that which the Gospel hath proportionable to ancient sacrifices, namely, the Communion of the Blessed Body and Blood of Christ, although it have properly now no sacrifice. As for the people when they hear the name, it draweth no more their minds to any cogitation of sacrifice, than the name of senator or of an alderman causeth them to think of old age, or to imagine that every one who is termed elder must needs be ancient because years were respected in the first nomination of both.

"Wherefore to pass by the name, let them use what dialect they will, whether we call it a Priesthood, or Presbytership, or Ministry, it skilleth not. Although in truth the word presbyter doth seem more fit, and in propriety of speech more agreeable than \* priest with the drift of the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Bishop Lightfoot distinctly asserts that the word "priest" in the Book of Common Prayer is misleading:

"If therefore the sacerdotal office be understood to imply the offering of sacrifices, then the Epistle to the Hebrews leaves no place for a Christian ministerial priesthood. If, on the other hand, the word be taken in a wider and looser acceptation, it cannot well be withheld from the ministry of the Church of Christ. Only in this case the meaning of the term should be clearly apprehended: and it might have been better if the later Christian vocabulary had conformed to the silence of the Christian writers so that the possibility of confusion would have been avoided." For communicating instruction and for preserving public order, for conducting religious worship, and for dispensing social charities it was necessary to appoint special officers. But the priestly functions and privileges of the Christian people are never regarded as transferred or even delegated to these officers. Their title is stewards, messengers of God, servants, ambassadors, members of the Church. But the sacerdotal title is never once conferred upon them. The only priests under the Gospel called as such in the New Testament are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood. As individuals all are priests alike. As members of the corporation they have their several and distinct offices. Here I would like to oppose a very specious analogy. Bishop Moberly of Salisbury lays undue stress on the analogy of the human body. He says that the ministerial priesthood form the organs of the body of Christ. "The analogy," he says, "so much presented to us in Scripture of the natural body can hardly be pressed too far in its strong and close bearing on

my present point. One vitality diffused over the whole, special organs for special and indispensable use all needful for each, each needful for all." He traces the analogy and says when any organ is removed or inactive, compensation is made by special sensibility of the organs left as a blind man gains quickness of touch and hearing. He concludes an eloquent passage with the words: "Not all the nervous power and health of the rest of the body can make an eye, nor enable a man to see, nor can all the lay people together either be or make a priest."

Thus he holds that the priesthood forms the organs by which the Church communicates with its Head. Differentiation of function is the characteristic of all rightly organised life. The various organs are adapted to their various functions, and if they interfere with each other the result is disease. If the organs of sight and hearing fail, the body is deprived of those senses. This is a very specious analogy, and requires to be carefully considered. We may admit that in all matters of discipline the analogy of the body is thoroughly sound. The Church needs a hierarchy of officers with sufficient authority to secure order and obedience. This principle demands that no religious ceremonies certainly not the most important rites shall be administered by unauthorised persons. We may go farther, and say that any such infringement of Church order must be highly displeasing to God. But as applied to ministers and laymen this figure of the body may be exceedingly dangerous and misleading. It is true the brain is connected with the limbs and nervous system, which latter may be said to mediate between the brain and the muscles. But Jesus Christ is not the brain of His mystical Body. He is its life. The physical body may be blind or deaf without the eye or ear, but it is not true that a Christian soul or a Christian community is deprived of the power of seeing Christ or hearing the voice of God if by some accident it is temporarily deprived of its duly appointed ministers. We are all in direct relation to Him. We not only need not, but we cannot approach Him through any human mediator. In Holy Communion the officiating minister, as representing the congregation, exercises prerogatives which strictly belong to the Church as a whole. The congregation is not composed of spectators, but of participators in the office. If this is so, it is clear that the metaphor of the body and members must be used with the utmost caution when we speak of the relations of clergy and laity. The notion of priesthood can hardly be disassociated from the kindred notion of sacrifice, which has been generally regarded as the priestly function par excellence. Canon Moberly, in his Ministerial Priesthood, seems to me to be very vague in his special pleading when he says:

"The inwardness, then, of priesthood is the spirit of sacrifice, and the spirit of sacrifice is the spirit of love in a world of sin and pain, whose expression in the inner soul is priestly intercession and whose utterance in the outward life is devotion of ministry for others for others from the Christ-like point of view, as for those for whom Christ died. The Levitical priesthood belonged distinctively to the side of ceremonial function, and might be both adequately fulfilled and defined in terms of ceremonial enactment only; but a Christian priesthood misapprehends itself which can be content to find the beginning and the end of its definition or meaning in terms only of what is outward and ceremonial or in any sacramental service, however intelligent it may be, or reverent in itself which does not sweep in the whole heart and action and life."

Now if we could accept this mild definition of apologetic sacerdotalism as "the spirit of love in a world of sin and pain," there would be no objection to calling the Eucharist, and many other things, sacrifices. The word, we can see by this special pleading, has happily come to be used in a thoroughly Christian sense, but it has other and inherent associations. Lightfoot and Hooker, as

we have seen, have both had the courage to express regret that the words "priest" and "sacrifice" have established themselves in our Church not because they have not acquired a sense in which they can be safely used, but because they are clearly associated with errors into which religion is very prone to fall, and which it was the main object of the Christian revelation to banish for ever. For us the Holy Communion is a sacrifice that of ourselves, our souls, and bodies, which we thereby consecrate to God; it is the commemoration of a sacrifice that of Christ upon the Cross. It is also the representation of a sacrifice, that of the Son of God regarded as an eternal act. Let us remember it is the Eternal Act that we are symbolically representing, not the temporal act we are repeating or continuing when we celebrate the Eucharist.

Offered was He for greatest and for least, Himself the victim and Himself the priest.

If to this statement it be objected that the inference is built upon the silence of the apostles and evangelists, and that such reasoning is precarious, the reply is that the sacerdotalism of one privileged class, in the common acceptance of the word "sacerdotalism," contradicts the general tenor of the Gospel. The strength or weakness of an argument from silence depends wholly on the circumstances under which silence is maintained. And in this case it has the greatest weight. In the pastoral epistles, for instance, which are largely occupied with questions relating to the Christian ministry, it is scarcely possible that this aspect should have been overlooked if it had any place in St. Paul's teaching. The apostle discusses at length the requirements, the responsibilities of the ministerial office. He regards the presbyter as an example, as a teacher; never as a priest. Sacerdotal privileges are unmentioned. Why, then, are the sacerdotal privileges of the Christian minister not referred to? If they existed at all they should have resounded throughout the discussion. The same argument applies with not less force to those passages in the Epistles to the Corinthians where St. Paul asserts his apostolic authority on his detractors. But this silence was maintained under the greatest difficulty.

It was part of our Lord's method to use the old wherever He could. A large number of His maxims had been uttered before by the Rabbis. The same thing could be said of the Lord's Prayer. Whatever He took He made His own. The new spirit without danger transmuted the old. Our Lord did not attempt to utilise the existing cultus of His own nation. He did not enjoin circumcision. The new covenant He came to proclaim was never connected by Him with the Jewish sacrifices and priesthood. Though He Himself and His disciples had been born under and were obedient unto the law, yet He declared that the law and the prophets were until John, and that a new order was marked by the proclamation of the Kingdom of God, Under these circumstances there can be no more perverse error than to suppose that He intended the Eucharist to be the continuation of the Jewish sacrifices, or the Christian ministry to be in any sense the successors of the Jewish priests. This would, indeed, have been to pour the new wine into the old wine-skins. The series of Jewish sacrifices culminated in the sacrifice of Christ upon the Cross, and ended there. He made the full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice. These sacrifices, like those of early religions, had been partly presents or tenders of hospitality to the Deity and partly the forms by which the covenant between God and His people were ratified and renewed. The true idea of sacrifice is realised when priest and victim, God and worshipper, are atoned or united. This atonement, which had been already symbolised in the sacrifices under the Old Testament, was achieved once for all by Christ when He who is both God and man offered Himself, and us in Himself, as an expiation for sin. In this the idea which has been demonstrated by all previous sacrifices was fully realised. The antitype had

been manifested, and the type and symbol were now abrogated for ever. It is plain that this abrogation of the old sacrificial priesthood was understood by the Christian Church in the generation after our Lord. When St. Paul enumerates the various offices to which men are called, he mentions apostles, prophets, workers of miracles, but he never says "He gave some priests."

Among the detailed directions which he gives to the Christian churches there is not a word about the proper way of offering sacrifice. He recognises no sacrifices excepting on the one hand the sacrifice of Christ, and on the other the sacrifice of our bodies in reasonable service. The breach of continuity between the Jewish priesthood and the Christian ministry is complete. The former ends with Christ; the latter begins afresh from Him. The conquering Christian Church took its hierarchic weapons from the arsenal of the enemy.

MOMMSEN.

## A 08 - Priesthood and Sacrifice

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Ryder PLHV: 08 Priesthood and Sacrifice VIII PRIESTHOOD AND SACRIFICE But I write the more boldly unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of the grace that was given me of God, that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. Romans 15:15-17. THE word "sacerdotalism" is a word which generally describes the view of the priestly character of the ministry. The late Bishop Lightfoot has asserted of the Kingdom of Christ, "Above all, it has no sacerdotal system." Canon Moberly, in his Ministerial Priesthood, has as his central argument an analysis and discussion of the idea of priesthood.

Canon Moberly's book is a masterpiece of special pleading. The sense in which Bishop Lightfoot uses the word "sacerdotalism" is well understood and clearly denned. Canon Moberly in effect says that there is in the Kingdom of Christ sacerdotalism in another sense. In this way he desires to turn the point of Bishop Lightfoot's statement.

Dr. Lightfoot says of the Kingdom of Christ: "It interposes no sacrificial tribe or class between God and man, by whose intervention alone God is reconciled and sin forgiven."

Surely this is clear. Canon Moberly's subtle mind passes by this sentence, and gives the following statement of priesthood: " The inwardness, then, of priesthood is the spirit of sacrifice, and the spirit of sacrifice is the spirit of love in a world of sin and pain, whose expression in the inner soul is priestly intercession and whose utterance in the outward life is devotion of ministry for others for others from the Christ-like point of view, as for those for whom Christ died."

We observe that it cannot be considered unnatural that Bishop Lightfoot should go to the Old Testament institution of sacrifice. The Old Testament was the book with which the writers of the New Testament were conversant, and the Old Testament presents us with a typical example of a priesthood the leading function of which was the offering of sacrifice. To apply this standard to the Christian function is natural, intelligible, and directly on a level with the instincts of plain men. This conclusion is self-evident the Christian ministry is not a sacrificing priesthood in the Old Testament sense of sacrifice.

Canon Moberly discusses quite a different question. Can we not conceive a spirit of sacrifice purified of all grosser forms? Can we not consider the sacrifice of Christ apart from His death? The offering of Himself to His Father by our Lord Jesus Christ was an act of sacrifice. His death was an unavoidable element, but not the greatest part of it. It had this in common with the Mosaic sacrifice, that without shedding of blood it would have been incomplete. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." Christ, therefore, died, and through death made good His sacrifice. Now comes an ambiguous statement by Canon Moberly. "What Christ does, that the Church, which is the Body of Christ, also does. What the Church does, so also does the ministry, its executive organ." It follows from this, according to Canon Moberly, that the New Testament has its

sacrificial system as well as the Old. In reply to such statements it may be said: if the spirit of priesthood is a spirit of sacrifice in a world of sin and pain, it may be predicated of many other things as well as priesthood. This is by no means the sense in which those who hold a sacerdotal view of the Christian ministry interpret the idea of the term "sacerdotal." The Christian does not die to sin in order to live exactly in the full and transcendent sense in which Christ died. His death and rising again were unique. The benefit to others from the death of Christ and from the dying to sin of a Christian are not on the same plane. The Christian must die to sin and put off the old man in the power of Christ. But surely we are speaking of a different thing when we say that Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification. When St. Paul says, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ?": he means that it is the appointed ceremonial means of realising to ourselves the death of Christ.

It is usually said that the minister pleads in the sacrament, or presents the sacrifice of Christ, and in virtue of pleading or presenting of a sacrifice he is himself described as sacrificing. But it has been well pointed out that to plead or present a sacrifice ceremonially is really a distinct thing from sacrificing. The position cannot be challenged that in the strict use of terms those who do but plead or present the sacrifice of another are not entitled to speak or be spoken of as though the act of sacrifice were their own. It is true Dr. Moberly admits this in the following passage:

"The words pleading or presenting in this connection must not be understood as de scribing anything corresponding to specific acts done or words spoken by Christ in His glory. His glorified presence is an eternal presentation: He pleads by what He is." The Church of Rome, however, states that the Eucharist is a "verum ac proprium sacrificium et vere propitiatorium." In Dr. Moberly's conception the element of sacrifice is twofold. First, there is the ceremonial act of sacrifice, which is of this derived character, and has behind it the true sacrifice of Christ. Secondly, there is the appropriation of the spirit of Christ's sacrifice that which gave to it its value, the spirit of self-devotion and love. He says the ministerial life ought to be a constant expression of this spirit taking the form of pastoral care. He says the Christian minister should be no mere performer of an opus operatum: he should live for his people and let himself spend and be spent in their service. It may be replied that these things are undoubted truths, but have nothing to do with the matter in hand. The title of the book is Ministerial Priesthood., not Ministerial Pastorate. The question now discussed is the position of the Sacerdos in Ecclesia and not Pastor in Ecclesia. The real question at issue is not what expressions have been used with regard to the celebrant at the Eucharist from the second century to the Reformation, but whether these expressions and ideas have any sanction in the New Testament. In the sense in which we are speaking now there is no trace of sanction. The only sacrifice we read of as being performed by any of the apostles is in Acts 21:26: "Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them went into the temple, declaring the fulfilment of the days of purification, until the offering was offered for every one of them." On the word "offering" (prosfora) Dean Alford says (see Numbers 6:13-17): "There is described a Mosaic offering in connection with the vow of the Nazarite, consisting of a he lamb, a ewe lamb, a ram, and a basket of unleavened bread. This is sufficiently far removed from the Christian Eucharist. The only sacrificial phrase which describes an apostle as a sacrificing priest is equally removed from the Eucharist. The sacrificial terminology is far more marked in the original than it can be in a translation." "I write," says St. Paul, "because of the grace of God, that I should

be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles (leitourgon Cristou Ihsou eij ta eqnh)." The word leitourgon is exactly the word that would be used of the discharge of the priest's office in the temple. Further, he writes "ministering the gospel of God." The R.V. notes in the margin that the Greek is "ministering in sacrifice." The word is ierourgounta, the technical term for the function of sacrifice. "That the offering up of the Gentiles (h prosfora tw'n eqnwn) [i.e. not the offering which the Gentiles make, but which the Gentiles are] might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."

Let us examine how far this word "offering" (prosfora) gives sanction to the Eucharist being a sacrifice. On the one occasion the word is used it does not refer to the Eucharist at all. "The apostle," says Dr. Sanday, "conceives himself as standing by the altar: and the offering he lays on the altar is the Gentile Church so far as it is of his founding or comes within his special province. An offering ought to be without blemish; it ought to be purified before it is offered. And it is the apostle's earnest prayer to God that these converts of his, these Gentile churches for which he is responsible, may be so sanctified by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them that they may be an offering really acceptable a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour, for the purpose for which they were destined."

It is said that the language of St. Paul is a metaphor; it may be retorted that the priesthood predicated by the ministry is a metaphor, but a metaphor which has been crudely and perilously mistaken for a fact. The use of the word "offering" by St. Paul refers to Christian missions; the use of the word "offering" by Dr. Moberly and his friends refers to the Eucharist. There is no mistaking the apostle's metaphor. "We seem to see the battered and shattered apostle, in bodily presence weak, but uplifted by the strength of deeply felt emotion, pouring out his whole soul to God as he lays this offering of his upon the altar, wrestling in prayer for precious souls which he has won from destruction, and commending them to the most effectual working of God's grace that they may fulfil the true end of their being, the glory of God who made and redeemed them." In Dr. Moberly's definition of sacrifice it is this fervour which is the essential thing. This is why he lays stress on the pastoral side of the priesthood.

There is no one who wishes to quarrel with such a presentation of ministerial office. But is not this evading the point? When Dr. Lightfoot said the Kingdom of Christ had no sacerdotal system, he denuded his meaning. It is no answer to give another definition, however true and beautiful, and think that the issue is joined. Dr. Lightfoot would welcome such a view of the ministerial office, but such a view is not what is in common parlance known as sacerdotalism. The Son of God went forth and trod the winepress alone in a world of sorrow and sin. His love caused the sacrifice to be made. The Christian priesthood, if it deserves the name of self-sacrificing, does so by virtue of the distant gleam which it reflects of the divine self-sacrifice. The Christian ministry must enter into the sphere of the divine purpose of which it forms part if it is to discharge its functions at all. I submit that there is on the part of Dr. Moberly a deliberate fallacy by which the sacerdotal idea of offering the sacrifice of the Blessed Body and Blood of Christ is confused with another part of ministerial work namely the self-sacrifice of a devoted life. It is idle to say that both may be joined in a good minister; the question is, Is it not a subterfuge to escape from discussing how far the Eucharist is a "verum ac proprium sacrificium et vere propitiatorium." Dr. Sanday says: "What Dr. Lightfoot combated, and what the strenuous opponents of sacerdotalism still combat, is, I believe, a very different thing. It is that spirit of clerical arrogance and assumption, utterly alien to the real leaders

of the movement, and to all who really understand their own meaning, of which the doctrines called sacerdotal are the excuse and not the cause. It is difficult to see how a book like Ministerial Priesthood, so carefully guarded, so critical and severe in its idea of ministerial duty, could furnish even a pretext for such perversion."

"All," says Dr. Sanday, "who are engaged in this controversy are Christians. All with whom I am at present concerned agree in celebrating the Eucharistic feast. The great majority also agree in entrusting the lead in that celebration to ministers specially set apart for that purpose. Nearly all, again, would agree in describing the death of the Lord Jesus Christ upon Calvary as a sacrifice. Nearly all would regard the Eucharist as in intimate relation to that death, which they allow to be sacrificial.

"The heart of the controversy lies in the one question, What relation and what share in the relation is borne by the ministers as distinct from the people?"

"I am still not shaken in my belief that if both sides in the controversy would only set out in full and exact terms their answer to these two questions, they would find that with their will or against they approach more nearly to each other's position than while they looked at it from the distance they imagined. We may be sure that the great Head of the Church does not mean His children to remain for ever in a dead lock; and the first step towards extricating themselves from it does not lie in disguising their meaning, but in determining with the utmost precision what they mean." The conception of office originally was that of order; by virtue of their appointment the officers of Christian communities were entitled to perform functions which in themselves were functions of the whole Church. The idea that ecclesiastical office in itself gave exceptional powers had the following main causes:

1. The wide extension of the limits of Church membership, which was caused by the prevalence of infant baptism. That which had been the ideal standard of qualifications for baptism became the ideal standard of qualifications for ordination.
2. The intensity of the sentiment of order under the Roman Empire. The same Apostolical Constitutions which give as a reason why a layman may not celebrate the Eucharist, that he has not the necessary dignity, call the officer who has that dignity " a god upon earth."
3. The growth of an analogy between the Christian and Mosaic dispensations. The existence of such an analogy in the earliest times was precluded by the vividness of the belief in the Second Advent.

PROFESSOR HATCH, The Organisation of the Early Christian Churches.

## A 09 - The Catena of Proof

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Ryder PLHV: 09 The Catena of Proof IX THE CATENA OF PROOF For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. Hebrews 7:12.

Having then a great High Priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need. Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 4:16. IN the writings of the apostles no traces of sacerdotalism as applied to church officers, apart from the whole body of Christians, are visible. This is also true of the ages immediately after the apostles. But when the idea once took root it shot up rapidly. The first germs appear about the time of Tertullian in A.D. 190, and the plant had attained all but full growth in the time of Cyprian, A.D. 250. The difference between clergy and laity is to be kept quite distinct from the idea of sacerdotalism. The word "clerus," as meaning ministerial office, did not convey the idea of sacerdotal functions. It is said of the Levites that they have no "clerus" in the land, for the Lord Himself is their "clerus" (Deut. x. 9). But the Jewish priesthood is never described as the "clerus" of Jehovah. On the other hand, the whole Israelite people are the "clerus" of the Lord (Deut. ix. 29). In the New Testament the title "clerus," as applied to the ministerial order, seems to have been arrived at in the following way. To supply the place left vacant by Judas, St. Peter tells the assembled disciples that the traitor had been among them and had received the lot (clerus) of the ministry (Acts i. 17). Then it is recorded that the lot fell on Matthias, and he was added to the eleven disciples. Thus "clerus" arrived at this peculiar sense: first the lot by which the office was assigned; secondly, the office thus assigned by lot; thirdly, the body of persons holding the office.

"Clerus" first meant clerical appointment, and then the holders of that office. Thus Irenaeus (i. 27) speaks of Hyginus holding the "ninth clerus" of the episcopal succession from the apostles. It is interesting to note that Tertullian (A.D. 190, in the next generation) gives us the earliest instance of "clerus" meaning "clergy" (Monogamia xii.): "When we begin to exalt and inflame ourselves against the clergy (clerus), then we are all one, then we are all priests, because He made us priests to God and His Father; but when we are required to submit ourselves equally to the priestly discipline, we throw off our fillets and are no longer equal."

Thus the use of "clerus" cannot be traced to the Jewish priesthood, and has no connection with sacerdotal claims. The term "clerus" recognises the clergy as an order distinct from the laity, but this is a question of ecclesiastical rule. The origin of sacerdotalism must be looked for in another direction. Taking in order the earliest documents, we may note the significant absence of sacerdotal claims.

1. The Pastoral Epistles (A.D. 67) are silent on the subject.
2. St. Clement (A.D. 95) urges that men appointed directly by the apostles, or those appointed by them, ought to have received better treatment. But he advances no sacerdotal immunities on behalf of those dismissed ministers. He shows that in the Old Testament God appointed persons

and places, and desires all things to be done in order. Then follows the passage in question (Clem. Rom. xl. 41):

"He hath not commanded [the offerings and ministrations] to be performed at random or in disorder, but at fixed times and seasons, and where and through whom He willeth them to be performed He hath ordained by His supreme will. They, there fore, who make their offerings at the appointed seasons are acceptable and blessed, since, following the ordinances of the Master, they do not go wrong. For to the high priest peculiar services are entrusted, and the priests have their peculiar office assigned to them, and on the Levites peculiar ministrations are imposed. The layman is bound by the lay ordinances. Let each of you, brethren, in his own rank give thanks to God, retaining a good conscience, not transgressing the appointed rule of his service (leitourgij)."

Here the element common to the Old Testament priesthood and the Christian ministry is divinely appointed order. But he keeps perfectly distinct the Jewish and Christian titles. To the murmuring of the Israelites, which was rebuked by the budding of Aaron's rod, he applies the words "jealousy concerning the priesthood" (Clem. Rom. xliii.). To differences in the Christian Church he applies most carefully the words, "Strife concerning the honour of the episcopate." It is most interesting that in the passage quoted above we have the first use of the word " layman " and " lay," and they are applied most accurately to those among the Jews who were not officers, but members of the laoj the chosen people of God.

3. St. Ignatius (A.D. 107) never regards the ministry as a sacerdotal office. He is the champion of episcopacy, but says no thing of the priesthood of the Christian ministry. Still more remarkable is the silence of the interpolated and forged letters falsely attributed to Ignatius. While these letters are full of passages enjoining obedience to the bishop, this pseudo-Ignatian writer never once appeals to sacerdotal claims. We may infer the sacerdotal view of the ministry had not yet made its way into the Christian Church.

4. Polycarp (A.D. 108) takes occasion to give his friends advice about a certain presbyter, Valens, who disgraced by avarice the office he held. Yet Polycarp knows nothing of any sacerdotal functions which claimed respect, or any sacerdotal sanctity which had been violated.

5. Justin Martyr (A.D. 140) speaks at length on Eucharistic offerings. Here surely we might expect to find sacerdotal views of the Christian ministry set forth, yet it is quite otherwise. When arguing with Trypho the Jew (Dia. c. Trypho, cxvi. 117) he writes:

"So we, who through the name of Jesus have, as one man, believed in God, the maker of the universe, having divested ourselves of our filthy garments, that is, our sins, through the name of His first-born Son, and having been refined by the word of His calling, are the true high-priestly race of God as Himself also beareth witness, saying that in every place among the Gentiles men are offering sacrifices well pleasing to Him, and pure" (Malachi 1:11).

"Yet God doth not receive sacrifices from any one save through His priests. Therefore God, anticipating all sacrifices through this name, which Jesus Christ ordained to be offered, I mean those offered by the Christians in every region of the earth with (epi) the thanksgiving (the Eucharist) of the\*bread and the cup beareth witness that they are well-pleasing to Him; but the sacrifices through your priests He rejecteth, saying, I will not accept your sacrifices from your hands" (Malachi 1:10).

He is arguing with a Jew, and he contrasts with the Jewish priests the whole body of Christians (the one high-priestly race of God) who offer jointly the sacrifices now appointed by God. The whole Christian people, therefore, according to Justin, have not only taken the place of the Aaronic priesthood, but have become a nation of high priests, being made one with the Great High Priest of the New Covenant, and presenting their Eucharistic offerings in His name.

6. Irenaeus (A.D. 167) writes on the importance of the episcopate, but the silence which has accompanied us is still unbroken.

He not only withholds the title of priesthood, as a name for the Christian ministry, but expounds a new view of the office of priest. He recognises only the priesthood of moral holiness (Hoer., iv. viii. 3). When speaking of our Lord's reference to the occasion in David's life where the king and his followers ate the shewbread, which it is not lawful to eat save for the priests alone, Irenaeus says:

"He excuseth His disciples by the words of the law, and signifieth that it is lawful for priests to act freely. For David had been called to be a priest in the sight of God, although Saul carried on a persecution against him, for all just men are of the sacerdotal order. Now all the apostles of the Lord are priests, for they inherit neither lands nor houses here; but ever attend on the altar and on God.

"Who are they," he goes on, "that have left father, and mother, and have renounced all their kindred for the sake of God and His covenant, but the disciples of the Lord? Of these Moses says again, But they shall have no inheritance.:"

Again (Hcer., v. xxxiv. 3) he says: " We have shown in a former book that all disciples of the Lord are priests and Levites, who also profaned the Sabbath and are blameless."

Thus Irenaeus regards the whole body of the faithful under the New Dispensation as the counterparts of the sons of Levi under the Old Dispensation. Not yet is there any departure from the views of the apostles and the evangelists.

7. Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus (A.D. 190), quoted by Eusebius (Hist. Eccles., v. 24), writes to Victor, Bishop of Rome. He speaks of St. John as having been made a priest and wearing the petalon that is, a long plate of gold two fingers broad, which reached from one ear of the high priest to the other. As a fact this is not probable. In any case its value is to be learned from St. John's own language in the Book of Revelation, where great stress is laid on the priesthood of believers generally. St. John may be regarded as the veteran teacher, the chief representative of a priestly race. If the words were to be interpreted literally, which is most unlikely, this would be the earliest passage in any Christian writing of a sacerdotal view of the ministry.

8. Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 192) was more inclined to maintain an aristocracy of intellectual contemplation than of sacerdotal office. In the following passage we observe how far he was from maintaining a sacerdotal view of the ministry:

"It is possible for men, even now, by exercising themselves in the commandments of the Lord, and by living a perfect gnostic life in obedience to the Gospel, to be inscribed upon the roll of the apostles. Such men are genuine presbyters of the Church, and true deacons of the will of God, if they practise and teach the things of the Lord, being not ordained by men, nor considered righteous, because they are presbyters, but enrolled in the presbytery because they are righteous;

and though on earth they may not be honoured with a chief seat, yet they shall sit on the four and twenty thrones, judging the people " (Strom., vi. 13). This truly spiritual view, which is metaphorical, does not prevent him from recognising presbyters and deacons and laymen in other parts of his writings as distinct and actual orders. But he never uses the words "priest," "priestly," and "priesthood" of the Christian ministry. In Stromata (v. 33) he contrasts laity and priesthood, but without any such reference. When he says the veil of the temple is a barrier against laic unbelief, he means those who appropriate the Gospel are priests, and those who reject it laymen. In the context St. Clement, following up the hint thrown out in the Epistle to the Hebrews, gives a spiritual meaning to all the furniture of the tabernacle.

Thus for 190 years the whole body of believers are regarded as the race of priests and no sacerdotal term is applied to the Christian ministry.

9. Tertullian (A.D. 192), of the same generation, is the first to assert direct sacerdotal claims for the ministry (De prescrip. Hcer., 41). Of the heretics he complains that they "impose sacerdotal functions on laymen (nam et laicis sacerdotalia munera injungunt)." He says (De Virg. Vel.): "No woman ought to teach, baptize, celebrate the Eucharist, or arrogate to herself the performance of any duty pertaining to men, much less the sacerdotal office." Tertullian employs the words "sacerdos," "sacerdotium," "sacerdotalis" of the Christian ministry. Yet even he strongly asserts the universal priesthood of all believers. In arguing against second marriages, he says: "We would be foolish to suppose that alatitude is allowed to laymen which is denied to priests. Are not we laymen also priests? It is written, He hath also made us a kingdom and priests to God and His Father. It is the authority of the Church which makes the difference between the order (the clergy) and the people; thus where there is no bench of clergy, you present the Eucharistic offerings, and baptize, and are your sole priest. For where three are gathered together there is a church, though they are laymen. Therefore if you exercise the rights of a priest in cases of necessity, it is your duty also to observe the discipline enjoined on a priest, where of necessity you exercise the rights of a priest " (De Exh. Cast.). In Monogamia, xii. he satirically says: " When we begin to exalt and inflame ourselves against the clergy we are all one.

Then we are priests of God and His Father. But when we are required to submit our selves equally to the priestly discipline we throw off our fillets and are now no longer equal."

These passages were written by Tertullian after he became a Montanist. But even in these passages he recognises that his opponents also held the Scriptural doctrine of a universal priesthood.

It was by Tertullian first the fateful word was spoken. Dr. Hatch says: " Tertullian, with an explanation which shows that the conception is new, tells us (De Bapt., xvii.): \* The authority of administering baptism is possessed by the high priest (summus sacerdos) that is, the bishop. The explanation of "summus sacerdos" was not needed a century later.

Origen, with a hesitating timidity which shows that such an idea had not yet established itself, said (Orig. Com. on Joann.): "Those devoted to the Divine Word and the exclusive service of God, Levites and priests not unreasonably might be named." It was a century and a half later before the analogy came to be generally accepted but when once established it became permanent.

10. Hippolytus (A.D. 220), Bishop of Portus, shows that the tide had changed, and was now running slowly in the direction of sacerdotalism (Hcer. prosm., p. 3):

"We being successors of the apostles, and partaking of the same grace of high priesthood, and of teaching, and being accounted guardians of the Church, do not suppress the true Word."

11. Origen (A.D. 230) still holds the doctrine of the universal priesthood (Horn. ix. in Levit.). He says there are "two sanctuaries in the temple of the Church the heavenly accessible to Jesus Christ, the earthly open to all priests of the New Covenant. For Christians are a sacerdotal race, and therefore have access to the outer sanctuary. There they present their offerings of love and self-denial." In Com. Joann., i. 3, his view is that many professed Christians occupied chiefly with the concerns of the world, and dedicating but few of their actions to God, are represented by the tribes who merely present tithes and first-fruits. On the other hand, those who are devoted to the Divine Word, and are busied in the sole worship of God, may not unreasonably be called priests and Levites, according to the difference in this respect of the impulses tending thereto. In all these passages Origen has taken spiritual enlightenment, and not sacerdotal office, to be the Christian counterpart of the Aaronic priesthood.

Up to the year A.D. 192 there has been only a sacerdotal view of the ministry as part of the sacerdotal functions of the whole Christian body. Tertullian held that the clergy are separate from the laity only because the Church in the exercise of her prerogative has for convenience entrusted to them certain sacerdotal functions, belonging to the whole sacerdotal body. Origen considered the priesthood of the clergy to differ from that of the laity only because the clergy devote more of their time and thoughts to God than the latter. The teaching of the apostles is not violated so long as the priesthood of the ministry is considered to spring from the priesthood of the whole body. It was, however, a dangerous change to use the terms "hiereus" and "sacerdos" as a special title of a single class.

Here is the period of change A.D. 250, when the general priesthood of the New Testament passes into the particular priesthood of a later age.

12. It is Cyprian (A.D. 250) who uses "sacerdos," "sacerdotium," "sacerdotalis" constantly of the ministry.

He regards all the passages which refer to the privileges, the sanctuary, the duties, and the responsibilities of the priesthood of Aaron as applying to the officers of the Christian Church. He says (Cyp. Ep. iii,) that his opponents have passed sentence of death on themselves; by disobeying the command of the Lord in Deuteronomy to hear the priest (Cyp. Ep. iii. 66), they have been guilty of the sin of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. It is no longer a metaphor, or an illustration, but an absolute unquestionable doctrine. He is so strongly assertive of the sacerdotal authority of the priesthood that it only remains for those who follow him to develop his principles.

Having thus traced the rise of the new view of the sacerdotal position of the clergy, it remains to note the cause of this change. It may be remarked that in the early centuries, when Judaism was still powerful enough to make its impress on Christianity, there is no trace of distinct sacerdotalism. It is not due to the influence of Judaistic Christianity. It comes from Gentile feeling. The Gentile lived in an atmosphere of sacerdotalism and depended on augury and sacrifice every day of his life. The Jew might have dispensed with priestly administration from one year's end to the other.

This is proved by the fact that germs of the sacerdotal idea first appear in the Church of Carthage that is, in Latin Christendom. To heathen, not to Jewish converts, sacerdotalism must be traced. Yet the form was derived from the Old Testament in a twofold way: (1) by the metaphor and analogy of the term "sacrifice "; (2) by the correspondence between the threefold ministry and the three ranks of the Levitical priesthood. In the apostolic writings the actions of the same type are sacrifices and offerings praise, faith, alms giving, the offering of the body, and the conversion of unbelievers. In Hebrews 13:10 we read, "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle"; but the apostle continues, Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to His name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

Dr. Westcott, in a valuable note, says: "In this first stage of Christian literature down to Polycarp (A.D. 108) there is not only no example of the application of the word *quasiasthron* to any concrete material object, as the Holy Table, but there is no room for such an application. The word is used, but in a quite different sense. Ignatius uses it of the assembly where the faithful meet God in worship. The order of widows is called the altar of the Lord, because they were constantly engaged in prayer and received the alms of the faithful. Christ Himself is called the altar. Thomas Aquinas declared the words here either mean the Cross or Christ Himself."

Dr. Lightfoot says: "In one passage the image is so far extended that the apostolic writer speaks of an altar pertaining to the spiritual service of the Christian Church. If on this noble Scriptural language a false superstructure has been raised, we have here only one instance out of many where the truth has been impaired by transferring statements from the region of metaphor to that of fact. The altar here spoken of is the Cross. An actual altar is not intended. This is shown by the context before and after. The apposition between grace and meats in the verses above; the contrast implied in the mention of sacrifice of praise, and fruit of the lips, and the naming of doing good and communicating help, as the kind of sacrifice in which God is well pleased, in the verses that follow, show the metaphorical sense. The interpretation of a spiritual sacrifice accords well with the Christian sacrifice of succeeding ages."

Dr. Westcott says that the writings of Cyprian mark a new stage in the development of ecclesiastical thought and language. It is from Cyprian's time that *quasiasthron* and altar are used habitually, though not exclusively, of the Lord's Table.

Spiritual sacrifices were often not the acts of the individual Christian, but of the whole congregation. Public prayer, thanks giving, almsgiving, giving of the food for the "agape" were presented by the people through their ministers, who, as their mouth piece, devoted their offerings unto God. From being the act of the whole congregation the offering came to be regarded as the offering of the minister who officiated on their behalf. By degrees the terms " offering " and " sacrifice " were restricted to the Eucharistic service, and by degrees the Eucharist, being regarded as the one special act of sacrifice, and appearing externally to the eye as the act of the officiating minister, might well lead to the minister being called priest, and then being thought a priest in an exclusive sense, where the religious bias was in this direction and the true position of the minister of the congregation was lost sight of. Again, there were in the Jewish priesthood and in the Christian ministry three orders. The analogy could not fail to seize the imagination. The solitary high priest was representative of the solitary bishop. The acts of Jewish sacrifice by the priests

were represented by the principal acts of offering by Christian presbyters. The Levite, as attendant minister, was represented by the deacon. The correspondence seemed complete. There was one hindrance. Our Lord Himself was the one High Priest recognised in the New Testament. Accordingly Clement, Polycarp, Ignatius, and other early writers reserve the title to Him, and all writers, though varying in other matters, refrain from applying it to the bishop. But at last the barrier was broken. After the presbyters were called "sacerdotes," the title for the bishop of "summus sacerdos" and "pontifex maximus" was too convenient to be ignored. The steps which led to the sacerdotal language and view were the analogy of the sacrifices in both Covenants, and the correspondence of the threefold order. The doctrine of an exclusive priesthood found its way into the Church by the union of Gentile sentiment with the ordinances of the Old Testament.

We have noticed the silence of the early Christian writers, and seek the explanation. It lies in the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The doctrine which is here explicit supplements and interprets the silence elsewhere, alike of the New Testament and of early Fathers. For this Epistle declares that all sacrifices have been consummated in the one sacrifice, all priesthood in one Priest. The offering had been made once for all; and as there were no more victims, there could be no more priests. The writer speaks of Christian sacrifices and a Christian altar, but the sacrifices are praise and thanksgiving, and the altar is the Cross of Christ. Though dwelling at length on the Christian counterparts to the Jewish priest, the Jewish altar, and the Jewish sacrifice, he omits to mention the one office, the one place, the one act, which on this showing would be their truest counterparts in the worship of the Church. He rejects these and chooses spiritual metaphor for the sacred types.

It is very remarkable that, while drawing profound lessons from the silence of Scripture about Melchizedek and from his receiving tithes, he passes over in silence what later sentiment would have made so prominent in the work of the high priest that he gave Abraham bread and wine. The Christian ministry could only be called a priesthood by broadening the idea of a priest to one who in the same way represents God to man, and man to God, and that he should be called of God, for "no man taketh this honour unto himself." The threefold ministry may be traced to apostolic direction. We may infer a divine appointment and an apostolic sanction. "If the facts," says Dr. Lightfoot, "do not allow us to unchurch other Christian denominations, they justify our loyal adherence to a Church government derived from this source." The true title of the Christian minister is ambassador, and as such he pronounces absolution. This term is not so much connected with the sacerdotal as with the pastoral or magisterial duties of his office. As his duty is to declare the conditions of God's grace, it is his duty also to proclaim the consequences of their acceptance. His office is representative and not vicarial. He does not interfere himself in such a way between man and God that direct communion with God is suspended and his own mediation becomes indispensable. As a representative of man to God the Christian minister is a representative first of the congregation, and next of the individual as a member of the congregation. Representation is necessary and consistent with the fact that the form of the ministry has been handed down from apostolic times. He is representative without being vicarial. He is the mouthpiece of a priestly race. His acts are acts of the congregation. It may be a general rule that the highest acts of worship shall be performed by the principal officers of the congregation. Circumstances may, however, arise when the spirit of Christian worship must overrule the letter. The Christian ideal will emerge and show us our duty. The universal priesthood will overrule all special limitations. The lay men, as

Tertullian says, will assume functions which are otherwise restricted to the ordained minister. Casual occurrences, like the shipwreck of the *Bounty* on Pitcairn island, may arrest functions that are considered essential; yet the priesthood of all believers will prevent the flow of divine grace from failing, and the ordinary channels may be replaced by the ideal and universal ones.

We have seen how the apostolic ideal was set forth, and in two hundred and fifty years forgotten. The spiritual conception of the priesthood of all believers was replaced by the strictly sacerdotal and limited one. The ideal of universal priesthood was submerged, first by the infiltration of Gentile sentiment, and then of Jewish analogies. From being the ambassadors of God, the ministers came to be looked upon as His vicars. But a truer view is now being maintained by men of all schools of thought, and the laity are welcomed to take their true place in the Kingdom of God. By the force of changing circumstances, and by the growth of new conceptions, the original difference of rank and order became a difference of spiritual power; and a mediaeval theologian, St. Bernard writing of the same officer whom Justin Martyr describes simply as president (o proestwj), offering prayers and thanksgivings, in which the congregation take their part by a solemn Amen says that the orders of the heavenly host, although they enjoy beatitude and want nothing to the sum of felicity, still revere the glory of a priest, wonder at his dignity, yield to him in privilege, and revere his power. But in earlier times there was a grander faith, for the Kingdom of God was a kingdom of priests. Not only the four-and twenty elders before the throne, but the innumerable souls of the sanctified, upon whom the second death had no power, were kings and priests to God. Only in that high sense was priesthood predicable of Christian men. For the shadow had passed! The Reality had come! The one High Priest of Christianity was Christ.

## A 10 - Practical Advantages

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### Ryder PLHV: 10 Practical Advantages PRACTICAL ADVANTAGES

Many complain of a rising sacerdotalism among us, a dangerous and unscriptural sacerdotalism. Of course there is when laymen hide their priesthood in a napkin, and carry out to the full the dangerous and unscriptural doctrine that the clergy are responsible for the souls of others, that all conversion and religious influence and reproof of evil is the business of the clergy alone. There is sure to be a one-sided and exaggerated ministerial priesthood when the laity neglect and forget their own proper priesthood. The best cure for clericalism is not to weaken the clergy, but to strengthen the laymen. If every layman fulfilled his own vocation and ministry, sacerdotalism of an unsound kind would soon be dead among us. The Church is a priestly Church, and this means more than the possession of so many thousand clergymen. It means, according to the teaching of the New Testament, that every Churchman is called to help others to make it more desirable and easier to be good, to bear the burdens of others, especially the burdens of poverty and ignorance and sin. It means that there is a general as well as a special priesthood; it means that the Christian who is not priestly in some practical way has a Christianity that is weak and starved. His own soul is not watered as it might be, because he does not water others. A useless Christian is a contradiction in terms.

JOHN GOTT, BISHOP OP TBUBO, The Priesthood of the Laity. As He is, even so are we in this world. 1 John 4:17. THE only High Priest under the Gospel recognised by the apostolic writings is our Lord Himself. The teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews is final on this matter. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews is contrasting the privileges of the Jews in the earlier dispensation and of the Christians in the later. He had every reason in the course of his argument to explain what human priesthood, sacrifice by human hands, and altar the Christians possessed. But his silence is significant. He mentions no human priest or material sacrifice or altar on earth.

If the Christian ministry were a sacerdotal office, if the Holy Eucharist were a sacerdotal act in the same sense in which the Jewish priesthood and the Jewish sacrifice were sacerdotal, then his argument is faulty and misleading. Though dwelling at great length on the Christian counterparts to the Jewish priest, the Jewish altar, the Jewish sacrifice, he omits to mention the one office, the one place, the one act, which on this showing would be their truest and liveliest counterpart in the every-day worship of the Church of Christ. He has rejected all these and chosen instead moral and spiritual analogies for all these sacred types. Our Lord in utilising existing ideas deliberately annulled the cultus of His own nation. As Head of the Christian Church He has made all Christians a holy priesthood (Heb. x. 19-22): " Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having a great priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our body washed with pure water." The entering into the holy place at once suggests the light in which Christians are there regarded, for into it under the Old Testament economy priests alone could

enter. There is a double reference: the one the sprinkling of blood which accompanied the consecration of Aaron and his sons to the priesthood; the other the command that when the priests entered into the tabernacle of the congregation they should first wash their hands that they died not. As priests, then, the members of the Christian Church enjoy their privilege of immediate access to the presence of God. It is so also in the Revelation of St. John. Jesus exalted in glory is a priest wearing His priestly garments in the manner in which they were worn by the priests of Israel. So we are taught in this same book that in Him all His people also are priests. They have been made a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father, and the white robes they wear throughout the book are the robes of priests. The idea of the universal Christian priesthood cannot be separated from the Christian Church. All the Lord's people are priests. People may be led to urge that there is no priest on earth, that our Lord in heaven is the one sufficient and only Priest. But let priesthood be denned as our Lord denned it when He said, "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give His life a ransom for many." Let the priesthood of the whole Church, not that of any particular class within her, be prominently brought forward. Let it appear that the very object of insisting on the Church's priesthood is to restore to the Christian laity that sense of their responsibility and privilege of which Protestantism hardly less than Romanism has practically deprived them. Let the Church's priesthood be invariably represented as a continuation of our Lord's priesthood through her, not as something deputed to her. Let all this be done, and prejudice against this doctrine will be removed. The commission of the Church is to represent her Lord, and as an instrument through which He acts to carry on His work. The Church represents Christ in four ways: her Life, her Work, her Worship, and her Confession.

1. The glorified Lord is to be made manifest in His people's life. He said (St. John 17:19): "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth." He had laid all that He was upon the altar of God, with perfect acquiescence and free will, and thus gained a place which entitled Him to be the Head of a new line of spiritual descendants. The consecration of His disciples, it is also evident, was to be the exact counterpart of His own, that they themselves also might be consecrated. The Church, in her whole process of sanctification, therefore, is only reaching onward in Christ to what Christ is. She aims at no merely pagan perfection of virtue. Her aim is to be like her Lord, and like Him in that character which distinguishes Him as the heavenly Priest, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Sanctification is salvation in the highest sense. It is being loosed from our sins in the blood of Christ (Revelation 1:6) which makes us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father. In the Eucharistic sacrifice the idea of offering is more forcibly and fully expressed than in any other Christian ordinance, and the Church throughout her history felt this to be the case. The offering made in the Eucharist is not an offering of death. In the Roman Mass there is an oblation in which the thing offered is destroyed or otherwise changed in order to acknowledge the supreme dominion of Almighty God over all His creatures, who, as He made us out of nothing, can again destroy us as He pleases. There is nothing of that kind here. The Eucharist is an oblation in which the offerer lives, having accepted death as the penalty of sin in Him who died on the Cross. As our Lord's offering of Himself to His heavenly Father never ends, so in that offering His people, organically united to Him, one with Him, must be offered and offer themselves: " And here we offer and present unto Thee ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, true, and living sacrifice."

2. The glorified Lord is to be made manifest in the work of the Church. The principal work needed is for herself. It is a mistake to think that the activities of the Church are to be directed only on those outside her pale. She has another more imperative duty to perform namely, building up, purifying, and advancing her own inner life. In the Beatitudes, in the Sermon on the Mount, every blessing has a reference to character. Not until the Beatitudes are ended do we read: "Let your light so shine among men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven." Character precedes power. The late Dr. Arnold of Rugby used to say, "If half the energy and resources which have been turned to Bible societies and missions had been steadily applied to the reform of our own institutions, I cannot but think that we should have been fulfilling a higher duty, and with the blessing of God might have produced more satisfactory results." Dr. Arnold did not, in thus speaking, forget the reflex action of foreign missionary work or undervalue Bible societies and foreign-missionary exertions. He meant that the Church herself and not her work is the great mission to the world, and until she spares neither labour nor sacrifice to exhibit a more perfect representation of that divine life and love without which all she does and suffers is no more than a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal, the result is trifling in comparison.

It is true she must work for the world. First "Be" and then "Do" should be the rule. There was work for the world even in the mediaeval times. The secular world then consisted for the most part of tyrants on the thrones and of fierce barons in their castles. The poor were ground to earth by brutal authority against which they had no protection from the State. In the Church, notwithstanding all abuses, there was law, order, mercy, charity. When men and women, weary of the corruptions and abominations around them, sought rest they found it in her bosom. There was help in the Church for woes for which otherwise there was no helper. When monks and nuns gave bread to the hungry and clothing to the naked, when they visited the sick man upon his bed of languishing and the prisoner in his loathsome dungeon, and told of One who had loved His people unto death and of a Church which was still His messenger upon earth for works such as He had done then the hungry and thirsty and the naked and the sick and the prisoner, moved by the loving voice, touched by the living hand, looked up and said, "We believe in the love of Him whose love is taught us by your love, whose pity by your pity." The representative of the dying and living Lord was fulfilling her commission, and the fruits appeared. The material welfare is also to be taken within the work of the priesthood of the Church. On the mission field Christ's representatives have to teach men to plough, to reap, to build, to clothe themselves, to read and write and cipher. At home they have to arouse a feeling on behalf of elementary education and light and air and cleanliness and efficient drainage. People say: "Now we understand you. This is practically to promote human welfare, and is far better adapted to human needs than what is called preaching the Gospel." No! there is no opposition here. When work of this kind is done from the Christian motive and is animated by the Christian spirit, it is preaching the Gospel. Our High Priest in heaven, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, healed the sick and fed the multitudes. He would do the same thing now through His people as they carry on this work of priesthood. In His name they are still to help, strengthen, and comfort all. They are to find their joy in taking upon them the sorrows of others, in dying for others that they may live. A heavy responsibility has been incurred by those who have presented to men a narrower idea of priesthood. The people of Christ are to be God's representatives to a heathen world. To no part of their work are the thoughts of Christians more earnestly turned at the present than to that which bids them "go into all the world and make disciples of all the nations" (St. Matt, 18:19). The Church must be animated by the

thought that she is elect not for her own sake, but for the world, that her life must be a life of priesthood in the name of the heavenly Father for the spreading of that kingdom which, bringing men to Christ, brings them into that ideal sphere of the holy, the beautiful, and the loving which as yet has only consummated in the Great High Priest in heaven. The embracing love of God is the historical destiny of man. This historical destiny of the human race is but another expression for the Biblical idea "the tabernacle of God is with men" (Revelation 21:3). In that tabernacle, wide as the world and with its veil rent from top to bottom, the whole Church, when alive to its vocation, is to stand as a ministering priesthood until, in the most extended sense of the term, "all Israel shall be saved." Personal work is to represent a personal Redeemer. From the thought of the work of the glorified Lord it would be seen that many branches of the Church of Christ have a lesson to learn in our day, which, when learned, may be the means of introducing a new era in their history. Let us be thankful that they are learning it. Their Brotherhoods, their Sisterhoods, their "Settlements," the dwelling of God's workers in the slums to raise the poor, the daily personal contact with hearts often more sad than wicked, and oftenest saddest in their wickedness, the labours unseen by human eye, the sacrifices uncomplained of by those who make them these and other efforts devised by the spirit of love are producing and will produce an effect the extent of which we cannot as yet measure. They are an approach to the idea of the priesthood of the Church.

3. The glorified Lord is to be manifested in the worship of His people. The Liturgy of the Anglican Church is one in which the laity have their share. It is a service of responses. The worship of the Church has always been a common worship. There is the worship in private, which is the Christian's vital breath and native air. There is family worship, which cannot tolerate that any member of the family be missed from the family in heaven. The Gospel fulfils its noblest mission in hallowing the general relations of family life. In St. Paul's history of Philippi whole families were gathered into the fold. Lydia and her household, the jailer and all belonging to him, were baptized into Christ. Henceforth the worship of households plays an important part in the divine economy of the Church. As in primeval days the patriarch was the recognised priest of His clan, so in the Christian Church the father of the house is the divinely appointed centre of religious life to his own family. The family religion is the true starting-point, the surest foundation of the religion of cities and dioceses, of nations and empires. The church in the house of Philemon grows into the Church of Colosse; the church in the house of Nymphas becomes the Church of Laodicea; the church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla loses itself in the Church of Ephesus and Rome.

Christians need a common worship. They are not merely individual personalities, each having its own connection with the Head. They are sharers of a common life, and are united to one another by a bond similar to that which unites them to their Lord, and in their Lord to the Father of all. If so, that common worship, which is as much the expression of common life as individual worship is of individual life, is binding on every Christian. It depends in the first instance upon no thought of benefit received or to be received, but on the fact that the Redeemer as Head of the body does not stand alone. He has taken up all His people to Himself, and His glory cannot be thought of without them. Through them and us, then, He fills all things. The service of the Church is almost exclusively joyous. It is one chant, culminating in the Eucharist, the peculiar sacrifice of thanksgiving. It is one effort to set forth "God's most holy praise," when the Church forgets for the moment her own necessities in contemplating the love which passeth knowledge. In the

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper the Church realises to a greater extent than in any other of her ordinances the sacrificial life of her glorified Lord. His life on earth was praise. The more fully the spirit of the Lord becomes her spirit, the more she must feel that the keynote of her worship is not prayer for blessings needed in the future, but adoration and thanksgiving for those that have been made hers already.

4. The glorified Lord is to be made manifest in the confession of His Church. Our Lord came into the world to confess His Father before men, to be a witness to His being and character. There is, indeed, no more characteristic aspect in which our Lord is set before us in the New Testament than that of witnessing. A similar confession and similar witnessing is demanded by the Church when she manifests the Redeemer's glory and carries on His work. A confession of the Church's faith is to be made by the whole Church. To maintain that a confession is to be limited to a few, is to destroy its vitality and to doom it to extinction. The few will cease to care for what they are taught to regard as intended for them alone. The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ does not live for the few. She lives for all, and she proclaims One who is the Saviour of all. The confession thus intended for the whole Church must spring from the Church as a whole. St. Paul fixes on the confession which is made to salvation: "If thou confess with thy mouth Jesus is Lord," and "that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." There should be fixity with regard to the great fact of salvation and freedom to discuss all else.

There is nothing more imperatively demanded of the Church in the present day than that idea of the general priesthood which flows directly from the fact that she lives in Him who is our High Priest in heaven. The idea has been too long associated with periods of unscriptural domination on the part of the clergy, and of ignorance and superstition. In spite of that it is true and fundamental. A clear conception and a bold enunciation of it lies at the very root of all that is most real in the Church's work. We cannot abandon a position to which we have been divinely called because it has been abused and may be abused again. The aim of true priesthood is not money and station and power. It is love, work, self-sacrifice. The Christian Church has lost much by casting the thought of her priesthood aside. Let us return to the proclamation of it by word and deed. In the previous lectures we have considered how the Holy Spirit has come into the minds of men through the Church, the Body of Christ. The view taken in this course of lectures combines in one the doctrines which have been held in part or else ever-emphasised by various Christian bodies. With the Roman Catholic Church it recognises the important powers of the Christian ministry, and claims for that ministry the functions which belong to it representatively through the Holy Spirit by the breath and commission of Christ ever since the Resurrection Day. With the school of Dr. Arnold it insists on the personal priesthood of every baptized member of Christ, and in consequence his and her access in personal devotion to the favour of God through Jesus Christ. But it supplies to both views what is much required, the full acknowledgment of the other part of the double truth namely, that the inherent priesthood of the whole body asserts, in a way that cannot be neglected, the official ministry in its representative priesthood. The organic ministry is requisite to keep up in its full strength and deep needs the priesthood of each member of the whole body. While it acknowledges the authority of Holy Scripture, it admits that God has given to each age the duty of determining the points which it alone has the power of determining.

If the two sides of this great truth were realised in all their strength, many important questions would be solved.

First, the important question of winning back those who have left the Anglican communion, not in consequence of any difference in doctrine or discipline, but through a desire for the fuller recognition of those important truths which the full doctrine of the general priesthood of all the members of the body of Christ brings prominently into view.

Then, secondly, the whole question of non-established churches, as in the Colonies and in the mission field, is more easily seen when both parts of the twofold truth are fully recognised. In such churches, where the State or long custom does not form a factor in the problem, the sacred spiritual authority of the whole Church, within due and scriptural limits, is more clearly seen and authorised. Even in churches established by law a reflected light is found for the exhibition and success in practice of this primitive truth in sister and daughter churches. As we consider in conclusion the personal priesthood of every single Christian, by which he has direct access to God, two elements here meet us: (1) the secret operation of the Holy Spirit, and (2) that which belongs to sacramental efficacy.

Both are necessary to the perfection of each member of the body of Christ. In baptism the outwardly administered gift is given and received. The soul is placed in a covenant relation to God. The germ may be long latent, and yet by no means lost. It awaits faith and repentance. But if a soul utterly profanes God's grace it will be cut off. Therefore the preaching of faith and repentance is necessary to waken up personal faith and conscious repentance. As the sap cannot flow from a tree to a branch that by decay has become incapable of receiving it, so the choicest graces cannot reach the soul which is not in a fit condition to receive them. In Holy Communion it is only those who rightly, duly, and with faith receive after a spiritual manner the body and blood of Christ that are strengthened and refreshed. So also in public prayer: here our faith must give sincerity and voice to confession, and proving of heart to prayer, reality to repentance, or else the united prayers of the Church are but like a tinkling cymbal. The absolution pronounced by the ministry acts like drops of water which flow off a hardened rock to the wet soil of a neighbouring heart, if unaccompanied by personal assimilation.

Besides this personal sincerity needed to enjoy the graces of the body through its authorised channels, each Christian possesses a distinct priesthood of his own, which is at once part of the universal priesthood, and is for himself a sufficient right of admission to the mercy of God through Christ. In the power of this priesthood he cultivates a perfect faith. In deep self-reliance he knits himself body and soul altogether perfectly to God. He finds strength sufficient to support him under earthly trouble, giving him cheerfulness, calmness, and a sense of the presence of God through pain and illness to the last ray of consciousness and the gates of the grave. It is his own. It is the gift of God to the separate soul of His child on earth. He possesses it alone. It is heaven in anticipation! It makes things hoped for substantial to his soul. It makes evident things not seen. In personal priesthood he has a right to the Holy Scriptures. It is a cruel overthrow of the fundamental principles of the doctrine of Christ which would withhold, and which has withheld, the life-giving Word of God from any portion of the people of God. If any be ignorant he is to be taught, that he may discern things more excellent and the true balance of the varying truths in God's revelation. But to withhold from him the Bible is to deprive him of the very means by which he may learn how to do the service which is due from every baptized member of Christ's Body. These truths are his to ponder, to hide within his heart, that he may not sin; to repeat when he walks by the way, when he lies upon his bed, and when he wakes up. They are as necessary to his spiritual life as the air

to breathing. He possesses all the faith once for all delivered unto the saints the doctrines of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is his duty to defend it from attack. It may not be his duty to preach, but his aid is a help the authorised clergy cannot spare or do without. For himself, his children, and those who come under his influence his own sacred and well-grounded faith is of a value that cannot be exaggerated, and its absence is a heavy and dangerous loss. In his own personal priesthood he can go to God in repentance and hearty confession of sin. He can lay open his conscience before God, confessing sins which no man knows or need know. He may be sure that God accepts his filial confession. He has a right in Christ to the absolute assurance of forgiveness in so far as his repentance is real and his confession true. He does not need that any man should necessarily come between God and his own soul in order to obtain for him the pardon and peace which are promised to faithful confessions: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness " (1 St. John i. 9). In the power of his personal priesthood he can pray to his Father in secret, and his Father will not fail to give him for Christ's sake the answer best for him: " Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened " (St. Matthew 7:7-8). In the power of personal priesthood the boy may pray in the critical temptations of school life; the young man in the searching trials of mind and body in the freshness of all his powers; the man in the stern realities of life; the old man with the nearing prospect of the grave. All are admitted in access to the Father; all are accepted in the Beloved.

He can make also effectual intercession for others. Very strong is the praying of a righteous man in its working! The father for his family, the mother for her girls and boys; friends asking the prayers of friends; prayers of members of the Church for all who bear rule in the Church. Here is a mighty network of intercessory prayer, an invisible force of incalculable strength which brings down rich and varied blessings from God. The single soul of the Christian in his place in the body of Christ is a room in the temple of God wherein His sacred presence dwelleth. In saying this I do not undervalue the blessing the individual Christian receives from the graces granted to the general body. As baptism is the spring of personal priesthood, so holy communion is the perpetual brook by the wayside.

Thus is the personal priesthood supplied, invigorated, and increased. In the light, however, in which we are regarding them at this moment, minister and layman are the same. All outer differences have fallen off for the time for him who is on his knees before God, as he prays in private and opens his soul to the eyes of his Maker. No external differences go with him into the immediate presence of the Most High. He comes as a member of Christ, God's own well-beloved child in Christ, whose heart is the dwelling of the Holy Spirit, from whose soul the Holy Spirit cries aloud, where the loving Father and His Son make their abode.

If all this be true, do we not need one and all to rise to a much loftier and truer sense of our position and the responsibilities involved? All need it; not only the clergy, but the laity. The responsibility which should belong to all alike is thrown as a professional burden on the clergy. The lay people are taught to think themselves outside the framework of the Spirit-inspired Church. They have forgotten that all the joints and sinews, having nourishment and knit together, must increase with the increase of God. As we consider the advantages arising from the doctrine of the priesthood of the laity we find there are at least five points which demand our attention. The first is,

that it removes the dangerous notion that there is one rule of holiness for the minister of the Church of Christ and another for the layman. The expression so often used in the Epistle of St. Paul teaches a different lesson namely, that all are called unto holiness. The idea that the divine rule of the Gospel does not bind all is dangerous and novel. The apostle appeals to the whole Church as "elect" that is, chosen for service and for holiness. It is often taken for granted that there is a dangerous chasm between the standard of life required of the clergy and that of the laity. This is quite opposed to the ideal of the Primitive Church. The words in the Sermon on the Mount were addressed to all; if to the apostles, to the apostles as disciples first and leaders afterwards not so much examples to the flock as types of the faithful. "We are mistaken," says Tertullian, "if we think that what is not allowed to ministers is allowed to laymen." The idea of personal holiness, purity, and devotion to God's service was included in the idea of priesthood in the Old Testament, and is transferred to the members of the spiritual Israel now. To insist on the general priesthood of Christians is thus to emphasise the nearness of each Christian to God, and the thought of special fitness for the service. The second thought is the recognition of each Christian as having his place, and that an honoured one, in the organisation viewed in its entirety. It removes the tendency to despondency and feeling of isolation to be assured that each has his place and his part to play. In this only can his interest be assured and loyalty maintained. His place and his part should be recognised and valued. Without entering into the intrinsic value of the work done, it leads to intelligent interest and fills the mind with the highest objects of thought, viz. the relation of the soul to God, and the work of the church for God. The wisest way to make a man interested is to give him work to do.

Thirdly, when we think of the need of workers in training, shepherding, and rescuing souls, the assistance of the laity is at once seen to be a necessary adjunct in the united work of the Church. The non-ministerial class has by its very position a powerful influence of its own. The words of a layman have special weight as coming from a layman to a layman, a force of experience, a force of conviction, an absence of any suspicion of mere professional teaching or advice necessitated by the official position held. We need most intensely the confirmation given to the words of the official teacher by the corroboration of good and consistent laymen.

Fourthly, when we come to the practical work of the Church we find that the duties cast on the clergy by the withdrawal of the laity from the work of the Church are overwhelming.

There is much work done by the clergy which is entirely the work of laymen. The apostolic rule that the apostles should not serve tables, but reserve themselves for the ministry of the Word and prayer, and the consequent appointment of the deacons, may be extended to all branches of ecclesiastical finance. This work can best be done as a labour of love in conjunction with the ordained clergy. It can be done more efficiently, rapidly, and easily by the laity. The supply of the material requisite for public worship and secular and religious education ought to have an interest for and supply a useful work to the skilled and business-like laity. Too often matters of mere maintenance of the fabric and materials necessary for the teaching of religion are regarded in some way as the "parson's job." This causes a great loss to the Christian community and is an unnecessary strain on the clergy. The lack which every joint supplieth mentioned by St. Paul surely comes in here with special application. In such useful and indispensable labours the layman is serving God with the gifts bestowed upon him. In the Church of Ireland such matters as finance, investments, income and clerical superannuation have been most successfully dealt with by

devoted laymen, who have achieved great results and thereby advanced God's Kingdom.

Fifthly, when we come to counsel as to religious matters and doctrine the assistance of the layman is most important. He brings a non-professional common-sense to matters which at times assume an unreal importance in the minds of the professional class, and often contributes sage, calm, and disinterested advice. Even in doctrinal matters, such minds are of great importance. To take as an analogy our courts of justice twelve men of unbiassed minds are welcomed to give an opinion as to matters of fact, even though they have not given their minds to deep legal questions. The Christian layman, well read and deeply imbued with the general teaching of God's Word, may often see the countervailing value of the broad essential virtues of peace and charity and godliness and edification, and thereby assist in preventing one-sided and over-strained application of some truths which have in their own place great value and importance. In legislation, from Cyprian's time down, it is the laity who have been on the side of strictness and in matters of discipline have been conservative. If discipline is ever to be restored to the Christian Church, if we are to trust history, allies are to be relied upon by calling in the counsels of the laity. For many years I have felt that the great spiritual danger of our times was the one-sidedness of the views which spiritual people take about the constitution of the Church. They too often think themselves free from their share in the powers of the Church, and from their responsibility in using them. I have felt deeply that the recognition of the great doctrine of the collective priesthood of the entire body, and with it the separate personal priesthood of each member of the body, is essential to the well-being of all. It would check the exaggeration of one-sided doctrine in either direction. It would settle various important questions which arise as the Church develops under new and varying conditions and press for solution. The strength of the future Anglican Communion and of the United Kingdom as a Christian nation depends on each man and woman acknowledging, and, by the grace of God, acting up to, the deep responsibility of their own real personal priesthood in the collective priesthood of the whole body of Christ. Our common priesthood causes us to act as a united body in which we work with the full power of the Holy Spirit, who, dwelling in the Church as the soul dwelleth in the body, giveth to every man severally as He willeth "for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him, which is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love."

## A 11 - Conclusion

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Ryder PLHV: 11 Conclusion of Priesthood of Laity

CONCLUSION "O laikoj anqrwpoj toij laikoj prostagmasin dedetai"

ST. CLEMENT OF ROME, Corinthians, xl.

Priesthood, accordingly, can and ought to be exercised in the so-called worldly daily calling, even in business, so that there are many kinds of works all in one congregation, for the furtherance of body and soul, even as the members of the body all serve one another.

LUTHER, quoted by Dr. Dorner, Hist, of Prot. Theol.y vol. i. p. 172.

XI CONCLUSION As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. ST. John 20:21. IN drawing to a close the present series of lectures on the Priesthood of the Laity, I desire to address myself more directly to the younger members of my audience. I see before me a number of students who will, I trust, take honoured and distinguished positions in society. The roll of honour of Trinity College, Dublin, contains the names of renowned men of letters, of eminent administrators, great thinkers, distinguished men of science, honoured statesmen, and of many who in less prominent ways have contributed nobly to the world's work. I have no doubt that those present will uphold the honour of their beloved Alma Mater in similar ways. But from the point of view of the present lectures, what a reservoir of spiritual power may be found in such a band of students! Purification of university life; Students' Voluntary Movement; the source of missionary power! To you, the men of the future, I have a message for your mission. The motto I give you is the noble sentence of Clement of Rome, "The layman is bound by the layman's ordinances (O laikoj anqrwpoj toij laikoj prostagmasin dedetai)." In the fullest Christian sense, you too are bound by the layman's ordinances. Never forget that you too are God's ministers. It is true that it is from the ranks of the laity that the clergy are called. It is true that the Christian home does more in the moulding of the true ministerial priest than any other human agency. It is true the laity react on the clergy. Like people, like priest. But I am taking the more spiritual view, that you share with us this priesthood. It is a fact that the clergy cannot discharge their spiritual functions aright without the laity. The people are every whit as necessary to corporate worship as the ministers (and that not merely as represented by him, or as listeners and lookers-on). Without your active co-operation the office and authority of the ministerial priesthood is a thing meaningless, inconsistent not only with the idea of a Church, but with the idea of Christianity. We have reason to be thankful that the Anglican Church has so plainly marked her sense of this truth in the Book of Common Prayer. It has been suggestively pointed out that the daily offices cannot properly be said without a congregation. This implies not that the clergy should give up daily services, but that the people should go to them. In the great service of all, the priesthood of the laity is emphasised with no uncertain sound. The service of Holy Communion not only may not, but cannot be celebrated without people as well as minister. The service is a service of responses. Mutual intercession is required: "The Lord be with you" is earnestly answered in the words, "And with thy spirit."

If you, my brethren of the laity, have a right to your part in the ministry of worship, with its corresponding obligation, you have a still more undoubted part in the ministry of conversion the apostolic office of evangelising all the world, both at home and abroad. You stand a priesthood to represent God to a heathen world and an unbelieving world, and make His holiness diffusive. You have the unconverted world on your heart to plead for it before God, and to work that God may be truly known. I do not suggest that it is everybody's duty to give up their lives to definite social and religious work. For many people it might be a desertion of duty. The daily work of the world has to be kept going. The great majority of men and women are bound first to earn their own living, and then to serve those few whom God has put close to them in the world, "to make on the whole a family happier by their presence." Most of us are called by minding our own business (in a true and noble sense) to do the work of evangelising. "Show piety at home." A Christian life is the best argument for the truth of Christianity as a creed. It is the only argument that unconverted humanity will attend to. It may be that unconverted humanity is right. A Christian life lived in normal circumstances is more impressive and encouraging than one lived in special conditions. The genuine layman has an advantage over the professional clergyman and philanthropist. If your lot calls you to live in our great administered colonies or dependencies, live as true Christians; if at home as men of science or law, show God to man (cf. Romans 13:4). The magistrate may be God's minister to men for good. The official ministers of God should teach the layman that he too is God's minister but teach at the same time that he can serve God in any calling, that there is an intellectual service of the Church, of which there is a growing need, that he serves God truly who seeks to remove the hindrances that keep men from Christ. On the Bench of Magistrates, on County and Borough Councils, on Boards of Guardians, also as medical men, and as men of science, Christian gentlemen are needed to uphold justice, righteousness, and truth. He who will take pains to understand what we call social questions, and will act strongly, fearing only God, may be helping in a high degree to extend the Kingdom of Christ on earth.

It has often been said that the best missionaries in India are the high lay officials whose shining lives have been daily witness to their Christian faith. This is also true of life at home. To be a Christian in any genuine sense is to preach the Gospel, and that perhaps in the hardest and most difficult way. "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me." The apostolate of the laity may find, and if the spirit is there inevitably will find, directer methods. Mackay of Uganda, General Gordon, and many a graduate of this university, such as your own Pilkington, have in lay life proved their ministry to the full. The right attitude of mind towards our fellow creatures discovers opportunities of service. Service gives the unresented claim to speak a word in season. The true reason why the Christian laity is necessary, in order to fulfil the purpose of the Incarnation and to justify the existence of the Christian Church, is the equal value of every soul to God equal value and equal responsibility. A State may be wise if its government is wise, and brave if its soldiers are brave. It is different with righteousness. This must be everywhere or nowhere. It must exist by the co-operation of all classes and individuals. It is the relation of class to class, and man to man, and of the whole society to the Divine Principle immanent and transcendent. A society cannot be properly religious because part of it is religious. The true purpose of a Christian society is set forth by St. Paul: "That we may grow up in all things into Him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love." It has been said of the laity that, while they are quick to resent clerical dictation and encroachment,

yet they have a tendency to let the clergy perform at least part of their duty for them. The great monasteries in the Middle Ages appointed poor priests for the discharge of their religious duties. The laity in many instances make the clergy their vicars. It is not safe to neglect one part of what claims the whole life. To omit the outward realisation of the communion of saints is to weaken its influence upon thought and action. People who are content to go to church by deputy may well be tempted to think they can depute other activities of the Christian life as well. If the clergy cannot rightly offer public worship to God on your behalf without you, much less can any ministry of theirs take the place of your private prayer and conscious communion with God, which is the spring and renewal of your spiritual life. Nothing can take the place of that. It is possible to be so busy with well-doing as not to do it well. You can be anxious and troubled about many things, and miss the one thing needful, the gracious presence of the Master. No man can deliver his brother, nor make agreement with God for him. We shall not be asked in that great day whether we have been priests or laymen for there will not be a different rule and measure for one and another but whether we have tried to mould our lives as disciples of Christ, and to be true brethren of all men. There will be a very stringent test of orthodoxy for those who are to be saved, but it will be this: whether we have grown to be like Him, when we shall see Him as He is. The outcome of true belief is right action. The test of acceptance or rejection will be the " Inasmuch as ye did it (or did it not) unto the least of My brethren (or sisters), ye have done it (or done it not) unto Me." The inwardness is that it is given in Christ's name in love to God and to man through Him. The act of service is the outward form of the sacrament of a love in Christ and for Christ.

I have spoken of the judgment as future; but it is more probable and quite as true to think of it being pronounced on our lives, daily and hourly, in the present. We are asked now as we shall be asked then if we are doing our best to make the world Christian by being Christians ourselves, in the deep and not in the shallow sense. We are called to personal priesthood in baptism; the brook by the wayside is the refreshment of Holy Communion. The first sacramental gift must be met by conscious repentance and renovation; the second by rightly and duly, and with faith, receiving those holy mysteries. In public prayer, sincere faith must give voice to confession, and earnestness to creed. May I remind my younger brethren of an advice given by a great Greek orator to his countrymen in a time of struggle and disappointment? His counsel to them was a constant repetition not to trust to mercenaries, but to go to the field as a nation. He said to them that it was the secret of success take the field in person (autouj strateuesqai). In spiritual matters I leave the same advice with you. You are enrolled soldiers of Christ. Take your full share in all the work of His Kingdom and act together as a body even the elect body. In our beloved Church of Ireland you have a noble heritage.

Many of the causes which led to the gradual separation of clergy and people were natural, and, in their working, justifiable. While in the earliest age a presbyter or deacon would have his trade to follow if he were free, as the Church grew towards maturity the increase of clerical responsibilities made it necessary to provide a special maintenance for the clergy; the clergy took a stated share of the monthly offerings of the faithful. The effect of this arrangement was that in turn all church officers came to stand on the footing claimed by St. Paul as permissible to an apostle: preaching the Gospel they lived by the Gospel. Yet even when this step was taken, and the line of division between cleric and layman became visible as a professional distinction, there was much in early church life which tended to preserve the conception of Christian unity. Within the church walls the

differences of function brought the distinction between the orders into prominence; but in daily life it was less obvious. Moreover, the lines of hierarchical division were crossed by other distinctions. The possession of a spiritual gift, such as prophecy, might lend one layman more weight than he would have had as presbyter or deacon; another as confessor or martyr might wield an authority almost as great as that of a bishop; another as a scholar might be found preaching and teaching even where the higher clergy were present to sit under him. Further, for several centuries the laity retained their place in corporate functions of vital importance, such as the election of clergy and bishops, or conciliar deliberation. But little by little, causes that were rational combining with many that were perverse, the laity lost their ground. The clergy became more and more official and professional, and with the specialisation of clerical work came the lowering of the ideals of the laity. As bishops, priests, deacons, and the rest passed clean away from secular life into a sphere of their own, and the clerical profession, the clerical world, came into being, so little by little it began to be felt that the layman's was a lower vocation and a lower responsibility, that he might wear a lighter cross and tread an easier path; and from this root sprang all that lamentable classification of Christian callings more deadly perhaps than any schism which put the monastic life highest of all, the clerical vocation next, and lowest that of the mere Christian, the mere layman. Shall we ever retrace and reverse the story of this miserable degeneration? Will the time ever come when to be baptized, confirmed, and a communicant is felt to be in itself the highest of all vocations? We feel and speak now as if the difference between man and priest, priest and layman, were a difference in kind, whereas that between Christian and non-Christian were only a difference in degree. Shall we ever come again to feel that to be in or out of the body of Christ is an alternative so tremendous that in comparison with it the difference between priest and layman dwindles almost into insignificance? If that apostolic conception ever returns, then I will dare to suggest that it may bring with it not only life to the dead bones, but also the return of one other feature of the apostolic age. It is the feeling that all who love the Lord in sincerity belong to the body of Christ. It has been said that we should think imperially. The definition of such an idea comprises the sense of duty, responsibility, sympathy, self-sacrifice. These ideas be long also to the empire of Christ. Were such ideas our rule in life we should realise more fully the idea of Christian unity, and hasten the day for which our Saviour prayed: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us;... And the glory which Thou hast given Me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as We are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and lovedst them, even as Thou lovedst Me " (St. John 17:20-23).

## A 12 - INDEX

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Ryder PLHV: 12 Index of Names and Subjects INDEX OF NAMES AND SUBJECTS

Above, from, 91

Acts of the Apostles, passages explained, i. 6, p. 93; i. 26, p. 94; vi. 2, p. 94; xi. 15, p. 95; xi. 30, the first Christian presbyters, p. 97 Alford, Dean, on sacrifice, 197

Altar: distinction between Jewish altar and Lord's Table, 110; Bishop Westcott says no example of word applied to material object for 250 years, 111; either the Cross, or assembly at worship, 222. The order of widows called an altar, 222 Ambassador, title of Christian minister, 227 Amos, the herdsman prophet, 137 Angels of the Churches, Dr. Swete regards as super human beings, guardian angels, 159

Apocalypse, 143 Apostles, how far a title given to others besides the Twelve, 123 Apostolic Canons, Sources of, edited by Harnack, 10, 149 Aristidee, Apology of, 8

Arnold, Dr., 239-249 Associations Cultuelles, 23 Augustine, St., De Vnitate Ecclesice and interpolations, 69; on Rev. xx. 6, p. 35; on transmission of grace, 137

Bampton Lectures by Bishop Moberly, The Administration of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ, 1869; concerning Church of Ireland, 17; privileges of laity, 16 Baudissin, on delegation of office to Jewish priests by Israel, 36, 37 Belgium, Church and State in, 25 Benson, Archbishop, Life of Cyprian, 69 Bernard, St., "angels revere the glory of a priest," 229 Birmingham, Bishop of, Church Reform, 21 Bishops, originally same officers as presbyters, descriptive term, 135 Book of Common Prayer, word "priest," 175, 176; congregation offer a spiritual sacrifice, 85

Briand, M., 23 Bright, Some Aspects of Primitive Church Life, Liturgy of St. Basil, 84

Bryennios, 149 Caesarea Philippi, 57 Centuries, appeal to first six, 15 Charismatic ministry in New Testament, 91 Church, Harnack's view of the earliest organisation of, 152 Church Reform, by Bishop of Birmingham, 21 Churches, Letters to Seven, opening of a pastoral message, 144 Churches, non-established, 250 Clement of Alexandria, 218; spiritual view of sacerdotalism does not apply priesthood to Christian ministry, 214 Clement of Borne, letter to Corinthians, 99; ordinances of priests and laymen, 208, 268 Clement of Rome, so-called Second Epistle, Harnack's views 149 Clerus, title of clergy derived not from Old Testament, but from method of appointment by lot, 206 Comitia, Roman, called Ecclesia by Dion Cassius, 61 Commission, the Great, three leading passages, St. Matt. xvi. 19, xviii. 18, St. John xx. 19, pp. 57, 125 Confirmation regarded by early writers as layman's ordination; but wrongly; it is baptism, 49

Corinthians, St. Paul's Epistles to: 1 Cor. v. 13, x. 18, x. 16, 2 Cor. ii. 6; St. Clement's Epistle to, 107 ff. Council at Jerusalem, 124 Cyprian, St., 69, 104, 220; recognition of laity, 104; De Unitate Ecclesiae explains commission to Peter, 69; first to use constantly "sacerdotium" of the ministry, 220; first uses the word "altar" in reference to Eucharist, 111

Deacons, "the Seven," Harnack calls " earliest datum of Church organisation," 96; suggests to Dr. Sanday the origin of the Christian ministry, 129

Didache: prophets hold important place, 92; directions as to prophets at Eucharist, 109; prophets mentioned with bishops and deacons, 115 Domitian, probably world power in Apocalypse, 148 Driver, Professor, sacrifices enjoined on lay Israelites, 39

Ecclesia, special meaning of word, 59; political use of word, 61; derivation of word, 62; denotes fellow ship with Jesus, 65; permeated with unity, 66; a visible society, 67; with divine authority, 68; Ram say's conjectures, 66 "Edhah generally translated "synagoge," 58 Elders, first Christian, 97 England, The Church of, appoints House of Laymen, 20 Ephesus, assembly at, called ecclesia, 61

Eucharist, the nature of the sacrifice therein offered, 197; Hooker on the subject, 177; Moberly, "What Christ does the Church does," 193; the part taken by the laity, 252 Eusebius Ecclesiastical History a mine for titles of lost books, 9; martyrdom of Polycarp, 145; early Councils, 105

Exodus, Book of, passages explained; "a kingdom of priests," xix. 6, p. 34; " Book of Covenant," xxii. 6, p. 38; " an altar of earth," xx. 24, p. 39 Fogazzaro, Senor, views on relation between Church and State, 25; complains of suppression of liberty, 26 France, Church and State in, 22; Separation Law, 23; Pope does not sanction Associations, 24 Fry, Mrs., would have been officially sanctioned by Rome, 32 Gifts of the Spirit, four differing lists of, drawn up by St. Paul, 112 Greek of New Testament was the vernacular of the time, 6; the language, of common life, 7 Habakkuk foretells increase of knowledge of the Lord, 44

Harnack, Adolf, edits "Setting forth of Apostolical Teaching," 8; "Didache, the missing link," 9; sees "Reader" in Apocalypse, 151; describes a completely organised congregation at end of the apostolic age, 152 Hatch, Edwin, shows sacerdotalism to be a novel conception, 217

Hebrews, Epistle to, hindrance to early sacerdotalism, 225; Christ a great priest over the house of God, freedom of access, 234 *ierateuo ierateuw* used in Jewish sense of Zacharias, 171 *iereus iereuj* expresses one meaning and *presbuteroj* another meaning of English word " priest," 173; never used of Christian minister, 187; in the singular used only of pagan and Jewish priests and of Christ, 169 *ierourgeo ierourgew*, used of St. Paul in connection with Christian missions, 171, 198, 199 Hippolytus, Bishop of Portus, speaks of Christian ministry as priesthood, 218 Hooker, "the word presbyter doth seem more fit," 177

Hort, Professor, on derivation of word "ecclesia," 62; on meaning of commission to St. Peter, 71; on binding and loosing by the ecclesia, 75; on apostles representatives of whole Church at Last Supper, 77 Huntingdon, Countess of, would have been canonised by Rome, 32 Ignatius Loyola, would in England have become a schismatic, 32

Ignatius, St., champion of episcopacy, but says nothing of Christian priesthood, 209 11 Santo, work by Senor Fogazzaro, 25 Ireland, Constitution of the Church of, 18, 19; assistance of laity, 260

Irenaeus, St., " Setting forth of Apostolic Teaching," 8; withholds title of priesthood from Christian ministry, 211 Isaiah, emphasised danger of reliance on ritual, 43; with draws from political Israel, 44 Italy, Church and State in, 25, 26 James, St., at Council of Jerusalem, 102 Jeremiah, predicts all shall know the Lord, 45 Jerome says layman's ordination is baptism, 49 Joel, promise of outpouring of Spirit on all flesh, 45

John, St., Great Commission, xx. 22, p. 76; the glorified Lord manifest in His people's life (St. John xvii. 19), 237 Justin Martyr says "Christians are the true high priestly race of God," 210 Juvenal on Domitian, 25; "calvo Neroni," 148

Kingdom of God, defined, 41; in Apocalypse, Dr. Swete's explanation, 154 Kings and priests, title of all Christians, Rev. i. 6, v. 9, xx. 6, how explained, 157 Laity, nobler word than people imagine, 48 Laos, chosen people of God, 58 latreuein, used of worshipping multitude in heaven, 163 Laying on of hands, 131 Layman, first use of word, 47

Laymen, title defined, 48; too little required of them, 53; special advantages of their service, 261, 268; their ordinances, 272, Leitourgein leitourgein the priestly word, not used, 163; leitourgoj leitourgoj, used of St. Paul, 171 Liddon, Canon, on laymen's service, 48

Lightfoot, Bishop of Durham, on title priests, "better if later Christian vocabulary had conformed to the silence of Christian writers," 178; no official class between God and man, 192

Lord's Prayer, derived from pre-existing Jewish sources, 185 Luke, St., xxiv. 33, others besides apostles present in Upper Room, 76 Luther, his view of the representative nature of the ministry at the Eucharist, 84 Macaulay, Essay on Von Ranke's History of the Popes, 31 Mass, Canon of the, the entire congregation offer a pure sacrifice, 85; an offering of the dead, not of the living, 238

Matthew, St., alone among the evangelists uses the word "ecclesia," 63; in St. Matt, xvi. 18,xviii. 18; authenticity doubted by Schmiedel, 62; missionary command to lay men also, xxviii. 19, p. 242 Matthias, election of, 94 Melchizedek, strange silence about his offering bread and wine by writer of Epistle to the Hebrews, 226 Micah calls to a purer ideal, 43 Milton, on word "presbyter," 174; Ministry of Grace, the Bishop of Salisbury, 88 Ministerial Priesthood, by Canon Moberly, 191 Moberly, Bishop of Salisbury, reference to the Church of Ireland, 17; analogy of human body criticised, 179 Moberly, Canon, his definition of sacrifice, 182, 191, 193 Modernist instance of unrest in Roman Catholic Church, 5 Nero, the persecuting world power in the Apocalypse, 147 Numbers, Book of, passages explained: iii. 40, p. 35; viii. 5, p. 36 Organisation of Christian Church, development seen in history, 13; Harnack a description of earliest form, 152 Origen, commission not given to St. Peter alone, 70; hesitates in calling Christian ministers priests, 217

Pastoral epistles silent on sacerdotalism, 207 Paul, St., appeals to Christian community in Corinth, 13 Pella, 10 Pentecost, the true greatness of, 52 Personal priesthood, 254, 255 Peter, St., commission to, 67; 1 Peter ii. 5, 9, p. 80 Philippians, Epistle to: Phil. ii. 17, iv. 18, p. 82 Pius X., on Modernism, 5 Polycarp knows nothing of sacerdotal functions, 210 Polyorates, on St. John wearing the petalon, 213 Portugal, recent events in, 25 Power of the keys, 78

Presenting the sacrifice in the Eucharist, 195 "Presbyter," the word changed into the English word "priest," 174 Priest, the word, 174, 175 Priestly tribe, 35 Prophets, New Testament, 92

Puritans, 14 Ramsay, Dr. William, development of the word "ecclesia," 66; bishop the correspondent of the Church, 136 Reader, the office of, in Apocalypse, 140

Revelation, passages explained: Rev. i. 6, p. 154; Rev. v. 10, p. 155; Rev. vii. 15, p. 163; Christ bearer of the keys, Rev. iii. 7, p. 73 Robinson, Dean Armitage, in Commentary on Ephesians, charismatic ministry, 114 Romans, Epistle to, the word "offering " used of converts, Rom. xv. 15-17, p. 198 Rome, policy of, 32 Russia, Church in, 21

Sacerdotalism dates from Tertullian, 215; attained full growth in time of Cyprian, 220; unknown to Pastoral Epistles, 207; St. Clement of Rome, 208; St. Ignatius, 209; Polycarp, 210; Justin Martyr, 210; St. Irenaeus, 211; Polycrates, 213; St. Clement of Alexandria, 214 Sanday, Dr., origin of Christian ministry, 129; the word "offering " used by St.

Paul, 198 Schmiedel, Dr., on commission to St. Peter, 62 Schiirer, Dr., on ecclesia, 59; on early organisation, 153 Service of Church joyous, 246 Smith, Dr. George Adam, 72 Society of Friends, 138 Sources of Apostolic Canons, 149

Spain, Church and State in, 25 Swete, Dr., explains " king dom and priests," 154 " Synagogue " contrasted with "ecclesia, " 59 Tertullian, same standard for clergy and laymen, 52; first to assert sacerdotal claims, 215 Testament of our Lord, "apocryphal book," 92 Timothy, St., his ordination, 132 Venice, picture at Doge's Palace, 89

Wesley, 32 Westcott, Bishop, on the day of Pentecost, 52; commission to Christian society, 78 Wood, ancient inscriptions discovered by, 146 printed by Hazell, Watson & Viney, Ld., London and Aylebury.

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