

## They Shall Be Turned Unto Fables

**"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears"—2 Tim. 4:3**

THE PURPOSE of this article is to attempt to illustrate the following points:

1. That the Scriptures clearly foretell and forewarn of an ALMOST UNIVERSAL departure from divine Truth, and that, if the Bible be true, we can expect nothing else.
2. That such an apostasy HAS occurred.
3. That in view of these facts, and in harmony with scriptural warnings, we must carefully try ALL claims of men by the one sole reliable touchstone of truth, THE BIBLE. That this is—and was intended to be—an individual responsibility, and that only by awakening to this responsibility and seeking God with all one's heart, soul and mind, will the keys of life be found.

This latter implies an effort and interest of major proportions—a subjecting of all other considerations that this pursuit may be given full rein. Jesus said, “Seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God.”

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BRIEFLY, the history of Christendom has been this: The Gospel was apostolically delivered, and a community of true believers was established. In outward form, that community has had continuous existence and stands among us today as the Roman Catholic Church. But outward form means nothing if the Truth is lost and, as the Scriptures foretold, the Truth WAS lost early. Even in Paul's own day he said:

"The mystery of iniquity doth already work" (2 Thess. 2:7).

During the first three centuries Christianity gradually spread from a small beginning until it reached such proportions that it became the dominant creed of the Roman Empire. But, as historians have often been sadly led to remark, as Christianity conquered paganism, paganism corrupted Christianity, and it was a sorry combination of the two that finally resulted.

Around 300 AD, Christianity was embraced, at least nominally, by the Emperor Constantine, and when he became established as the sole and undisputed ruler, it became the officially recognized religion of the empire.

For the next 1300 years, until the 16th century, the history of Christendom is practically synonymous with the dark and bloody history of the Roman Catholic Church, except—and this is an all-important exception—EXCEPT for the relatively few and historically-obscure courageous souls who were willing to face persecution, torture, and death in order to worship God in truth.

Then, in the 16th century, the Roman Catholic Church began to lose its grip of terrorism and coercion, and separation from it became wholesale for various reasons: political, personal and doctrinal, until at the present time the sub-divisions of Christendom run into hundreds.

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TODAY, however, the trend is in the other direction. Most of the divisions were created in the beginning (ostensibly at least) over doctrinal disagreements in belief and practice.

The modern trend, on the other hand, is to increasingly regard fundamental truth and specific divinely revealed doctrines and commandments as unimportant, and the "brotherhood of man"

on natural, flesh-pleasing lines as all-important, and so we see Catholics, Protestants, and even Jews joining hands and trading pulpits though they differ widely on basic divine truths.

"What communion hath light with darkness?? What agreement hath the Temple of God with idols?" (2 C. 6:14).

What communion of worship have Christians with Jews who reject Christ? What communion of worship have Jews with "Christians" who reject the one true God of Abraham and substitute a man-made Trinity?

"Brotherhood week" is clear and condemning proof that all sects who participate in it regard God's revealed truth as a very secondary and unimportant matter, and are not motivated with the slightest desires to faithfully maintain the integrity and purity of His revelations.

Modern Protestantism, once a courageous voice crying in the wilderness against the gross and superstitious errors and corruptions of Catholicism, has lost all pretence of its protesting and is fast gravitating back to the mother church and submission to Paul's Man of Sin and Son of Perdition whom leading Protestants already fondly and reverently refer to as "His Holiness."

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SHORTLY before his crucifixion, Jesus was asked what the future held and, specifically, what would precede the end of this present human dispensation and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. He began his answer by saying (Matt. 24:4)—

"TAKE HEED THAT NO MAN DECEIVE YOU. For many shall come in my name and deceive many . .

V. 10: "Many shall be offended . .

V. 11: "Many false prophets shall arise and deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many (RV: the many—the majority) shall wax cold .

V. 24: "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect . .

V. 38: "For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away, SO SHALL THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN BE."

This is the picture Jesus gives of the conditions prevailing at his return. An almost universal apostasy as in the days of Noah when only eight were saved of the whole population of the earth. Deception everywhere and so subtle that even the very elect are in danger of being deceived.

In harmony with this sad, but unfortunately true picture, he remarked on one occasion (Luke 18:8)—

"When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?"

Expectations of universal Christian conversion and harmony can only be entertained in ignorance of what is clearly revealed.

"Many are called," Jesus said (Matt. 22:4) "but few are chosen."

"Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:14).

"Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me" (Matt. 7:22).

That is the picture Jesus portrays throughout. A few holding to the truth, the many astray.

And going on further to the words of the apostles we find the same conditions foretold. Consider, for example, 2 Thess. 2. Paul says (v. 3-4)—

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for THE DAY OF CHRIST SHALL NOT COME, EXCEPT THERE COME A FALLING AWAY FIRST, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of Perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;

"So that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

Before going further, let us consider that. A "Man of Sin" who exalteth himself above all that is called God, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. And this, we note, is to be the result of a falling away, that is, it is to arise from within the erring majority of the church itself as a result of a departure from the Truth.

It requires but a very scant knowledge of history to identify this system, that arose out of the original purity of the church, for it is still with us today, and its claims are just as brazen as ever, though its power has been restrained.

There has only been ONE such manifestation, and there is today but one man who pretends to sit in the merry seat of God and who sets himself up as an infallible God on earth, superior to all judgment and criticism, and with greater authority than the Scriptures which are the very words of God Himself. And we shall discover further identifying features as we proceed.

In v. 7 of the 2nd chapter of 2nd Thessalonians, Paul says:

"The mystery of iniquity doth already work."

Even in Paul's own day, the system had begun to generate. What conditions were to be expected when the apostles were removed? And that system of iniquity which had already started then was to continue throughout until the coming of Christ back to the earth, for Paul says in v. 8 that the Lord shall "destroy it at his coming."

In v. 9 Paul speaks of the Man of Sin working "with all power and signs and lying wonders." What is the lesson and warning here? To "try the spirits whether they be of God or not," as the apostle John warns (1 John 4:1).

Be not deceived by great claims and lying wonders. Be not carried away by a great show of pomp and piety. Bring all, small and great, to the bar of truth. And what is that bar? THE SCRIPTURES. Peter says (1 Pet. 4:11)—

"If any man speak, let him speak as (according to) the Oracles of God."

And Isaiah says (8:19-20)—

"And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God?"

"TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them."

THE WORD OF GOD IS OUR GREATEST HERITAGE, and no system of priestcraft can take it from us. Oceans of blood have been shed to make the Scriptures freely available to all, and yet how few appreciate or take advantage of it!

And it is addressed, not to a selected and restricted few, but to ALL. Paul's epistles are addressed, for instance, not to an initiated priesthood but—

"To ALL that be in Rome called to be saints" (Rom. 1:7);

"To ALL the saints in Achaia" (2 Cor. 1:1);

"To ALL the saints at Philippi" (Phil. 1:7)

Once a priesthood had persuaded its victims that the Bible is a sealed book and is not intended for the study of the "common laity," the people have lost their only safeguard against deceptions, and are putty in unscrupulous hands. And once persuasion had given the power of exclusive interpretation to the priesthood, compulsion held it. The Roman Catholic Council of Toulouse, in 1229, decreed—

"We FORBID the laity to possess any of the books of the Old or New Testaments,"

Every effort was made to stamp out any circulation of the Scriptures, and many paid with their lives for translating or reproducing it.

Until the invention of printing, and the general acquisition of the ability to read and write, enforcement of this ban was comparatively easy. But printing opened the floodgates of revolt against compulsory ignorance, and precipitated the Reformation which—while it fell far short of a return to truth—at least broke the intolerable shackles of ecclesiastical tyranny and paved the way for free individual unmolested worship as we enjoy today.

So every sign and lying wonder, however great its pretensions, must be brought to the bar of GOD'S WORD. And it is every man's responsibility to study God's Word and make the test FOR HIMSELF. There is no other safe or scriptural way.

God gave Israel a law, and told them to study it continually, to thoroughly familiarize themselves with it so that it would be an everpresent guard against deception. Then He laid down a principle of individual responsibility in relation to that law to which we do well to take heed. God said—

"If there arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spoke unto thee saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known and let us serve them: thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet: for the Lord your God proveth you" (Deut. 13: 1-3).

The point is this. Their personal knowledge of God's law was to be their measuring rod, and even if one rose up working miracles he was to be rejected if he did not conform to it. Paul said similarly (Gal. 1:8)—

"Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, let him be accursed."

How precious and exalted then is the Word of God! David said (Psa. 138:2)—

"Thou hast magnified THY WORD above all Thy Name."

Yet Christendom dares to freely alter or reject its contents!

As Israel was given the Law, so we are given the Scriptures, and told to "Give ourselves wholly to them" (1 Tim. 4:15). In his second letter to Timothy, Paul says (3:1)—

"In the last days perilous times shall come."

Then, after speaking of the general conditions of those times, so well portrayed in our present day, he continues—

"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

"But continue thou in the things which thou has learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them, that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation" (2 Tim. 3:13-15).

Of how many of the millions of so-called Christendom could that be said—"From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures"?

In verse 3 of the next chapter (2 Tim. 4) Paul continues—

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own

lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

"And they shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

Such is the picture Paul depicts of the future of Christendom, and it has only been too well fulfilled.

Peter adds his testimony to the same effect (2 Pet. 3:3-10):

"There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? . . . But the day of the Lord WILL COME as a thief in the night"

This, as we shall mention later, is perhaps the greatest and clearest indication of the extent to which Christendom has wandered from the Truth of the Gospel, the Gospel of the coming KINGDOM OF CHRIST ON EARTH, the one Gospel of salvation. The great mass of Christendom have gone over to the side of the scoffers who say, "Where is the promise of his coming?"

The whole hope of the early Christians was centered around the return of Jesus Christ to the earth: 300 times this is promised in the New Testament, as in the following—

Acts 1:9-11—"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

"And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said,

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

2 Tim 4:1—"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."

Matt 16:27—"For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels: and then shall he reward every man according to his works"

Acts 3:20—"He shall send Jesus . . . whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things."

1 Thess. 4:16—"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

1 John 2:28—"Abide in him: that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

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In 1 Tim 4:1-3, Paul says—

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils . . . forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats."

It was not until the 11th century that the Roman Catholic Church made a definite decree forbidding its priests to marry, but history shows that even as far back as the Council of Nice in 325 AD the idea was beginning to develop.

Roman Catholicism says, "A bishop shall not marry."

The Scriptures say: (1 Tim. 3:2), "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife." Comment is unnecessary.

As for commanding to abstain from meats, how clearly that is fulfilled in the religious systems of the day. In addition to the regular Friday restrictions by which the Catholic Church so brazenly identifies itself with Paul's condemnation, both Catholics and Protestants join hand in fulfilling this prophecy during the period they have invented and called "Lent."

To the Colossians, Paul said of such vain demonstrations of outward piety, (Col. 2:15-23)—

"Let NO MAN therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances—"Touch not, Taste not, Handle not"; which are, all to perish with the using—after the commandments and doctrines of men? . .

(We look in vain for meatless Fridays or references to Lent in the Scriptures).

"Which things (Paul continues) have indeed a SHOW of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh."

## PART TWO

"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine . . . but shall be turned unto fables"—2 Tim. 4:3-4.

THE FIRST of these fables, as we have mentioned, is the denying of the great central promise of Scripture—the return of Jesus Christ, and the setting up of God's Kingdom on the earth.

The prophet Daniel, interpreting the dream of the king of Babylon, said (Dan. 2:25)—

"There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be IN THE LATTER DAYS."

Tracing through the vision, we find that the concluding phase is this (v. 44)—

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, AND IT SHALL STAND FOR EVER."

If we believe Scripture, this verse establishes one fact clearly and inescapably, in plain words that cannot be mistaken. That is, that the final chapter in the history of this earth will be the destruction of all human rule and kingdoms and the forcible establishment of a divine government, administered by those who have been found faithful in this dispensation. The following is further proof:

Dan. 7:27—"And the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN, shall be given to the people of the Saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

Rev. 2:26-27—"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father."

Rev. 5:10—"Thou has made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign ON THE EARTH."

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TO ILLUSTRATE the gradual departure from the Truth of the Scriptures by the early church (as was prophesied), we wish to quote from the ecclesiastical historian, Mosheim, who wrote

about 200 years ago. The value of his work to us will be in the fact that we shall use him as a witness against himself. He was a learned and highly esteemed Protestant dignitary, and the historical facts which he faithfully records are often, when compared with Scripture, very destructive of his own Protestant theology. Of him the Encyclopedia Britannica says—

"The scientific period of church history may be said to commence with the great work of Mosheim in 1755...

"His history is constructed in the interests of science and not of party, with the sole view of stating the facts, fully and exactly as they occurred. His fidelity to his principle is conspicuous."

It was the third century when Christianity became both completely triumphant and completely corrupt. Of this century Mosheim says—

"In this century the doctrine of the Millennium fell into disrepute, through the influence especially of Origen, who opposed it because it contravened some of his opinions" (pg. 103).

Of this same Origen, whom Mosheim's Protestants, as well as the Catholics, follow in rejecting the coming millennial reign of Christ on earth, Mosheim says (pgs. 99-100)—

"The doctors who cultivated literature and philosophy deemed it proper and becoming to subject Divine wisdom to the precepts of their philosophy.

"At the head of this class was Origen, who, being fascinated with the Platonic philosophy, ventured to apply its laws to every part of religion ...

"The same Origen stands unquestionably at the head of the interpreters of the Bible in this century. But with pain it must be added, he was the first among those who have found in the Scriptures a secure retreat for all errors and idle fancies ...

"He taught that the words in many parts of the Bible convey no meaning at all; and in some places where he acknowledged there was some meaning in the words, he maintained that under them was contained a hidden and concealed sense, which was much to be preferred to their literal meaning."

Speaking of what was known as the "Neo-Platonic" philosophy, promulgated in the second century by one Ammonius, Mosheim says (p. 60)—

"The grand object of Ammonius was to bring all sects and religions into harmony ... This new species of philosophy, imprudently adopted by Origen and other Christians, DID IMMENSE HARM TO CHRISTIANITY."

Such is the accepted "Head of the interpreters of the Bible in this century"!—The man who was chiefly responsible for the rejection by the church of the scriptural teaching of the millennial reign of Christ on earth.

The historian Edward Gibbon, whose work is ranked among the masterpieces of literature and history, and who was a complete unbeliever, confirms Mosheim's account of the gradual rejection of this original basic doctrine of the early church. He says (Vol. I, p. 404)—

"The assurance of a Millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of fathers from Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, who conversed with the immediate disciples of the apostles, down to Lactantius, who was preceptor to the son of Constantine ...

"But when the edifice of the Church was almost completed, the temporary support was laid aside.

"THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S REIGN UPON EARTH WAS AT FIRST TREATED AS A PROFOUND ALLEGORY, WAS CONSIDERED BY DEGREES AS A DOUBTFUL AND USELESS OPINION, AND WAS AT LENGTH REJECTED AS THE ABSURD INVENTION OF HERESY AND FANATICISM."

We wonder how these things could be, until Paul's words again come to our mind, "They will not endure sound doctrine, but shall be turned unto fables."

Note how gradually, and subtly, and "respectably" it was accomplished. The first small and apparently harmless step toward "fables" is the most serious.

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MOSHEIM says (p. 42)—

"Jesus himself established but two ordinances, which it is NOT LAWFUL EITHER TO CHANGE or to abrogate, namely, baptism and the Lord's supper."

This can be easily verified by Scripture, and his remarks should be noted that "It is not lawful to change them," for on his own testimony we shall see that Mosheim's Protestants, as well as the Catholics, have done just that.

Regarding baptism we find first, in examining the Scripture, that knowledge and belief of the Gospel (the rejected Gospel of the millennial Kingdom) is an essential prerequisite to a valid and acceptable baptism. Peter says (1 Pet. 3:21)—

"BAPTISM is the answer of a good conscience to God."

Jesus said (Mark 16:16)—

"PREACH THE GOSPEL ... He that BELIEVETH and is BAPTIZED shall be saved."

Obviously, then, a baby is not a fit subject for baptism, having neither conscience, knowledge, or belief. Infant baptism is an invention of men, made necessary by another invention, the supposed "immortality of the soul," which condemns unbaptised babies to eternal torment. All scriptural example and teaching indicates the necessity of belief before baptism to make it mean anything. Paul says—

"He that cometh to God MUST BELIEVE" (Heb. 11:6).

"The gospel is the power of God to salvation TO EVERYONE THAT BELIEVETH" (Rom. 1:16).

Such is the testimony of the inspired Word, and Mosheim says, in complete harmony with this—

"In the first century, NONE WERE BAPTIZED UNLESS PREVIOUSLY WELL INSTRUCTED IN THE PRIMARY TRUTHS OF RELIGION."

A very candid admission for an orthodox Protestant! And he further quotes Justin Martyr, who lived in the early part of the second century, as follows—

"Those who BELIEVE and are persuaded that the things we teach and inculcate are true, and who profess ability thus to live, are directed to pray . . . then we conduct them to where there is water, and they are baptized."

As to what the ordinance of baptism consists of, we find from Scripture, and none will deny it, that the only form recognized there is complete immersion in water. This is so obvious and generally admitted that it hardly requires proof. And surely it should be equally obvious that calling an entirely different ceremony by the same name does not make it baptism in the sight of God. It is absurd to expect it to.

SPRINKLING IS NOT BAPTISM. It is an unscriptural and unauthorized invention of man. Baptizo, the word used in the original, means "dip, immerse, plunge, submerge," and nothing else. Consult any lexicon or concordance.

Sprinkling is a different thing altogether and has no relation to it. The type of burial and

rebirth, which baptism is said to be, is only fulfilled by complete immersion. Paul says (Col. 2:12)—

"Ye are BURIED with Christ in baptism."

And all the scriptural examples given for our instruction clearly indicate complete immersion in water as the ordinance as first given. We read (Acts 8:39-40)—

"They WENT DOWN INTO the water—they CAME UP OUT OF the water."

Matt. 3:6—"They were baptized IN (the river) Jordan."

Turning to Mosheim again we find his record in harmony—

"In the first century baptism was administered by immersing the candidates WHOLLY IN WATER."

To conclude our consideration of the apostasy in this respect, we would like to quote from a very well known and much more recent high Protestant dignitary, the late "Dean" Stanley of the Church of England. For those who value the integrity of Scripture, and deplore the presumptuous meddling of men with the commands of God, his remarks require no comment.

Let us mark his words well, for they contain the whole secret of Christendom's complete departure from the true, original faith and practice. He says—

"For the first 13 centuries the almost universal practice of baptism was that of which we read in the New Testament, and which is the VERY MEANING of the word baptize—that those who were baptized were PLUNGED, SUBMERGED, IMMersed into the water.

"With few exceptions the whole of the Western Church have now SUBSTITUTED for the ancient bath the ceremony of sprinkling a few drops of water on the face.

"There is no one who would wish to go back to the OLD PRACTICE. It had, no doubt, the SANCTION OF THE APOSTLES AND THEIR MASTER. (But) . . . the whole Christian world has decided against it.

"It is a striking example of the triumph of common sense over the bondage of form and custom. The CHANGE from immersion to sprinkling has SET ASIDE THE LARGER PART OF THE APOSTOLIC LANGUAGE REGARDING BAPTISM, AND HAS ALTERED THE VERY MEANING OF THE WORD."

What an arrogant, shameless disregard for the ordinances of God! Do we need wonder that sprinkling and the application of baptismal ceremonies to uncomprehending babies are now the common practices of an apostate Christendom? "They shall be turned unto fables."

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THE POPULAR doctrine of the Trinity, rightly styled by its exponents "incomprehensible," reduces the scriptural account of the life of Jesus Christ to meaningless absurdities. The Trinity presents us with the conception of God and Jesus Christ as both almighty, eternal, co-equals, neither greater or less than the other. That is the Creed's wording.

The Scriptures, on the other hand, show us Jesus praying to God, saying that his Father was greater than he, being led into the wilderness to be tempted, being anointed by God with power, confessing ignorance regarding things his Father had not revealed to him, receiving commandments from his Father, dying and being raised to life by his Father, being elevated to glory and told to sit at God's right hand until God should make his enemies his footstool, being sent again by God to the earth, and finally, when all his work is accomplished, being subject to God, that God might be all in all.

How did the Trinity originate? One of its supporters, writing in the Encyclopedia Britannica, says—

"The propositions constitutive of the dogma of the Trinity were not drawn directly from the New Testament, and could not be expressed in New Testament terms.

"They were the products of reason speculating upon a revelation to faith. They were only formed through centuries of effort, only elaborated by the aid of the conceptions, and formulated in the terms of Greek and Roman metaphysics.

"The evolution of the doctrine of the trinity—(note the expression well)—THE EVOLUTION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY was far the most important fact in the doctrinal history of the Church during the first five centuries of its post-apostolic existence."

If we are not prepared to go into Greek and Roman metaphysics, its supporters tell us, we cannot hope to understand or define the doctrine of the Trinity. It "cannot be expressed in scriptural terms," they tell us flatly, for it is a step further advanced than the scriptures.

"To US," says the Apostle Paul (1 Coe. 8:6), that is, to the simple believers in Scripture—  
"To us there is but ONE GOD, and one Lord Jesus Christ"

And again (1 Tim. 2:5)—

"There is ONE God, and one mediator between God and man, the MAN Christ Jesus."

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WE FIND that Mosheim ascribed much of the corruption of Christian doctrine to the powerful, pervading influence of Platonism, the leading philosophy of the civilization into which Christianity was introduced. Here again we find him witnessing against himself, for examination clearly reveals that Platonism was responsible for the introduction into the "Christian" Church of the doctrine of the immortal soul. Mosheim says (p. 99)—

"Its originators—(he is speaking of mystic theology)—Its originators assumed that WELL-KNOWN DOCTRINE OF THE PLATONIC SCHOOL, which was approved also by Origin and his followers, that a portion of the divine nature was diffused through all human souls."

Here again, as with the Trinity, we must go to paganism for our sources. The Scriptures know nothing of immortal souls. The doctrine is wholly foreign, and wholly contrary, to the revealed Word of God. Pope Leo X said he knew the soul is immortal because Pope Clement V said so, but, as one writer has said—

"We have not found anyone who seriously endeavors to prove that the immortality of the soul is taught in the Bible."

The Bible gives the same simple, clear and consistent picture throughout that all consciousness and being ends at death, and that the dead know not anything (Eccl. 9:5); that in the day of death man's thoughts perish (Psa. 146:4); that death is a sleep, a complete oblivion, from which some—the vast majority—will never awake (Prov. 21:16)—

"The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead."

"Like sheep are they laid in the grave, death shall feed on them . . . Man that is in honor and understandeth not is like the beasts that perish" (Psa. 49:20).

Whether we shall be among the number that "sleep a perpetual sleep," or whether we shall be called forth from the grave at the return of Christ to enjoy glorious immortality, depends upon

the course we follow now. Paul said—

"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine."

If we blindly follow an apostate Christendom, and remain ignorant of the ways of God, we shall—with them—remain in the congregation of the dead.

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OTHER outstanding features of orthodox Christianity could be similarly compared with Scripture, and examined as to origin. But sufficient has been brought forward, we believe, to demonstrate that Christendom as a whole is, on their own admission, not founded on the pure teachings of Scripture but upon philosophy and speculation.

"The time will come," said Paul, "when they will not endure sound doctrine." But his words of exhortation to Timothy outline the course to be followed by those who by a patient continuance in well-doing, would seek for glory, honor and immortality—

"Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned . . . from a child thou hast known THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, WHICH ARE ABLE TO MAKE THEE WISE UNTO SALVATION" (2 Tim. 2:14-15).

Truly as we survey the gross darkness that engulfs Christendom, we are grateful for the unchanging Word of God, which (2 Pet. 1:19) calls the—

"Sure word of prophecy: whereunto we do well that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place."

—G.V.Growcott, The Berean Christadelphian, June and July, 1959