

of that spiritual kingdom which was built up in their midst, they partook of the fatness of the olive tree, though they were wild branches. But by and by we find the Gentiles following after the same example of unbelief; they to whom the kingdom had been transferred from Israel got into darkness, unbelief and apostasy, the same as the Jews had done before them. Paul further warns them in this chapter not to boast. Says he—"Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, the branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Take heed, therefore, lest you also shall fall after the same example of unbelief."

Have they taken heed? No, they have not. Where is that kingdom that was transferred to the Gentiles, that had inspired Apostles and Prophets in it? That kingdom upon which the Lord shed forth the Holy Ghost and all its gifts—the gift of revelation, discerning of spirits, seeing angels, healing the sick, foretelling future events, visions and all the other gifts which came through the operation of his Spirit upon the wild branches of the olive tree, after they were grafted, through obedience to the Gospel, and became partakers of the root and fatness of the tame olive? Where is that kingdom? In other words, where is the church? It is said by some that the church has continued from the Apostolic period down until the present century of the Christian era. But if it has, I cannot find it, the researches I have made give me no indication of the existence of the kingdom that was transferred to the hands of the Gentiles. I know of no way to distinguish the church of God, only by comparing it with the pattern given in the New Testament.

Can I find among any of the Gentile nations a church with inspired Apostles in it? If I cannot, I have no authority to pronounce any such church the church of God. Its members may believe in the Bible, and they may be honest, we do not dispute the honesty of men; but unless they have this distinguishing characteristic of the Church of the living God, we have no right to suppose them to be the real, true Christian church. Let us hear what Paul says in the 12th chapter of Corinthians in relation to the organization of the church of Christ. We there find that the church have placed within it, first, Apostles, secondarily, Prophets, thirdly, Teachers, after that working of miracles, healing the sick, speaking with divers tongues, interpretation of tongues, etc., and all these were helps, governments, gifts, blessings, authorities and powers that served to characterize the true kingdom or church of God from all those that were destitute of this power and authority. Did this authority, these gifts and blessings exist towards the close of the second century of the Christian era? No. What had become of them? The people had entirely apostatized from that ancient order of things. There were no doubt many who were very zealous and who professed Christianity, and claimed to be the church of God, but where were their Apostles? Nowhere to be found among men. Where were the Prophets in what was called the Christian church towards the latter part of the second century? Nowhere upon the face of the earth; the spirit of prophecy was entirely rooted out, and the Gentiles, through apostasy and unbelief, had fallen as the Jews had done before them.

Again, where were the healing of the sick, opening the eyes of the