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THE TEACHING OF JOHN GLAS

DURING the first half of the eighteenth century there arose in Scotland a religious movement which owed its origin to the teaching of the Rev. John Glas, sometime minister of the parish of Tealing, near Dundee. Mr. Glas commenced his ministry in the period following the long struggle of Presbyterianism to secure its position as the national form of religion. Unfortunately the Revolution Settlement did not usher in an era of peace and unity. The history of Scottish religion in the eighteenth century is one of theological controversy and ecclesiastical division. Hitherto Presbyterianism had presented a solid front to both Episcopacy and Independency, but the new century was to see several secessions which resulted in the rise of new denominations, Presbyterian and Independent. The Revolution Settlement not only led to the exclusion of those Episcopalians who refused to conform, but also to the isolation of the Cameronians, or extreme Presbyterians, who remained outside a Church which they regarded as "uncovenanted", for in the new compact between Church and State the old Covenants had been ignored. But within the National Church there were also many who held the binding obligation of the Covenants and hoped for their renewal. Opposed to these Evangelicals were the Moderates who cared little for the Covenants and disliked what they considered a narrow, dogmatic, and enthusiastic type of religion. This party was destined to become the dominant force in the Church of Scotland for nearly a century. With both Moderates and Evangelicals Glas had something in common. Like the former he denied the binding character of the Covenants, but with the latter he emphasized the importance of spiritual religion as distinguished from conventional morality. The controversies of his time led Glas to make a careful study of the Nature of Christ's Kingdom, from which he reached the conclusion that the Kingdom of Christ is essentially spiritual in its nature, and as such is completely independent of State sanctions and control. From this it was but a step to

the further position that the Church of Christ is composed solely of believers possessing a vital experience of saving grace. In his desire to foster spiritual religion in his parish he organized a society which virtually became a "gathered" Church as distinct from the parochial congregation. His attitude and principles incurred the disfavour of both Moderates and Evangelicals, though, strange to say, it was from the latter that the chief opposition came. His opponents regarded him as an Independent whose views were at variance with the principles, order, and government of the National Church. Eventually he was cited to answer charges of error and disloyalty. Glas defended himself with vigour and persistency, but after a protracted process in the Church Courts he was finally deposed from the ministry of the Church of Scotland. Though his separation was compulsory, there is a sense in which Glas was the leader of the first secession from the Church of Scotland, for a number of his sympathizers severed their connection. Unlike the later secessions led by the Erskines and Gillespie, who retained the Presbyterian polity, Glas's movement, like that of the Haldanes at the end of the century, developed along Independent lines.

Following his deposition in 1730, Mr. Glas's disciples in various centres formed themselves into churches modelled on what they believed to be the apostolic pattern. The attempt was made to reproduce the order and discipline of New Testament times. In course of time, chiefly due to the labours and writings of Robert Sandeman, Glas's son-in-law, the new movement spread to England, Wales, and America, but the number of churches was never large. The influence of the Glasite movement, however, was much more widespread, for during the century which followed the establishment of the first Glasite or Sandemanian Churches, new religious bodies came into existence, and these, though having no direct connection with Glas's communion, absorbed various elements of his theology and preserved certain features of the Glasite Church order. The most important of these were the "Scotch" Baptists, the Old Scots Independents, the Haldaneites (disciples of the brothers Robert and James Alexander Haldane from whose evangelistic labours the modern Scottish Congregational and Baptist Churches have sprung), and the "Disciples" (sometimes known as the Campbellites) who have grown to be one of the largest

denominations in America, and are also represented in Great Britain and Australia.

Glas was a prolific writer. Many of his publications were pamphlets occasioned by the controversies of the time, but others were considerable and substantial treatises. His works, which cover nearly every aspect of Christian doctrine and practice, show him to have been an erudite scholar and a keen thinker. His general theological position was that of orthodox Calvinism. He describes Calvin as "a great and excellent writer of the sixteenth century, no way equalled by those who show the greatest contempt for him in comparison with the ancients", and adds, "The fourth century has not furnished us with any writing on divinity that can be compared with his 'Institutions'". He declined, however, to accept Calvin's judgments as final and authoritative, for the Scriptures alone, he maintained, "contain the complete revelation of the whole counsel of God, and are the perfect rule of the Christian religion, which is still to be found pure and entire in these".

A detailed examination of Glas's teaching would require a volume of considerable length, therefore it is proposed to confine attention to what is central or peculiar in his doctrinal and ecclesiastical teaching—particularly in relation to the topics of Christian Salvation and the Constitution and Order of the Church.

I

CHRISTIAN SALVATION

From his early days Glas's mind was seriously exercised by the question: How may a sinful man obtain salvation and peace with God? He himself found spiritual peace in a realization of the sufficiency of Divine Grace manifested in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ perfected in His Atoning Sacrifice. Glas's soteriology was based upon the Divine testimony concerning Jesus as the Son of God Who became Incarnate for men's salvation and through Whose perfect righteousness alone the sinner is justified before God. "The whole scripture-revelation," he says, "centres in the death of Christ, that great fact whereby the counsel and purpose of God, for the declaration of his justice and mercy in the salvation of sinners, is executed" (Works, Second edition, Vol. V, 210).

(1) THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT.

Glas carefully examined the doctrines associated with the names of Calvin and Arminius, and also the views of those who held a mediating position. His study convinced him that the special tenets of Arminianism were unsupported by the Scriptures. In an unpublished letter he writes: "As to the distinction of Arminian, Calvinist, or Baxterian doctrine . . . I'm persuaded Calvin's scheme is more agreeable to the Truth of the Gospel than either of the other two". Hence he became an earnest advocate of salvation by sovereign grace, maintaining the doctrine of particular redemption as opposed to that of universal atonement. He was not unaware that certain passages in the Apostolic writings seemed to imply the universality of Christ's grace and salvation, but he declares, "The Apostles never intended the universal way of speaking of Christ's death should lead any to think he died for every one of mankind who fell in Adam" (Works, V, 206). Glas believed that the doctrine of universal redemption diminishes the sense of indebtedness to the work of Christ by introducing personal merit as an element in salvation, whereas the Scriptures represent salvation as the gift of God's sovereign grace to those who are elected by His sovereign will (Works, V, 210, III, 56-57. Cf. Calvin, *Institutes*, III, xxiii, 2). Glas takes his stand on the classic Pauline statement in Romans ix. To him the fundamental truth is the sovereignty of God, in the light of which the doctrine of redemption must be interpreted.

(2) JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

How is Christ's salvation made personal to God's elect? To this question Glas replies that a man is justified solely by faith in the redemption wrought by Christ, not by any works of his own. Man can find in himself no fitness to warrant hope of salvation. "No man can be justified by doing, or by the deeds of the law, for all have sinned; but all sorts of sinners, without difference, are justified by faith."

Glas holds that this doctrine of Justification by Faith, so central in the Apostolic testimony, early became dimmed and obscured: "This appeared under the eyes of the apostles, who

complained of Christian teachers perverting the gospel of God's grace in the justification of sinners by the faith of Christ, and of the ear that was given to them, even among those who had been made disciples by the teaching of the apostles." Glas proceeds to say: "But these perverters of the gospel were only a sample of that grand apostasy from the faith, under some profession of it, that was to come" (Works, V, 355-356). He states that in the sub-apostolic age it is difficult to find among the Early Fathers any who preserved the faith in its purity and simplicity, though he makes exceptions of Clement of Rome (1 Cor. xxxii), and the author of the "Epistle to Diognetus" (Epistle, section ix). Not until the Reformation was the long-obscured truth of Justification by Faith re-discovered and proclaimed in opposition to the Romanist conception of merit. Luther described it as "the article of a standing or a falling church", while Calvin and other Reformers taught the same truth. But it was not long before "the first seal for the truth abated, and nature prevailed, as it will always do in the nations of this world" (ibid., 358). Even among professed Calvinists the truth was watered down, "For in place of free justification by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ's blood . . . they now began to insist much more in their sermons on free electing grace, but especially on the efficacious power of that grace in the conversion of the elect, working unfeigned faith in them, and turning them to God in a sincere repentance. . . . The effect of this strain of doctrine upon them that hearkened to it, was, their seeking peace with God and rest to their consciences by what they might feel in themselves, the motions of their hearts, and the exercises of their souls, in compliance with the call to faith and repentance, under the efficacious operation of grace, which they hoped to find in using those means whereby they supposed it to be conveyed" (Works, V, 362). Glas maintains that, in spite of differences on Election and Perseverance, the Calvinists and Arminians were really at one "as to the grand point of the justification of the sinner before God", looking for grounds of confidence from within themselves rather than from the truth of the Gospel itself.

It is here that we find Glas deviating from the popular theology of his day, and the difference is most clearly illustrated by his conception of the nature of saving faith which he declares to be neither more nor less than simple belief of the truth or

testimony of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ. Such faith is not an act of the human will but the production of the Holy Spirit. In his early work, "The Testimony of the King of Martyrs (1729)", Glas enunciates and expounds this conception of faith which was afterwards so forcibly and militantly advocated by Sandeman in his "Letters on Theron and Aspasio." Glas says:

"This truth (God's revelation in His Incarnate, Crucified, and Risen Son) comes into our minds and hearts from above, by divine teaching . . . not growing naturally in them, but brought in from elsewhere, and ingrafted, that we may bring forth a new kind of fruit. . . . To be of the truth is to believe it. They that are delivered into that form of doctrine do obey it. And the way that we obey a truth testified unto us is by believing it upon the authority of the testifier. In believing this doctrine there is subjection of the mind unto the authority of God in his testimony, which is this doctrine. . . . And this persuasion of this truth upon the evidence of the divine testimony in it is indeed that faith whereby we are justified, and eternally saved. And this is that which the scripture seems mainly to intend, when it speaks of faith, and calls us to believe. . . . Thus the scripture-notion of faith agrees with the common notion of faith and belief among men, a persuasion of a thing upon testimony" (Works, I, 141-142).

Glas asserts that this scriptural view of faith has frequently been obscured by the attempts to describe it, "while that which is most properly faith has been either shut up in a narrow and dark corner of the description, or almost excluded from it, as a thing presupposed unto faith, and not that very faith itself whereby we are justified and saved". Some definitions of faith have been so complex and comprehensive as to include the whole of "gospel-obedience", with the result that faith has not only been confused with its concomitants or effects, but also represented in such a way as to make it a "work", an act on the part of the believer, instead of the outcome of God's operation on the mind of the believer. He sums up his view of saving faith: "This, then, is that faith whereby we have Christ, with the life from the dead that is in Him; even our taking God's testimony, or believing him, that he hath raised Jesus Christ his Son from the dead; and what else is this, but the knowledge and persuasion of this truth by testimony? yea, if it were anything else, it behoved it to get another name than faith" (Works II, 125-126).

To the critics who charged him with teaching a view of faith equivalent to the "faith of devils" (James ii. 19) Glas replies that he cannot see that James represents faith as consisting in anything other than belief of the Gospel testimony, though

he does show that there is a marked contrast between the faith of the elect and the faith of devils in their effects. What James seeks to emphasize is, that religious profession without corresponding practice is valueless. But where zeal for "pure and undefiled religion" does correspond with zeal in profession there can be no comparison with the "faith of devils". Glas repudiates the charge of Antinomianism. The belief of the testimony, wrought by the Spirit, naturally finds expression in the graces of the Gospel. These effects or fruits include all that is meant by love to God and to the children of God. "The good works that are required throughout the New Testament, as the fruits and evidences of faith, are works of mercy and almsdeeds, to be done to all men, but especially to the household of faith" (Works, III, 100-101). But Glas does not limit the fruits of faith to works of mercy and almsgiving, but represents them as full conformity to Christ Who is the Great Exemplar of Faith. "If we have the same spirit of faith, it must have the same effects in us: and if we have it not, we are none of Christ's, we are not Christians."

(3) ASSURANCE.

How may a man know that he is justified or in a state of salvation? Glas affirms that as the Death of Christ saves all for whom He died, so "to know that he died for us is to know and be assured that we shall be saved by his death" (Works, V, 212). Such knowledge or assurance may be inferred from the promise of the Holy Ghost as the Comforter, the pressing exhortations to seek after it, and the directions for its attainment.

Glas, however, distinguishes between the assurance of faith and the assurance of hope, declaring that it is useless to expect the latter until faith has been exercised. Neither that which is hoped for, nor the ground of hope, can be discerned apart from faith. Therefore to place the assurance of hope before faith is to begin at the wrong end. The foundation of hope is the assurance of faith which can be nothing else than what is proposed in the Gospel for acceptance unto salvation. The assurance of hope is the fruit of faith which originates not from any persuasion of personal interest in Christ or in the certainty of salvation, but from the truth believed.

Glas denies any knowledge of justification except by the works of labours of love. The evidence on which the early Christians based their assurance of salvation was not the possession of any special gift or extraordinary manifestation, but the "charity, the fruit of faith, and the work and labour of that charity or love, without which there is no Christianity" (Works, V, 213). Those who continue "steadfastly in the work of faith and labour of love . . . are in the straight way to the full assurance of hope." This is put beyond doubt by the concurring testimony of two witnesses. First, our own conscience testifies whether or not we are walking in faith and love. But as the testimony of conscience may waver, "the Holy Ghost comes in as another witness, corroborating the testimony of our spirit, and finishing the proof, by adding his own testimony; as the apostle says, 'The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God'".

On this question of Assurance Glas is somewhat halting. Elsewhere he seems to make it more of a hope than of a certainty providing the Christian with a permanent ground of joy and peace (Works, V, 226). While he admits that the knowledge of personal justification is attainable, and that the Word of God testifies the sufficiency of Christ's righteousness to justify the sinner, he continues, "But we must not think that he who is thus certain of the sufficiency of Christ's righteousness to make him just, is yet assured that this righteousness is imputed to him, and that he is made just by it. . . . When we believe on him that raised up Christ of the ungodly, we believe *that we may be* justified by this. And the hope that arises from this faith or belief is the hope of being made just, or of becoming just, by the imputation of this righteousness" (Works, III, 89). The Assurance Glas offers is not a certainty but a possibility or probability. Even within Glasite circles his view of Assurance met with critics who desired something more definite and comforting. They felt that the Scriptures encouraged believers to expect the witness and consolations of the Spirit, but even they drew a distinction between an assured confidence in the truth itself and an assurance that "we are believers", holding it presumptuous for any individual to claim that Christ died for him in particular.¹

¹ Towards the end of the eighteenth century the Glasite churches were rent asunder over this question of Assurance. "This controversy was begun in 1798 by a public character amongst them affirming that by the work of faith and labour of love they came to

II

CONCERNING THE CHURCH

(I) ITS NATURE AND CONSTITUTION.

Glas maintains that, according to New Testament usage, the word "Church" may be applied only to the "mystic body of Christ" and to the visible expression of that Body in a company of believers locally gathered and organized. "The mystic body of Christ—that catholic heavenly assembly, the true Israel—is most frequently called the Church in the New Testament. This is that 'general assembly and church of the first-born' written in heaven, Christ's church, built upon him the rock, so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it" (Commentary on Part of Acts xv). He regards the terms "church" and "congregation" as identical: "The whole nation of Israel is called a church" (Acts vii. 38). "But that was a congregation, and had one place of worship, the tabernacle of the congregation. The Catholic Church of Christ, his holy nation and kingdom, the anti-type of that Church of Israel, is also a congregation, having one place of worship, where all assemble by faith and hold communion, and when all the members are fully gathered in they will be one glorious assembly" (Works, I, 194). With the coming of Jesus Christ the temporal covenant with Israel was set aside, so that "the Church had passed out of the state of an earthly nation . . . and is now a glorious general assembly out of all nations, typified by that national assembly; for it is also a nation, but not earthly, not of this world, and so it very far exceeds the earthly nation" (ibid., I, 63). Glas states that it was this conception of the spiritual nature of Christ's Kingdom which led him to change his views concerning the nature and constitution of gospel-churches (ibid., I, 377).

It may be a question, he says, if all Christ's professed disciples throughout the world may be called a Church except as they may be regarded as belonging to the "Mystic Body" or "general assembly and church of the first-born". There is a distinction between the Church Invisible and the Church Visible:

know that they were of the truth; that by receiving a foretaste of the heavenly life they obtained the assured hope of being accepted of him; that this was the highest possible enjoyment of Christ's people in this life, and in them the highest possible evidence that Jesus Christ was the Son of God." *A New Theological Dictionary* (1807), 790. To the orthodox Glasites this view appeared to leave room for subjective grounds of assurance, providing hopes of final perseverance for which there was no clear warrant in Scripture.

“There is one holy Catholic Church made up of all them in heaven and on earth that are born of the Spirit; and this church is not in itself to be seen till Christ appear: yet of this Church every one in the earth that is, according to the law of Christ, an object of the Christian brotherly love, is a visible member, and is, to us, in that Church by the law of Christ, and, as such, has a right to baptism, wherein we are all baptized into that one body; but many that are such, prove, in the issue, to have been no real members of that body, though they were visible members of it. There is also a Church, visibly joined together in the profession of the Christian faith, hope, and charity, and assembling together in one place to partake of the Lord’s supper, and to observe all Christian institutions, continuing steadfastly together in them; and in every such visible Church, the mystical Church is shewed forth and represented to us; but besides this, I do not know of any visible face or form of a Church upon the earth” (Works, I, 432-433).

The New Testament represents the “mystic body of Christ” as visible in particular Churches, but knows nothing of any larger visible entity like that of a National Church or a world-wide ecclesiastical corporation: “We may have a metaphysical view of the universality of the visible members of the mystical body of Christ; but that this universality of visible members is, or ever was at any time, one visible Church in a political sense, or one visibly organized body, is so far from being a truth, that it is evidently false in fact” (Works, I, 345).

The New Testament reveals Churches in various places like Jerusalem, Corinth, and Ephesus, but each was the local expression of the Catholic Body of Christ. The Church in one place was not broken up into several congregations. Despite the large numbers associated with the first Church at Jerusalem, there is nothing to indicate that it was regarded as other than one church or congregation. There may have been various meetings of Christians in Jerusalem, “but it seems pretty plain that the body of disciples, called the *Church*, could, and did frequently assemble with one accord in one place, and so was but one congregation” (Works, I, 196 ff). What was true of Jerusalem may be assumed to have been the same in other places—one flock or church under the spiritual oversight of its own presbytery or pastors. Thus each congregation possessed the complete character of a Christian Church. Glas contends that this view of the local congregation as a complete Church is in harmony with the declaration of the old Scots Confession (1560), wherein the Scottish Reformers state that if the true notes of a Church, viz., the true preaching of the Word of God, the right administration of the Sacraments, and an adequate discipline, are to be found, no matter how few of the number

of members, there is a true Church of Christ (Scots Confession, cap. xviii). The Scots Confession, says Glas, "owns no other Church but the mystical body, and a single congregation" (Works, I, 379).

On these grounds Glas enunciated and defended his proposition: "A congregation or church of Jesus Christ, with its presbytery, is, in its discipline, subject to no jurisdiction under heaven" (Works, I, 188). This affirmation was a distinct denial of the claims of both diocesan Episcopacy and classical Presbytery. The local congregation alone has Divine sanction, therefore there can be no superior external authority or gradation of ecclesiastical courts exercising control over a particular Church. Jesus Christ Himself is the Head of the Church to Whom the local Church owes direct allegiance. A visible or congregational Church is a company of believers called out and separated from the unbelieving world, gathered and united in the profession of the one faith, walking in mutual love and faithful obedience to the institutions of Jesus Christ.

(2) THE MINISTRY.

Glas made a careful study of the Christian Ministry during the first three Christian centuries. In his tract entitled "Tradition by the Succession of Bishops" (1752), he traces the steps whereby the simple ministry of the New Testament Churches gave place to a clerical caste deriving its authority from a monarchical Episcopate. But in his judgment clericalism is not peculiar to Episcopacy. It manifested itself in modern Presbyterianism and also in Independency. Glas desired to restore within his societies a scriptural ministry which, though unprofessional or priestly, was valid and authoritative, resting solely upon the sanctions of the Word of God. He marks the distinction between what he calls the extraordinary and the ordinary officers in the New Testament Churches, or between the temporary and the permanent ministry. Included in the former are the Apostles, the Prophets, and the Evangelists. The permanent ministry consists of Elders and Deacons, the latter including the deaconesses or ministering widows.

A distinguishing feature of Glas's teaching is his insistence on a plurality of Elders in each congregation. "The written

tradition," he says, "establishes a plurality of bishops in every Church, and we may as well look for one chief deacon, as for one chief presbyter in any Church there." Everywhere in the New Testament the church-officers are spoken of in the plural—"bishops (presbyters) and deacons" (Works, II, 216-217). Without a plurality of Elders a Church is incomplete and cannot observe Christian ordinances and discipline. In this respect Glas differs from the common form of Presbyterianism with its single minister or pastor, assisted in the discipline by a body of lay-elders, and also from some forms of Independency which do not regard the presence of a pastor as essential to the constitution of a Church. Though Glas described himself as a Congregationalist, his form of Church order might be more correctly denominated Presbyterian Independency. He will not allow any real difference between a teaching and a ruling elder. In a congregational presbytery there must be parity of office. Though the Scriptures distinguish between the functions of teaching and ruling, this does not imply two distinct offices. The gift of teaching is necessary to every elder. "He is no elder that is not qualified for the ministry of the word, and is not a steward of the mysteries of God" (Works, II, 221). Moreover, all elders are equal in the rule and government of the Church over which they have oversight. No elder singly may exercise discipline or dispense the Lord's Supper. Though Christ has not fixed the number of elders in any Church there must be at least two to form a presbytery. "Where they are wanting there is something necessary unto Church order wanting" (Commentary on Acts xv. 23). Elders are to be chosen from the membership by the unanimous decision of the Church. Character and ability, not academic education or social position, are alone to be taken into account (*ibid.*, 4). Further, it is required that the elder be the "husband of one wife", usually interpreted as excluding a second marriage with retention of office, and that he is one "having faithful children", meaning children, who, if of mature years, have made the profession in joining the fellowship (Works, III, 155). Institution to office is by prayer and fasting accompanied by the laying on of hands of the presbytery. Glas repudiates the idea that ordination conveys any priestly status. He acknowledges no distinction of "clergy" and laity, and deprecates the use of ecclesiastical titles. Elders may fulfil their duties without giving up their

ordinary occupations, though if necessity obliges them to do so they have the right to sustenance from their flocks.

The office of deacon is confined to the "ministry of tables" as distinguished from the ministry of the Word (Works, II, 214). The special function of the deacon is to minister to the poor.

(3) THE SACRAMENTS.

(i) *Baptism.*

Glas defines Baptism as an institution wherein is expressed "the great Christian truth concerning salvation by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ the Son of God, in whom the Father is well-pleased, and the purification of sinners by his blood" (Works, II, 356). This institution has been variously perverted and opposed, but "there is no remarkable error about baptism, but what has a foundation in some great error as to that truth which is signified in baptism".

The subjects of Baptism are those who confess their faith in Christ, and their children. Glas was a convinced Paedobaptist:

"We find that Christ has commanded his ministers to baptize all them that are made disciples by the influence of the word of the New Testament; and all and every one of them that believe with all their heart that Jesus who was crucified, and raised again, is the Son of God, and that gladly receive the word of the gospel testimony and exhortation, or the new covenant: and he hath warranted them to baptize the infant seed of such, whom he calls holy, and of whom he says the kingdom of heaven is, and to whom the promise of the new covenant, whereof baptism is the seal, is as it is to their parent; and he has not commanded them to baptize any other" (Works, I, 328).

Glas thinks that the denial of Infant Baptism arises from the fundamental mistake of making baptism "to lie in something else than the thing signified, even that, whatever it be, which distinguishes the adult Christian from his infant: though our Lord expressly declares that we must enter his kingdom even as infants enter it". He continues: "The first opposition that we hear of to infant-baptism, turned salvation upon an entire sort of believing whereof infants are incapable, whereas there is not any true faith, or sincere profession of faith, but that alone which acknowledges that salvation lies only and wholly in the thing signified in baptism. And if we inquire how that

thing saves us, our Lord answers us, Just as it saves our infants. The denial of infant-baptism must have always proceeded from a disbelief of this" (Works, II, 358-359).

(ii) *The Lord's Supper.*

Glas pronounces the Lord's Supper "the most solemn outward action of religious worship instituted in the New Testament" (Works, V, 27). Appointed by Christ as a memorial of His Atoning Sacrifice, and as the bond of communion with Him in his Death, the ordinance is perpetually obligatory to His disciples "until he come". As Baptism marks a relation to the Universal Church into which all believers are baptized, so the Lord's Supper marks a relation to the particular visible church. Baptism is administered to individuals, but the Lord's Supper must be partaken of in a company: "The nature of the Lord's Supper will not admit of a believer's receiving it alone, 'for we being many are one bread, for we all partake of that one bread'" (Works, V, 157). Glas stresses the point that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the visible Church constituted of believers. He strongly objects to indiscriminate admission to the Lord's Table, regarding it as the consequence of the loss of that discipline which was connected with the ordinance in the primitive Church: "We find the outward seal of the Lord's Supper delivered to the disciples in the Churches of the saints, where the ordinance of discipline is placed. . . . These Churches are made up of visible members of the New Testament Church, the body mystical, that are visible within the new covenant, and are visibly God's justified and sanctified people; that is, them that appear to the eye of man, according to the rule of the word, to be such by their own profession of the new covenant" (Works, I, 329). He admits the difficulty of preserving purity of communion, but this does not relieve the Church of its responsibility to guard the Table. Though Christ has not given us the key to men's hearts, He has pointed out the objects of brotherly love with whom we are to hold communion. Promiscuous communicating destroys true fellowship in the mystical body of Christ, consequently "it is our duty to forbear communion in the Lord's Supper with them that have no appearance of being disciples of Christ, believers in him, and are not objects of that brotherly love required in the new commandment; and to withdraw in that ordinance from every brother

walking in open notour disobedience to the commands of Christ" (Works, I, 266 ff).

Glas's doctrine of the Lord's Supper emphasizes the commemorative and declaratory aspects of the ordinance. While the Sacrament is a real communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, the sign must not be confused with that which is signified, viz., the sacrificial Death of Christ. That sacrifice has been made once for all and cannot be repeated in the Sacrament which only represents it and assures its benefits. The Lord's Table is not an altar of sacrifice but a table of communion.

(4) SOCIAL WORSHIP.

Glas has no regard for the religious profession of any man who isolates himself from or neglects the society of Christ's disciples. Only in a fellowship can the duties of discipleship be developed. The first Christians assembled regularly on the first day of the week for fellowship in prayer and praise, mutual exhortation, and the observance of the Lord's Supper. In so doing they acted not from any sense of obligation to an external law, but from a desire for communion and to express their common faith and hope in the Gospel.

Glas repudiates the binding obligation of the Jewish Sabbath. With the coming of the Christian Dispensation the seventh-day Sabbath as a Divine institution had passed away and was superseded by the Lord's Day. Glas supports his argument by an ingenious interpretation of Hebrews iv. 4-11, which speaks of two days of rest—the seventh day and *another* day which he understands as a specific day which "remains" in place of the old day, and which is "a sabbatism of the people of God". He concludes that this can be no other than the day which commemorates the Resurrection, the first day of the week. This Christian Sabbath is the anti-type of the Jewish Sabbath which it superseded. But the abrogation of the old day does not remove the necessity of observing a weekly day of rest. The observance of the Christian Sabbath is the privilege of Christian believers who are to "assemble themselves together, in the confession of the faith that is in Christ the Son of God, the Mediator of that covenant, to observe all his institutions of worship, continuing steadfast in the doctrine, and in the fellow-

ship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers, praising God, and to obey his new commandment in all the branches of it, and to observe all things whatsoever he commands as they find them written in his law" (Works, II, 251). By "fellowship" Glas understands the regular contribution of members to the requirements and services of the Church, especially the relief of needy brethren. The central act of worship, however, is the "breaking of bread", or the Communion of the Lord's Supper.

Associated with, though not part of the Worship of the assembled Church, is the Agape or Love-feast, which is to be partaken of "at home" as a common meal in which the poorer brethren may share. There is evidence that these "Feasts of Charity" were continued until the fourth century when the introduction of the world into the Church rendered it impossible to observe them in brotherly love.

Occasional practices which Glas regards as either obligatory or praiseworthy are the "Kiss of Charity", and the "Washing of Feet". Ridiculous as these may appear to the world, they are enjoined in the New Testament (Works, IV, 246-247). A further obligation, which Glas considers obligatory, is "Abstinence from Blood-eating" (Acts xv. 20, 28-29; xxi. 25).

(5) DISCIPLINE.

The exercise of discipline is one of the distinguishing marks or notes of a true Church, and is necessary to the maintenance of unity in the profession of love and faith. "Without the discipline uprightly exercised as God's word directs, a communion of the purest confessors of the truth must be very impure" (Letters in Correspondence, 83). Glas recognizes that forbearance has its place in the Christian fellowship, but if all attempts to win an erring brother fail, there is no option but to proceed to excommunication and the withdrawal of all fellowship.

Discipline rests upon the authority of Christ who has committed to His Church the "keys" or powers of "binding and loosing", Glas distinguishes between the "key of knowledge or doctrine" and the "key of discipline". The former "must chiefly be understood of the invisible Church, the whole body of Christ", but the latter belongs to the visible Church,

and its rule is clearly prescribed in Matthew xviii. 20. Those guilty of heinous sins are to be treated according to the directions in 1 Corinthians v. A peculiarity of Glas's later teaching is the impossibility of a "Second Absolution" after an offender has once been restored and again gives cause for excommunication.

(6) SEPARATION.

In his "Testimony of the King of Martyrs" Glas made the confession of Christ's Lordship the bond of Christian unity. Christians may have different speculations concerning the truth, yet are they all members of the Body of Christ and brethren in the common Faith. But within a few years Glas's views had undergone a change on the question of "Charity and Forbearance". In his "Catholic Charity" (1742), intended as an answer to George Whitefield, he insists on full conformity to the commandments of Christ and His Apostles, declaring that all who claim Christ's commission to preach the Gospel are "obliged to teach the disciples to observe all things whatsoever he commanded his apostles, which things they taught the first Christians to observe; and, if they acknowledge any as disciples who will not be taught to observe all these things, they are then plainly acting contrary to his instructions to his apostles, and to their own pretended commission" (Works, II, 187). Christian uniformity must lie in a common confession of faith in Christ and in the observance of all the precepts of the New Testament. Therefore all who are concerned about obedience to Christ's laws cannot join in the worship, public or private, of those who reject the prescribed faith and order of the primitive Church. What is called "Catholic Charity" tends to undermine the foundation of Christian Union in obedience to Christ. Intercommunion with other bodies is not permissible.

Such in brief outline are the main features of Glas's teaching, theological and ecclesiastical. It cannot be said that he was an original thinker who has made any important contribution to theological thought. He was indebted to previous writers, particularly Dr. John Owen, for many of his views. Glas, however, rendered a great service to his own generation by recalling to men's attention the historic character of the

Christian Faith and the spiritual nature of Christ's Kingdom. He insisted that Christianity was not the fruit of philosophical speculation, nor of mystical feeling, but the revealed truth of God in Jesus Christ. He suspected all claims to religious experience which rested on a purely subjective basis, and made it to depend on faith in the Gospel testimony concerning Jesus Christ. In course of time Glas became concerned with matters of order, and his movement developed into an attempt to reproduce in minute detail the practices of the Primitive Church. In exalting the letter above the spirit he introduced a new form of legalism which reduced the New Testament to a code of laws and regulations from which there could be no deviation. Had he been content with the spiritual principles with which he began his career, he might have become a great leader of religious revival, but he fell into the snare of religious particularism, and became dogmatic, hyper-critical, and intolerant. This explains the failure and decline of his movement. To-day the Glasite body is almost extinct. But the best elements of Glas's teaching have been absorbed by other communions while the great truths for which he originally contended—the spiritual nature of Christ's Kingdom, the Supreme Headship of Christ in His Church, the primary authority of the New Testament as the criterion of faith and practice—are acknowledged by Christians of all Evangelical Churches.

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