

## *Terms of Communion and the Six Terms.*

(The Scriptures Must be the First Term of Communion)

*And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3:15-17)*

Question. — *Why must the Scriptures be the first term of communion?*

Answer. — The first term of communion ought to be that which sets the people of God apart from the pagans, Rom. 3:1-3.

Although the light of nature is sufficient to give men a knowledge of natural theology whereby: 1.) It renders men accountable and without excuse because they possess this innate idea of God, Rom. 1:20. 2.) It restrains vice, and benefits societies by making a natural order appear, 1 Cor. 5:1; which is only suppressed in their unrighteousness, Rom. 1:28. 3.) It renders man a proper subject of faith, under the instructions of divine revelation, Acts 17:28; Isa. 44:9-20. 4.) It gives force to divine truths on the conscience, Rom. 2:14, 15.

This light and knowledge of nature, however, does not extend to those things which do not pertain to man's existence and natural relation to God, Matt. 16:17; 1 Cor. 2:12. Thus, this natural revelation is not sufficient to matters pertaining to salvation, Ps. 119:1-7. This is because: 1.) It does not give a sufficient knowledge of the true God, John 17:3. 2.) It cannot exhibit Christ the Mediator, apart from Whom there is no salvation, that is, without knowledge of Him and faith in Him, John 17:3; Acts 4:12. 3.) It cannot reveal that covenant of promise wherein the people of God find hope and find God Himself, and without which men are cut off from any hope, Eph. 2:12. 4.) Because there is no salvation by works, and there is no other way revealed by nature's light, Gal. 2:16. 5.) Because there is no fitness for duty or happiness, without union to Christ, and faith in Him, Rom. 7:4, 6; Heb. 9:13, 14.

Nonetheless, although the light of supernatural revelation is superior to the light of nature, yet if some meaning is attributed to supernatural revelation which appears to place natural revelation in a position contrary to the supernatural, we must seek that meaning which is not contrary, as did Jesus in the case of divorce, Matt. 19:7-9; and also respecting the Sabbath, Mark 2:27; Luke 13:15, 16.

On the other hand, Scripture contains that revealed theology of habit, or habitual theology, whereby the mind is brought under the conviction and impression wrought by the working of the Spirit, John 6:63. Habitual theology may be understood in several ways: 1.) When theology is understood correctly and practically, in which case, Scripture calls this *science* or *knowledge*, 2 Pet. 1:3;

3:18. 2.) When it governs and persuades the heart, it is called *wisdom*, Jas. 3:17; Col. 3:16. 3.) When it regulates life and conduct, it is called *wisdom* or *prudence*, Deut. 4:6.

Question. — *What makes the Scriptures such an important division between the people of God and the pagans?*

Answer. — The Scriptures present to the people of God the fullness of that special revelation which pertains to the Christian era, Heb. 1:1, 2. Though there are many claims to special revelation, some true and some false, yet the Scriptures possess a quality of certainty and the assurance of the immediate inspiration of God, 2 Pet. 1:19-21.

It was necessary for the preservation of the truth of special revelation amongst the people of God that those revelations having abiding profit for the church of God in all times must be turned to writing, Jude 3. It was not necessary for the revelation to be reduced to writing upon first reception, but it was necessary that that revelation was commanded by the Lord to be reduced to writing, Jer. 25:13; 30:1, 2; 36:2. Scripture is the result of a conscious encounter with God by the prophets and apostles, Ex. 3:1, 2; Isa. 6:1; Deut. 18:18. This written word provides the light of special revelation for the goings forth of the church unto the end of time, Ps. 119:105. In fact, they form the standards against which all subsequent revelations and teachings must be judged, Isa. 8:20.

In demonstration of this necessity, God Himself not only spoke, Ex. 20:1; but He also recorded it in two tables of stone, Ex. 34:28. Furthermore, He expressly commanded those sacred writers of Scripture to record His Word in writing, Ex. 17:14; 34:27; Rev. 1:11.

Question. — *Wherein does the profit and necessity of Scripture appear?*

Answer. — The Scriptures are both profitable and necessary to the people of God for several reasons: 1.) They are the only means instituted by God to be used by the Spirit to work faith and conversion in men, Rom. 10:14, 17. Apart from these Scriptures, none can be regenerated because they are the seed the Spirit utilizes to produce saving faith, Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23. 2.) They provide the food which is used to nurture and grow the spiritual life of those who are converted, 1 Pet. 2:2. 3.) They contain that only rule which can govern our hearts, thoughts, words and deeds, Ps. 119:6. 4.) They provide a spiritual comfort to the people of God, Rom. 15:4; Ps. 119:92, 111. 5.) They are a special means of effecting the sanctification of the church, John 17:19. 6.) They are that spiritual sword given to the church to resist and defeat all enemies, whether devils, heresies or our own flesh, Eph. 6:17. Only the Scriptures can reach to the very thoughts and intents of the hearts of sinful men, Heb. 4:12. 7.) They are the only means whereby men can be saved from the world, the flesh and the devil, Rom. 1:16; Eph. 1:13; Jas. 1:21.