

**PLAIN FACTS
AGAINST THE POPE'S
PRETENSIONS**

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Plain facts against the pope's pretensions by Charles Haselden

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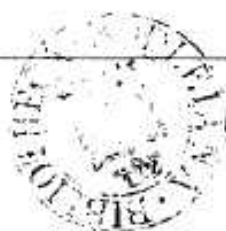
CHARLES HASELDEN

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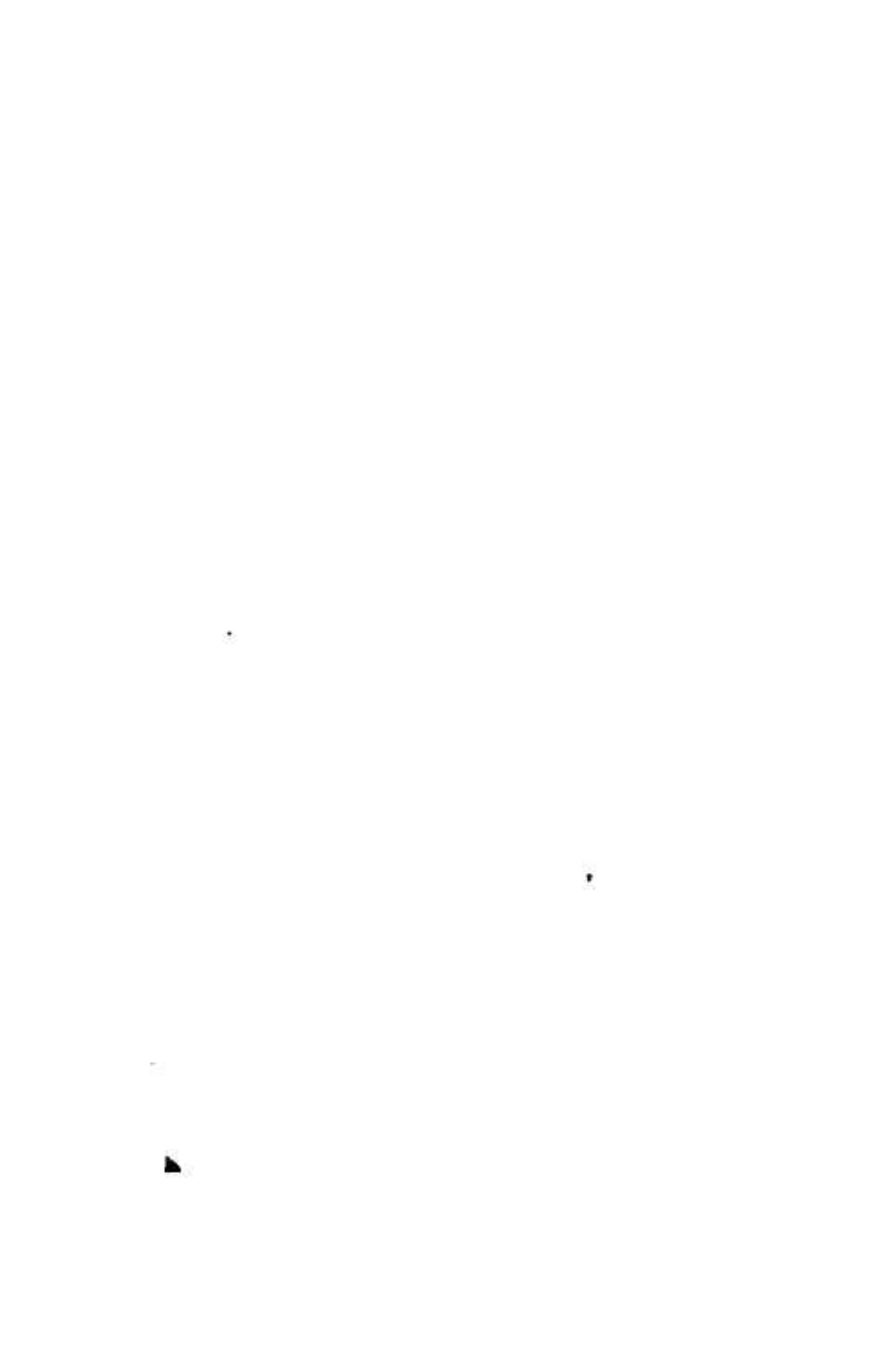


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PLAIN FACTS.

WE read in the New Testament, that our Lord Jesus Christ when He was on earth, after He had preached His gospel for some time, and many believed on Him, and many "forsook all and followed Him,"* that "He called unto Him His disciples: and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named apostles: Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphæus, and Simon called Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor."† "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them to preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand."‡

* Luke v. 11. † Luke vi. 13. ‡ Matt. x. 5-7.

Judas Iscariot, whom our Lord always knew to be a traitor, but who was selected to fulfil the oracles of God, Judas Iscariot died miserably before his Master; the other eleven had their office more solemnly confirmed by our Lord after His resurrection.*

When our Lord had ascended into Heaven, the first act of the eleven was to appoint another apostle instead of Judas; this they did with serious deliberation and prayer to the Lord to direct their choice,† and Matthias was numbered with the eleven apostles. Shortly after this, they received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For some time they remained in Jerusalem preaching the Gospel, and baptizing the converts, but after a time many of the apostles travelled into different countries to preach the Gospel to the Jews in different parts, and they appointed James to remain at Jerusalem, to take the spiritual charge of the Christians there.

Before this time, Saul, afterwards called Paul, had been miraculously converted to the Christian faith, and appointed by our Lord from heaven, to

* Matt. xxviii. 16—19, 20.

* Acts i.

be the Apostle of the Gentiles.* Paul and Barnabas were specially directed by the Holy Ghost to travel and preach amongst the Gentiles.† During their journey, disputes arose whether it was necessary for the Gentile converts to Christianity to be circumcised according to the Jewish law,‡ and to decide this question, a council of the apostles was held at Jerusalem. At this council, James presided; and when Peter and Paul had both expressed their opinions, James decided that circumcision was not necessary. After this council, Paul again set out to preach to the Gentiles; and having travelled and preached in many countries, he was about the year of our Lord 56, sent as a prisoner to Rome,§ where “he dwelt two whole years in his own hired house,” guarded by soldiers, but “receiving all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.” ¶

As the sacred narrative of the Acts of the

* Acts ix.

† Acts xiii.

‡ Acts xv.

§ Acts xxv. 27.

¶ Acts xxviii. 16—30, 31.

Apostles ends at this point, we have no very certain account of the actions of the apostles afterwards. It is generally supposed that Peter arrived in Rome about the year 57 or 58, while Paul was still there, and assisted him in establishing the infant Church of Rome; and, according to their usual custom, before the apostles left the city, they appointed a head or Bishop to take charge of the Church, and Linus was by them appointed the first Bishop of Rome about the year 58. Thus in the entire history of the apostles we nowhere read that Peter had any pre-eminence or supremacy over the other apostles. At the council of Jerusalem James presided; the Gospel was probably first made known in the Imperial City by the means of some strangers of Rome who were at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost,* but Paul is considered to have first gathered the Christians there into a settled Church, and Linus was the first Bishop of Rome.

For many years the Bishops of Rome were purely and solely spiritual Bishops, without any pretensions to temporal power; and when the

* Acts ii. 10.

Emperor Constantine became a Christian, he seems at once to have taken his place as earthly Head of the Christian Church.

The Eastern and Western Christian Churches differed in their time and manner of keeping Easter,* and about the middle of the second century, during the reign of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, the venerable Polycarp Bishop of Smyrna, came to the Imperial City to confer with Anicetus, Bishop of Rome, upon this matter, with a view to terminate the disputes it had occasioned. But this conference, though conducted with great decency and moderation, was without effect. Polycarp and Anicetus were only agreed in this, that the bonds of charity were not to be broken on account of this controversy; but they continued at the same time, each in their former sentiments—nor could the Asiatics be engaged by any arguments to alter their custom. At that time the Bishop of Rome did not even pretend to exercise any authority over the Christian ministers in other countries, but was contented to argue

* Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. 1. cent. 2, part 2, chap. 4.