

THE OLD PATHS: OR, LECTURES ON THE PROTESTANT FAITH

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649661275

The Old Paths: Or, Lectures on the Protestant Faith by J. H. Rogers

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Cover @ 2017

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Lectures on the Protestant Faith.

BY THE



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LONDON: S. W. PARTRIDGE & CO., PATERNOSTER ROW.
MALVERN: "ADVERTISER" OFFICE, EDITH WALK.

1873.

100. w. 249.

ERRATA.

"JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH."—Page 21, for lines 8, 9, 10, 11, substitute the following: of itself, the second by itself valueless. Baptism, however, is a sign or seal: on God's side, a seal to His promises, to those who believe; on man's side, a visible sign and outward profession (at

"THE LORD'S SUPPER."—Page 15, line 6, for *copula* read *copula*.—Page 17, line 4 from bottom, for 20 read 21.

"SUPERSTITIOUS BONDAGE AND GOSPEL FREEDOM,"—Page 16, line 1, for *met* read *met by*.

PREFACE.

THE Lectures comprised in this book were not originally intended for publication: they were delivered as instruction to a Protestant Educational class, with a view to giving distinct dogmatic teaching on the principal strongholds of the Christian Faith.

At the request of many who heard them they are set before the Public in the present form, with the hope that those who read them may be led to study the truths of Christ's religion for themselves, and so to be able to give "a reason of the hope that is in them."

The dangers and doubts of the present day cannot be met by merely exposing and confronting error. Falsehood must be overthrown by truth, scepticism by faith, ignorance by knowledge. All the denial of error and all the refutation of falsehood will not arrive at anything positive, at any *real personal* experience of truth. Highly as we love and value the word *Protes-*

tant, let us see to it that our religion means something more than mere *protesting*. The knowledge of Christ as our own Saviour will involve our keeping near Him, and honouring His word above all things. If we have "won Christ," we shall live in Him; if we keep close to Him, we shall not have the desire to stray from Him.

The object of this little book will be thoroughly answered if it leads any to search and try, what they themselves believe, by the standard of God's Word: not so much seeking into what others hold, as receiving from the Gospel, in all its simplicity, a *positive personal faith*.

J. H. R.

Malvern, 1873.

The Word of God the Only Rule of Faith.

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THE title given to this course of lectures sufficiently explains their subject and nature. Their subject, the Protestant faith in its integrity—true faith, as distinguished from unbelief on the one hand and misbelief on the other—Protestant faith, that which, itself Scriptural and Apostolical, the faith of Jesus Christ, protests against being spoiled through “philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

They are lectures, not discussions, education rather than controversy; and the object in view is to bring forward and state the truth itself, to give reasons for what we believe, and to state fundamental doctrines with all the power and clearness that God may vouchsafe to give us, rather than to assail those who, as we believe, do err from the faith.

The first step in lecturing on Faith must be to establish the Rule of Faith, and the subj

of our present lecture fixes this as being the Word of God and the Word of God *only*. Until this be established, we have no certain standard, and no ground on which to prove the other doctrines which are to be brought forward. Let us, then, calmly and prayerfully consider why we Protestants believe the Word of God to be the only Rule of Faith.

This I shall endeavour to lay before you under five points:—

I. The Word of God is *inspired*, and so permits no doubt.

II. The Word of God is *complete*, and so neither needs nor permits additions.

III. The Word of God is *sufficient*, and so needs no human interpretation.

IV. The Word of God is given to *all*, and so to be withheld from none.

V. The Word of God is *the revelation of Christ*, “in whom are hid *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” and therefore anything not included in it must be spurious.

I. Our first business is to establish the inspiration of the Word of God, since, if once we accept it as the dictation of the Holy Ghost, it can admit of no doubt, and we can lawfully appeal to it in support of our other propositions.

Now we must bear in mind that if the Bible be not inspired, it is a forgery and a falsehood,

for it says of itself (2 Tim. iii. 16), "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." How, then, has God treated this book, which professes to be an inspired revelation of His will? He has *providentially protected* it in all ages; it is the only book that has never been lost; preserved during the captivity, and in all the dangers and persecutions of the Jewish nation; carried throughout the known world by their dispersion; now multiplied and circulated in the most marvellous manner. Would God have interfered for its preservation, and permitted its multiplication and reception throughout Christians of every race, if it had been the forgery which is its only alternative from being His own inspired Word?

Again, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the New Testament, testifies that the Old is what it professes to be, and therefore inspired. He quotes passages, points out fulfilled prophecy, recalls commandments, and mentions persons and facts as realities, in a way which proves the inspiration of the records to which He refers.

And, still further, God has in unnumbered cases used the written word to bring souls out of darkness into His marvellous light. History, ancient and modern, and many cases probably known to all present, unite in showing how God has used His word for the conversion of souls. And would He have used it thus, had it been