

**WHY I AM A CHURCHMAN: THE
PITTS STREET CHAPEL LECTURE,
IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION,
"WHY I AM A CHURCHMAN"**

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Why I Am a Churchman: The Pitts Street Chapel Lecture, in Answer to the Question, "Why I Am a Churchman" by Geo. M. Randall

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GEO. M. RANDALL

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THE

PITTS STREET CHAPEL

LECTURE,

IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION,

"WHY I AM A CHURCHMAN."

BY THE

REV. GEO. M. RANDALL, D. D.

Rector of the Church of the Messiah, Boston.

Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you. — 1 Peter iii. 15.

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PREFACE.

THE occasion of the delivery of this Lecture was on this wise:—

An association connected with the "Pitts Street Chapel," (a Unitarian place of worship, in this city,) invited clergymen from six denominations to preach a course of sermons, last winter, in defence of the distinctive principles of the religious bodies which they represented. Having been requested to deliver one of that course, I accepted the invitation; and in this Lecture, stated the reasons WHY I AM A CHURCHMAN.

Some have expressed a doubt, whether it were precisely becoming in a Church Minister to engage in what, to their eye, appeared to be an *Eccelesiastical tournament*.

In this course of Lectures, there was neither *union* nor *controversy*. Hence there was neither compromising nor fighting, on the part of the preachers. On the Sunday evening assigned to me, the pulpit was mine, exclusively, for the time being. I had been invited to defend the faith and practice of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and I was expected to do this as fully and as forcibly as I would do, or could do, in my own parish Church. There was to be no delicacy of feeling, nor embarrassment of utterance, arising from the fact that I stood in another man's pulpit, and was addressing a congregation, a very large majority of whom were not Episcopalians.

Here was an opportunity for the Episcopal Church to have a hearing, such as she never before had in New England. We were challenged to tell our story, as plainly as we pleased, in the open ears of a multitude, who never

before heard the Church argument, and who were willing to sit and listen to it, patiently and respectfully. Shall this opportunity be improved? Shall the Church be heard in the heart of New England? To my mind, there never was the shadow of a doubt, as to the course which I ought to take. I believed it to be not only right, to accept the invitation and plead for the Church, but a bounden duty, which I was not at liberty to decline.

The results of that humble effort, which have already come to my knowledge, have confirmed the conviction, that in delivering this Lecture, I acted the part of a consistent Churchman, and a faithful soldier and servant of Christ.

This Lecture was first published in a volume, in connection with the other Lectures of the course. To such a publication, grave objections have been urged. On the other hand it is to be remembered, as a matter of compensation, that *thirteen thousand* copies of this book have already been published. At least ten thousand of these have gone into the hands of persons who are *not* Churchmen. On the supposition that each copy has been read by ten persons, we have this result: *one hundred thousand persons* have read the *Church argument* who never read it before, and who, but for this volume, might never have read it at all. Moreover, these volumes are still in circulation, and will be more or less read every day, for years to come, while new editions will undoubtedly be issued. There is surely some advantage in this, the fruits of which the Church will, no doubt, ultimately reap.

This Lecture is now issued by itself, in a tract form, in the hope that, with the blessing of God, it may be the means of some good.

G. M. R.

Boston, 1858.

WHY I AM A CHURCHMAN.

THUS SAITH THE LORD, STAND YE IN THE WAYS, AND SEE,
AND ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS.—Jer. vi. 16.

THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD, THE PILLAR AND GROUND
OF THE TRUTH.—1 Tim. iii. 15.

HOLD FAST THE FORM OF SOUND WORDS.—2 Tim. i. 13.

THE object of this discourse is to indicate the distinctive principles of the *Protestant Episcopal Church*. The enunciation of these is a sufficient answer to the question: Why I am a Churchman,—and cannot preach the Gospel in any other ecclesiastical organization.

There is, and since the days of Abraham, there ever has been, such a thing, on the earth, as the *Church of God*. He originated it,—He governs and protects it. It is His instrumentality for the reformation,—the regeneration and the salvation of a fallen world. It is that Kingdom which Christ has

promised to be with, to the end of time, and against which the gates of hell shall never prevail. God wrote its constitution, appointed and commissioned its officers. As man did not originate this organization, so he can neither abrogate nor modify it. He can neither establish the terms of admission nor clothe its rulers with power. If, then, the Church in its origin and authority is in no sense *human*, — and is in every sense *divine*, — we must look for its features, in the only book, where God has written out His will, touching the salvation of men. That Book is the *Bible*. Here, if any where, must we find the charter of the Church. Here the boundaries of this great kingdom are defined. Here the titles and functions of its officers, their authority and their duties, are declared.

The world is divided into two great classes : those who are within this Kingdom, and those who are without it. There is no neutrality in the great contest between a righteous God and a rebellious world. Every man is either an adopted citizen in this great commonwealth of grace, or he is an alien. "He

that is not with me is against me," is the declaration of Christ.

The lines which mark the boundaries of God's Kingdom have been drawn by His own finger, for the darkened eye of the sinner. This fact, of itself, is sufficient to warrant the conclusion, that this demarcation is so distinct and definite, that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein," and "he that runs may read." The Church then is God's Kingdom on earth, protected and preserved by the abiding power of His own promised presence, and may be as readily recognized by the description contained in the Scriptures, as any earthly kingdom may be known by its Constitution and Statute Book. If there be "no other name given among men, whereby we must be saved," but the name of *Christ*, and the Church is "Christ's mystical body," then it follows, that the sinner must know *where*, as well as *how*, to look for refuge from the power and penalty of sin. He is not to be sent in search of an *invisible* ark.

The Israelites knew when they crossed the line, and entered "the promised land." The