BIBLE ASSURANCE;
OR A REPLY
 TO
 Dr. B. H. Carroll's Tract on Assurance,
 BY
 Pastor E. R. Carswell,

GONZALES, TEXAS.

JOHNSON BROS. PTG. CO.,
STATIONERS, PRINTERS AND ENGRAVERS
SAN ANTONIO, TEX.
BIBLE ASSURANCE;

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TO

Dr. B. H. Carroll's Tract on Assurance;

BEING A CANDID EXAMINATION AND THOROUGH REFUTATION OF HIS HISTORICAL AND SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST BIBLE ASSURANCE.

BY

Pastor E. R. Carswell,

Author of "JESUS AT OUR DOORS," "THE NUTSHELL CRUSHED," and "APOSTASY," or a Classified Explanation of All Passages Used to Teach Falling From Grace.

GONZALES, TEXAS.

"I Know My Sheep and Mine Know Me."—Jesus.

1895.
INTRODUCTION.

In reviewing Dr. Carroll on "Assurance," I feel "assured" that an opportunity is offered for rendering valuable service to the cause of New Testament teaching.

The gifted author's great name and wide influence clothe his production with a weight of authority (?) far beyond its real merits.

Dr. Carroll is a great orator, and possesses other rare gifts. But this Tract of his is my warrant for saying that he does not possess, even in a fair degree, the "gift of interpretation."

Bro. Carroll, occupying his pulpit throne in Waco, mistakes in assuming that he could settle the whole controversy touching "assurance" by the sound of his mighty voice.

He needs to remind himself that every Baptist man in Texas has the same right to be heard. The power of remedy does not reside in the Oracle of Waco.

Our eloquent brother mistakes the question. We do not hold assurance to be essential to salvation; but an invariable characteristic of the saved under the Spirit's Dispensation. The difference that puts us apart on "assurance" begins in our views of "saving faith."

The sinner may do all Bro. C. bids him do and yet be unassured of salvation. If a sinner will obey my teaching, under God's blessing, he will be instantly and permanently assured of his salvation. Difference in our teaching as to the object and end of saving faith makes the difference in result. "Assurance" is not the same thing as faith; but the "assurance of faith" is the instant, constant and everlasting consequence of faith—under this Dispensation.

Dr. Carroll's converts need to go on and seek "assurance." True Gospel converts have "assurance" as soon as they have believed. The defect is in our brother's teaching, which, at this point is sheer Campbellism.
Campbellite and Carrollite faith agree in accepting Jesus Christ as a person, as the Son of God. They also agree in trusting Him for nothing.

Whereas the saving element in faith is trust. See 1 Tim. 1:12; Eph. 1:12-14; Rom. 4:3-24. It is by excluding this essential element that Bro. Carroll comes to deny that faith assures—and he is right, such faith, untrusting faith, does not and cannot assure. But the saved soul is a trusting soul. And the trusting soul is a soul assured of that for which he trusts.

Bro. Carroll charges us with the sin of excess in stating the terms of salvation—that we prescribe three terms, repentance, faith and assurance.

But the sin of excess is his; for he makes two terms, repentance and faith, whereas the Bible makes faith the one condition.

Neither repentance nor assurance is a term of salvation. Faith alone justifies (Acts 15:39); faith alone relieves from condemnation (John 3:18); faith alone secures everlasting life (John 6:47.) No sinner can believe until the Holy Spirit prepares him by change of nature for it, termed in Scripture, “begotten of the Spirit,” “santification of the Spirit,” and the like. But it is after this that faith justifies and saves.

No sinner will believe until he has repented, that is, until he has seen himself condemned and helpless. But, again, it is after this that faith alone secures the relief and deliverance offered in Jesus.

He who would assign repentance its right Scriptural place, must not class it a term or condition of salvation. It ought not to be thought a heresy or a crime to place, define and describe, with greater Scriptural accuracy than has usually been done, these elemental and experimental truths.

Brother Carroll is justly chargeable with the sin of deficiency, as well as of excess. Having added repentance as a term of salvation, he subtracts from “saving faith” all that is essential to its saving quality, namely: the element of trust. He thus adds a false term and subtracts from the true term its saving element.

Brother Carroll, in seeking a method of harmonizing our discordant elements and of healing our differences, tries “compromise,” or alternate concession” and “calling three things two things.” But he seemed never once to have thought of that old Baptist weapon—treating each
other as equals in a free and fair discussion of the issues involved, under the light of Bible teaching.

In the end, he reaches another method—to refuse recognition to all such Baptists as have the temerity to differ with him and agree with the Bible, in teaching that all the saved know their Savior. The foundation standeth sure "Because God knows us, as in II Tim. 2:19; Gal. 4:9, and I. Cor. 8:3. But we are sure that we stand on this foundation by our knowing him, as in II Tim. 1:12; II Cor. 13:5, and John 10:14. Both these are inspired thoughts. "I know my sheep and mine know me," said the Good Shepherd. We know not how to doubt or deny his precious words.

But it seems never to have dawned upon our brother that it is the province of each church to decide who is unworthy of recognition by Baptists.

Brother Carroll and Editor Cranfill must produce their Commission giving them the right to decide our Baptist disputes and to execute the penalty of suppression and destruction upon such as they decide against.

That Waco trial (?) of Brother Martin, with its serio-comic ending—granting him a letter in full fellowship as a Baptist, after condemning him as a heretic—settled no question for Baptists in general.

The doctrines voted down at Waco still live. Fairly stated and rightly understood, all converted Baptists would die for them.

The writer of this Tract asks nobody's pardon and fears no consequences, in saying, "That he believes that the Lord Jesus Christ and the Bible were on Martin's side in that controversy."

Martin has his faults as have the rest of us. In some minor matters, he is tangential, as are all of us in degrees. But in all points essential to Baptist integrity, Martin is sounder than those who seek to destroy him. He has won thousands to Christ and his converts are Baptists.

He would do us yet more good, if allowed to serve the Lord in the quiet way his true Christian spirit elects. Modified, as he could be by considerate affection and fraternal admonition, we could use him for the glory of God and the good of our beloved cause.

I believe that wisdom and brotherly love will yet prevail; that a day of better understanding is hastening on; that we will soon come to reason soberly and lovingly together; that our differences will be found to be fewer and smaller
than we had thought; that we shall learn a new and sweet lesson of mutual forbearance; that we will profit by our family quarrels, make up, and then go to work with a will for Missions and education—our neglected and bleeding causes.

This Tract is aimed at this mark. The Lord conduct the bullet to the target. We will yet see alike and stand together.
CHAPTER I.

THE HISTORIC ARGUMENT ANSWERED.

IS ASSURANCE A BAPTIST DOCTRINE?

Dr. Carroll's order of discussion is tell-tale. He consults traditional theology first and accords the Bible a second place. In his hand the Bible must conform to Baptist standards (?) and yield to Baptist authorities (?); but Bible Baptists allow no standards apart from the Holy Scriptures and repudiate all human authorities, as absolutely unauthoritative. All must do obeisance to God's infallible Word.

Bro. Carroll actually speaks of certain "Confessions" and "Declarations of faith" as "most official and authoritative." Pray tell us, good Doctor, what officers and of what, did this official thing? And whence their authority? When did all Baptists, representatively or otherwise, formulate a declaration of their faith? Should they do so. would it in any scriptural sense be official? Could any body of Baptists clothe any creation of theirs with an atom of authority over anybody's conscience? For Baptists, the Bible monopolizes and exhausts all authority. Do Baptists, so late as this, need to be taught this primary lesson, this axiom, in Baptist principles.

But as Bro. Carroll quotes especially from the Philadelphia Confession, "as the most venerable symbol of American Baptists," and as it seems to be a kind of idol-god to many, let us first examine this hoary document to see if it fairly represents Baptist beliefs.

I know of no Baptist on earth that believes this Philadelphia Confession. I know of no Baptist church that will even pretend, intelligently, to go by it.

For a decisive test at once, I will now and here introduce its Thirty-first article. I quote from Cathcart's copy, quoted so copiously by Bro. Carroll.

XXXI. "Of Laying on of Hands."
"We believe that Laying on of Hands, with prayer, upon baptized believers, as such, is an ordinance of Christ, and ought to be submitted unto by all such persons that are admitted to partake of the Lord’s Supper, etc." Here is a precious morsel of Episcopal Confirmation in this much glorified symbol of Baptist faith. Does Dr. Carroll believe "Laying on of Hands" to be a third ordinance, and essential to prepare baptized believers for approaching the Table of the Lord in due scriptural order? Does he? Does his church practice it? If not, they are heretics by this "most venerable symbol of American Baptists." If they do practice it, they are peculiar among Baptists, and all the rest of us are heretics; for none of the rest of us practice this third ordinance. We believe and practice only two. We know nothing of the ordinance of "Laying on of Hands." Baptists, take notice: This, article, which we all know teaches a falsehood, is in the Confession which our dear Bro. Carroll and others exalt to a place of such high authority, and by which Bro. M. T. Martin was tried and condemned.

Once for all, the writer would affirm that "assurance Baptists" will accept more of the article on "assurance" as given by this Philadelphia Confession than Bro. Carroll will of the article on "Laying on of Hands." Mark. The Philadelphia Confession is as much an authority in one article as another. And if it is an authority on this third ordinance, all Baptists are heretics, even to Bro. Carroll.

This is enough to suggest what is verily true—that the Philadelphia Confession of Faith is one of the most defective, inaccurate and misshapen statements of scripture doctrine ever put forth by any body of Baptists.

GLARING DEFECTS AND BLEMISHES.

1. Twice it speaks of "temporary believers," which are only make-believers and never were genuine believers. Baptists do not teach that believers ever cease to believe and become unbelievers.

2. It speaks of "saving faith" being of different degrees, whereas it is not saving but serving faith that has degrees. Not the amount of faith saves, but the blood faith grips.

3. It teaches that the faith which saves is increased by baptism and the Lord’s Supper, etc., (Art. xiv, § 1), which is but another phase of sacramental or ritualistic salvation, always repudiated by Baptists.
4. It mixes repentance and faith, (Art. xv, § 3), whereas repentance is toward God, (Acts 20:21), as Sovereign Law-giver, and faith is toward Christ as Savior—the two being always distinguished in God's Word, and in actual experience.

5. It speaks of "saving repentance," whereas the Scriptures nowhere say the sinner is saved by repentance. Never. Repentance has no saving office. In repentance one sees his need of a Savior by seeing his own helpless condemnation. But it is faith that takes Christ as Savior. Repentance in no way refers to Christ, and, therefore, cannot save, because Christ is the Savior.

6. This leprous creed, (Art. xv, § 5), teaches that a saved man has future contingencies to be met by himself in order to keep himself saved and to secure himself from damnation. He must repent of every sin committed after he believes, or damnation will befall him; hence it adds, "which makes the constant preaching of repentance necessary." Necessary to what? To prevent a saved man from being damned by subsequent sin? This is the manifest meaning of it. But this is false. The saved man does not have to repent to keep from being condemned and damned by sin. He repents because, being saved, he loves his Savior, sorrows over every violation of his sweet will, and cannot be happy in disobedience.

This is unadulterated Arminianism, which some of us have repeatedly punctured for our Methodist friends; and through which that ancient and valiant Baptist, Paul, ran his sword the first time it ever showed its head in gospel history. (Gal. 3:5).

7. It speaks of the Pope of Rome as the personal Anti-Christ, which every mere tyro in the study of prophecy knows to be impossible. The spirit of Anti-Christ has been in the world since Paul's day, but the personal Anti-Christ who is to be incarnated Satan, as Christ was incarnated God, is to appear just before the Second Advent of Jesus and be consumed by the brightness of his coming. He is a person, not an office or a mere influence. His time is yet future. (2 Thes. 2:1-12).

8. Now, adding to this batch of errors that gigantic blunder already pointed out—that "Laying on of Hands" is another ordinance and an essential prerequisite to the Supper—haven't we an olio for Baptist hosts? What must be thought of those who are willing to accept this as a Baptist
standard of orthodoxy, or who undertake to saddle it upon
Baptists?

By such a standard, no wonder if Bible Baptists are ad-
judged to be heretics. The Bible and the Phil. Confession
are a long ways apart. What Baptist does not prefer the
approval of the scripture standard rather than of this faulty
human standard?

ERRONEOUS ON ASSURANCE.

We are prepared to find this blundering Confession in
error upon the great doctrine of "Assurance." But it is no
more of an authority upon "Assurance" than it is upon
"Laying on of Hands." On the one and the other its erro-
neous statements are to be corrected by God's Word. And
let it not be forgotten, that even this faulty Confession (Art.
I, § 1, 9 and 10) submits its every article to the arbitrament
of Holy Scripture.

And it possesses another virtue, now too commonly
disregarded. It provides (Art. xxvii, § 15) that assembled
messengers from the churches, though fraternally counsel-
ing as equals, "are not intrusted with any church power,
properly so called, or with any jurisdiction over the churches
themselves, to exercise any censures either over any church
or persons, or to impose their determination on the churches
or offices. [Officers perhaps was meant.]"

Strict observance of this divine regulation would have
prevented our historic divisions, one and all, and would even
now avert the alienations and divisions into which we are
being precipitated, denominationally, by its violation.

But to return to its deliverances touching "Assurance:"

In the second section (Art. xviii) what it denominates
"an infallible assurance of faith" it founds upon "the blood
and righteousness of Christ revealed in the gospel, and also
upon the inward evidences of those graces unto which prom-
ises are made, and on the testimony of the Spirit of adopt-
ition, witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of
God." This is measurably accurate, basing assurance upon,

1. The merit of Christ received by faith.
2. The infallible testimony of the Holy Spirit.

But in the next section (3) there is an utter change of
basis from the merit of Christ received through faith to hu-
man merit attained by one's own works, namely, "upon
long waiting, conflicting with difficulties" and the like.

This change of basis is a change from truth to false-
hood. Both can not be true. The latter is pure, unvar-
ished Arminianism.
Those who have such an assurance only as comes from their doings, their own patient endurance of trials, etc., will, of course, be tortured, at times, by doubts and fears for the simple reason that they are banking on some supposed merit to be acquired by themselves, and not on the sole merit of the Crucified Redeemer and the testimony of the infallible Spirit. Going back to the second section, where Christ is made the basis of assurance—Christ received by faith and witnessed by the Spirit, the only logical deduction is that such assurance, so based and so witnessed, is abiding, changeless, deathless; for it possesses only a divine basis and the Spirit of God will never alter, recall or contradict his testimony.

So that the believer, who rests as every genuine believer does, upon this unmixed foundation of divine merit and divine integrity, though reprobating his own sins and despising himself as a wrong-doer, may, like conscience-lashed, but trusting Peter, look up through his blinding tears and say, "'Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.'"

We see, therefore, that the Philadelphia Confession on "Assurance," is self-contradictory and semi-Arminian.

So much for Brother Carroll's first historic witness. Many such witnesses would wreck even a better case than that which the good Doctor has assumed to advocate.

**THE NEW HAMPSHIRE DECLARATION.**

Like the Philadelphia Confession, this Declaration is utterly devoid of authority. Indeed, it is not in the power of any body of men—even to the whole number of Baptists on earth—to clothe any declaration of faith with authority over Baptists. The opinion of the most insignificant and unlettered layman among us possesses equal authority with the deliverances of the millions of Baptists, even if all agree as one man—for in both cases, zero is the expression of their authority. The New Hampshire blunders inexcusably in having no special article on so important a Scripture topic and doctrine as this. It only incidentally alludes to it as having its foundation in election. Its teaching is, that such as make their calling and election sure, thus become assured of their salvation. True enough. But as the Scriptures speak of Three Assurances—of Faith, of Hope and of Understanding, the question arises, which one is ascertained by diligence?

Not the "assurance of faith;" for this comes by be-
believing, and does not have to be sought at all. When Paul (Heb. 10:22) exhorts believers to draw near to God in a "full assurance of faith," he assigns to faith "full assurance" as its essential attribute or necessary resultant. How could they draw near in such, unless they really possessed it. He bases it upon their having consciously had their "hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" as symbolized by their baptism. If they were what they professed to be by their very baptism, they had by faith received the blood cleansing, and in the full assurance always inspired by such faith, they were exhorted to draw near to God. But this assurance comes, not by diligence in good works, but simply by believing.

Again, the "full assurance of hope," referring not to salvation, but to promises made to the saved, results from hope, that faculty of the soul which ever looks to the future, and which is endowed with the capacity of converting promises of future good into present realities.

Those who already have the first-fruits of the spirit (Rom. 8:23-24), are the only ones who can rationally look forward to the other fruits, the full harvest and the "harvest home." Rational hope ever has this undergirding of knowledge. Knowledge of one thing, furnishes hope of other things. But the "assurance of hope" comes not by diligence, but by looking to the promises.

The third assurance, "of understanding," (Col. 2:2), clearly refers to that experimental assurance, that results from a growing understanding of God's Word and our relations thereto as discovered in the practical effects of grace in the life of the believer.

It is connected with Christian love (v. 2) and the Christian's walk (vs. 6-7).

Now, this is the assurance attained by diligence.

Hence, he who is already sure of his salvation because by faith he rests upon the assuring word and finished work of Jesus—"the assurance of faith"—may, by diligence in Christian life, come to be assured of the same thing from experimental evidences—the "assurance of understanding." This is related to growth in grace and divine knowledge. This makes the believer neither safer nor surer, but as a creature of sense, happier.

Right here is one of Brother Carroll's gravest oversights—the overlooking of these Bible distinctions.

I challenge any man to explain John's First Epistle otherwise.
John assumes (I. Jno. 2:20-27) that the believers he was addressing, as such, already possessed the assurance that comes by faith, and needed no teacher concerning this; and straightway sets about expounding to them the "assurance of understanding," that they may know themselves saved by another class of testimonials.

All believers, he assumes, receive the anointing, and this Witness of the Spirit seals their faith and assures them of their salvation, and this, he says, "abides in them and they shall abide in it." [Margin.] And as the spirit of man knows of his own experience (I Cor. 2:11) John rightly declares they need no teacher as to this primary assurance—possessed by all believers.

Hence, when he undertakes to teach them, as he declares he does do, (1 John 5:13), he is not speaking of the same means of assurance mentioned above, else he contradicts himself in undertaking to teach those whom he had previously declared needed no one to teach them. But how easy if the Bible distinction be applied.

Those who have the "assurance of faith" may go on to the "assurance of understanding," from "primary assurance" to "matured assurance." How sweet and rejoicing to find in our lives corroboratives of that satisfying assurance which, from our first reliance on the assuring words of Jesus, has had possession of our hearts. Growth, modification, fluctuation, increase and diminution belong here—and not to the "assurance of faith" which is absolute and invariable, because its basis is altogether divine and not a whit human.

"OUR THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES."

These, again, are unauthoritative. The text-books introduced are the production and property of individual Baptist scholars—Drs. Boyce and Strong. They are entitled to just that measure of respect which they have won by the degree of conformity to God's word, which their respective works illustrate. When they depart from the Bible—and their fallibility insure such departures—neither of them would have us follow him instead of our infallible Guide.

If Boyce and Strong, and both their Seminaries be found on one side in the interpretation of a scripture or the statement of a doctrine, and some back-woods country preacher be found on the other, the latter, if he comes nearer to the sense of Scripture, is entitled to more credit and con-
sideration than the whole theological outfit. But no au-
thority would vest in either. Theological professors
and country preachers, alike, must submit to correction by
the unerring Word of God.

DR. BOYCE AS A WITNESS.

Several things deserve to be said that his testimony
bearing upon "Assurance" may be rightly graded.
1. When discussing "Assurance," technically or in
place, Dr. Boyce evidently kept his eye on the Philadelphia
Confession and simply expounded that. He was under
oath to do so. Like Dr. Carroll he interpreted God's Word
by human fallible creeds.

2. But I am prepared to show from Dr. Boyce's own
book that when off of his guard and not trying to conform
to his human pattern, he taught, incidentally, about all,
touching "Assurance" and "saving faith," any of us would
care to teach.

BOYCE ON "SAVING FAITH."

"Faith rests upon Christ and His work for our salva-
tion and upon the promises made of blessings." (p. 394).
"God does not impute the righteousness of Christ to
the sinner, until and unless he (through grace) receives and
rests on Christ alone for salvation." (p. 401).
"Faith is trust in or reliance upon any person or
thing." (p. 394).
"Christian faith, therefore, is personal reliance upon
Christ for salvation because of belief of God's testimony as
to our sinful and ruined condition, and as to what Christ
has assuredly done to save us." (p. 386).

BOYCE ON "ASSURANCE."

"At last accepting the truth of God's Word it [the-
soul under despairing conviction] rests in trust of a per-
sonal Savior." (p. 382).
"Those for whom he has thus been delivered, feel
assured that he will give also all grace, so that their sal-
vation is secure." (p. 316).
"The conscious recognition in our hearts of God's re-
lation to us as Father." (p. 406).

Speaking of the necessary results of Justification,
he has these strong words:
"(3). Peace with God,—assured peace—because
dependent on the merits of Christ and not on those of him-
self." (p. 402).
No "assurance man" would care to add to the strength of these words from Dr. Boyce. They put Boyce vs. Boyce, and contradict Brother Carroll on both points.

3. Again, Dr. Boyce proves conclusively that he did not work the subject over for himself, for nearly every word on "Assurance" in his "Abstract of Theology" is quoted verbatim from "Hodge's Outlines"—a Presbyterian Book. (Carroll on Assurance, pp. 13, 14).

So that, Dr. Carroll in quoting Boyce, is merely quoting a Presbyterian, who is no more of a standard for Baptists on "Assurance" than on "Infant Baptism."

Dr. Carroll may content himself to take his views on "Assurance" from a Baptist copyist of a Presbyterian pattern—second-hand by second-hand—but Bible Baptists will assert their God-given right to go back of both Boyce and Hodge. We will not take the "milk of the Word" from a Baptist who purchased it of a Presbyterian dairyman. Like the devoted Irishman, we would rather keep the cow (Bible) ourselves and do our own milking. Thus, we know where the milk comes from—and that it is "pure Jersey cream," so to speak.

4. Lastly, on Boyce. As proof positive that he blindly followed his Presbyterian guide and fell into every ditch with him, observe, as quoted by Dr. Carroll (p. 13) that he even copies Hodge's perversion of 1 Cor. 9:27, and has Paul fearing he might be damned.

But Paul, in the entire context from verse 17 and even from the Third Chapter of the same epistle, was concerned, not about his salvation but the salvation of others and the rewards to be won thereby. "That I might by all means save some"—is the key-passage that reveals his purpose and meaning here. Having previously distinguished between salvation and rewards, and taught that though those on the one foundation, Christ, lose the rewards by carelessness or sin, they should be saved, "yet so as by fire," he comes back to the same thought in the Ninth Chapter. He classes himself with all Christian racers and crown-winners and (verse 27) he simply declares his purpose to conform to the rules of the race which he has prescribed to others. He would win Rewards and win them Lawfully.

But not a hint about his salvation. And the verse immediately preceding (v. 26) shows he has no doubt even about the rewards "I, therefore, so run Not as Uncertainly," etc. "Castaway," better, "rejected" or "disapproved," that is, for a crown.
Brethren, Baptists, is it not too bad that the man who could so grossly pervert this plain scripture, whose very context is its luminous interpretation, is set up high as a standard for Baptists?

Hodge, Boyce and Carroll make common cause with the Campbellites in the abuse of this important text. Arminians platform Apostasy upon its perversion; and Hodge, Boyce and Carroll adopt the same perversion of it and endorse a slander upon that old Baptist Hero, Paul, to maintain their unscriptural doctrine of Doubts.

Bro. Carroll will please excuse us, if we have no more respect for Bro. Boyce [whom the writer honored and loved beyond almost all others] when he copies Dr. Hodge's unscriptural opinion; upon "Assurance," than when he presents Paul as a Doubter and quotes in support of it a passage that refers, not to salvation at all, but to Christian rewards.

A pretty pass, that Baptist Doctors have to be corrected for the misinterpretation of a crucial passage, that stands in dispute between Bible Baptists and Arminian perverts!!

DR. AUGUSTUS H. STRONG.

Of course Dr. Strong is authority to nobody. His views are just like those of any other man—subject to Scripture test. Mark, too, it is not Rochester Theological Seminary, but Dr. Strong that Dr. Carroll exhibits. Promising to explain the scriptures he employs in the next chapter, we dismiss Dr. Strong’s testimony with a solitary remark: Like Dr. Boyce, he was not independently studying the Mind of God in order to state with precision what that Mind reveals touching “Assurance”; but as a Theological Professor under pledge to conform to a Creed, he was merely expounding that Creed.

Boyce, Strong and Carroll agree in one thing—in interpreting God’s Word by the Philadelphia Confession. This was not accidental, but designed and studied. It is nothing to the point to say, they believed the Confession a correct statement and for this cause expounded it, as the best method of expounding the Scripture. For as a matter of fact, they were not free to interpret the Confession by the Bible, but were bound to interpret the Bible by the Confession.

Better intrusion: Biblical interpretation and doctrinal statement to the hands of plain, common sense Baptist preachers,
with only an experience of grace and an English education, but who have not sworn away their liberty of individual interpretation and right of private judgment, than to these theological heavy weights, with a traditional straight jacket on them. Interpreters of the Holy Oracles should be left unshackled; for only such are free to let the Scriptures mean just what they do mean.

Baptist Confessions and Articles of Faith, as approximate expressions of truth, for information to those who are without and as an easy basis of agreement, when no dispute or controversy is up, serve a valuable end. But as standards of orthodoxy, or as arbiters of disputed questions among us, they are to be despised—as usurpers of the place and office that belong to God's Book alone.

I am indebted to Hon. Yancy Lewis, of Ardmore, Indian Territory, one of the most astute lawyers of our day and one of the brightest and broadest minds of our country, for the following apt and telling illustration.

Speaking of derived interpretations he observed that "the Constitution of the United States is no longer interpreted by the Supreme Court. But, the court now interprets the former Supreme Court decisions. That this has been done for so long a time—interpreting, not the Constitution, but interpreting interpretations of it, until the Constitution is made to contradict the Constitution, and to teach the very reverse oftentimes, of what it was designed to teach and what its language implies."

Just so with Boyce and Strong and Carroll—all good men and great men—but instead of going back to Fountain Source every time, they have expended much of their marvelous force and genius in interpreting interpretations of the Bible, made by uninspired and fallible men. Their references to Scripture are made largely to maintain these interpretations of interpretations. And this has been kept up, repeated over and over, for so long a time, that these derived interpretations put the Bible against the Bible. This we have observed as a fact in Boyce. And it is doubtless, partly due to this, that Brother Carroll, with all his mighty powers, is unable to be consistent with the Bible or with himself. This entire Tract shows him in conflict with Scripture. He as certainly contradicts all his other teachings on Assurance in the first sermon in his Book of Sermons.

With his usual fervid force, he says: "In a moment I went, once and forever, casting myself unreservedly and for all time at Christ's feet, and in a moment the rest came,
indescribable and unspeakable, and it has remained from that day until now." (p. 23).

His experience antagonizes his doctrine in two main points, being the very points in dispute between us.

1. His "experience" puts this rest [assurance] at the moment of his full surrender to Christ by faith. His "Sermons on Assurance," declare that no believer receives such at first, but by "long seeking, patient waiting, etc."

2. His "experience" makes this rest, or assurance, absolutely perpetual and unbroken. His "theory on assurance" makes it variable, and subject even to a total eclipse. And it was in this early experience that he went, as he says, with Bunyan's pilgrims "to the Beulah Land, from which Doubting Castle could be seen no more forever." (p. 23.) So our dear brother, God bless him! came to Beulah Land in the sweet happy hours of his experience of grace, and never since has he caught a glimpse of old DOUBTING CASTLE. And now, if Brother Carroll will only allow as much to every other believer under the same Dispensation with him, as he claims for himself, our disputings about assurance will end. And I know he will not claim to be anything like a pet among the Lord's children.

Having a human theory to maintain snared our brother. Our safety as Baptists, is in fostering and exercising the right of private judgment and of individual interpretation, going back always to the Fountain Source. These traditional interpreters can not be trusted to expound the simplest passage on disputed ground. Among Baptists, uniformity can never be had by conformity — except to God's infallible Word, in the utmost freedom of interpretation.

Those who blindly conform to human Creeds are vassals. They will seek in vain to fasten the chains of their vassalage upon their brethren, who know their liberty, as Sons of God and Grace.

True Baptists will conform to the Bible alone, and up to stake and flames and death assert and maintain our right of private judgment — and this is a principle essential to Baptist existence, not to say, to Baptist unity.

What, then, if it be proven that, historically, Baptists, some Baptists, or even all Baptists (which I do not believe) have sometimes held and taught that saving faith, excludes the element of trust, and "only accepts Christ as a person," as, Dr. Carroll believes, and that assurance is not the possession of all believers, but that "all have their doubts
and fears at times," as he maintains, what shall we do? Simply this: Test these, as we do all other traditional beliefs, by God's Word. Baptists have never yet claimed infallibility for themselves, past or present. Hence, they will hardly object to having their opinions, whether of one or of all, corrected by God's Word. Wherever divergence appears between the Bible and Traditional Baptist Beliefs—and such do appear unless historic Baptists were all infallable—all Bible Baptists will unhesitatingly align themselves with God and his Word.

It seems nothing to Bro. Carroll (p. 15) to be told that a given historic Baptist statement lacks Scriptural accuracy. But it is everything to him to find that it is a Baptist tradition.

But Baptists made mistakes in Paul's day (Galatian Baptists) calling for correction. And Baptists of to-day are making mistakes constantly which we both are striving to correct. Is it, then, to be presumed that Baptists between Paul's day and our day have issued only infallible statements of doctrine, and that their Confessions and Declarations are not to be corrected by the Word of God? Hardly so.

Baptist traditions may not always state the doctrine of "Assurance" correctly or fully. But, thank Heaven! the Bible does, and we have that yet. If all Baptist traditions, good and bad, should perish forever, as long as the Bible is left us, Baptists will live and thrive and be happy.

The Founder and Master of all Baptists is reputed by inspiration to have said, "Thus have ye made the Commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." And, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matt. 15:3-9.

Baptist traditions that make void the teachings of God's Word, as we have seen the Phil. Confession does do touching the "Laying on of Hands" and other matters, are as much to be repudiated as Catholic traditions, or any others.

The Bible and the Bible only shall tell us what assurance is, as well as every thing else. "And the Bible, it being allowed to be its own interpreter," as our old Gonzales Articles phrase it.

The Phil. Conf. declares the same in these words: "The infallible rule of the interpretation of Scripture is Scripture itself; and, therefore, when there is a question about the true sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold but one) it must be searched by other places that speak more clearly" (Art.I, § 9, Cathcart's copy).
Many of our Baptist leaders seem to have forgotten these elemental principles. Hence, the need of emphasis on this point.

So much for Dr. Carroll's Historic Showing. The Scriptural argument will next claim attention—following Dr. Carroll's order.

LET US REASON TOGETHER.

CHAPTER II.

THE SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT.

The real issue on "Assurance" in Texas is not, "Is Assurance a condition of salvation?" or "Is Assurance identical with saving faith?" Dr. Carroll makes a better show of argument against these artificial and imaginary positions than he can make against the real position held by Assurance or Bible Baptists.

The precise question is this: Do the Scriptures teach that every saved man under the Dispensation of the Spirit is fully and forever assured of his salvation so as never to doubt it? It has already been shown that Dr. Carroll and his Baptist standards blunder in classing repentance with faith as another term of salvation, and that, instead of our our making assurance a third term of salvation we agree with our Lord (John 3:14-18; 6:29, 40, 47) and with Paul (Rom. 3:30; Acts 13:39; 16:39) that there is only one term or condition of salvation and that is FAITH. Repentance is a necessary moral antecedent that prepares for the exercise of faith, and the "assurance of faith" is the immediate and never-failing consequent of saving faith. But it is FAITH alone, standing between antecedent and consequent, that is the condition of salvation.

There is not a case referred to by Dr. C., on page 17, in which repentance appears as a condition. Every time it is to be explained as essential moral antecedent to faith. Hence, Jesus said, (Math. 21:32), "And ye when ye had seen it repented not afterward, that ye might believe." No man who studies accuracy in stating the relations of Biblical
truths can afford to speak of repentance as a term or condition of salvation or justification. Dr. Carroll charges us with making assurance, which is a consequent of faith, a distinct term of salvation, while he himself takes repentance, which is only an antecedent of faith, and makes it a term of salvation.

ANOTHER MISSTATEMENT.

Dr. Carroll (p. 21) assumes that we teach that Old Testament saints and pre-Pentecostal believers were saved by faith without assurance, whereas we, under the Spirit's Dispensation, are saved by faith with assurance. That is, that faith alone saved Abraham and John the Baptist; but that now it requires both faith and assurance to save. But this is not our claim.

Surely, the Doctor is willing to allow us a fair statement of our position. Here it is: Faith alone is the condition of salvation under all Dispensations (Rom. 3:30); but the distinguishing privilege of believers under the Dispensation of the Spirit is immediate and unvarying assurance. No difference as to the salvation or the condition of salvation. The difference pertains to the privileges of the saved.

The dividing line is Pentecost, afterwards to be scripturally demonstrated; prior to which time there were two things wanting which are essential to perfect and permanent assurance.

1. The object of faith was, in general, only dimly revealed. We can more clearly see Christ and his finished redemption since the offering has been actually made, than they could see beforehand.

Their faith, considering the comparative dimness of the revealed object, would seem to be more creditable than ours. But it was their practical, serving faith that in special instances, loomed up into conspicuous view. But this is accountable to the fact that God by special visions and revelations of his personal presence, as a wonder-working God, cultivated and strengthened their working faith, as the best compensation possible in those rude times, for the very lack we are now considering, as well as for the one next to be instanced. But their saving faith, looking forward through the mists of coming centuries, through promises partly covert and expressed in language that was symbolic and that looked to future events for more exact and intelligible interpretation, was necessarily subject to variation.
2. The other, and the main lack, was the "Witness of the Spirit," that was, according to divine promise and purpose, reserved for all believers under the Spirit’s Dispensation.

DISTINCT OFFICES OF THE SPIRIT.

At this point Dr. Carroll’s vision needs unwonted purging. He seems to be utterly confused as to the special offices of the Spirit, bearing upon this discussion.

There are three distinct offices:

1. The "Gift of the Spirit," (Acts 2:18; 8:15; 10:45; 19:7), was miraculous and conferred the power to speak with tongues and to work supernatural cures.

2. The "Filling of the Spirit," (Acts 2:4 and 6:3), is the enduement of power for service. It is this that comes through prayer and special seeking.

3. The "Witness of the Spirit," the "Sealing of the Spirit" and the "Anointing of the Spirit" class together and refer, under three distinct but harmonious figures, to the same act of the Spirit and the same experience of the believer.

The witness, sealing and anointing harmonize in one common purpose, namely: To perfectly and permanently assure the believer of his salvation. The "Sealing," (Eph. 1:13, 14), furnishes the earnest or assuring pledge of salvation, and which is to endure until the redemption of the body. The "Anointing," (1 John 3:20, 27), teaches the believer all things necessary to make him sure of eternal life, and the inspired penman says: "This anointing abideth in you and ye shall abide in it." [Margin]

The "Witness" of the Spirit, (Rom. 8:16), is to the same truth to which our own spirit or consciousness testifies as soon as we believe, namely: That "we are the children of God."

THE EXACT SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE

here is this: That apart from the miraculous gift of the Spirit, which served its purpose in the apostolic era and then was discontinued, and still again equally distinct from the filling of the Spirit which endows for service, may be indefinitely repeated in Christian life and is to be sought by prayer, the Holy Spirit, according to divine promise, has since Pentecost been in the world in a new office. This office is peculiar to the Dispensation of the Spirit and confers a privilege which is the distinguishing mark of believers
during the reign of the Spirit among the saints on earth. This office of the Spirit is variously denominated, as before seen, the "witness," the "sealing" and the "anointing" of the Spirit.

Its divinely revealed purpose is to add such clearness to the revealed object of faith, and to witness with such definiteness to the believer's acceptance, as to put him at once and forever beyond the possibility of doubting his salvation.

**SCRIPTURE PROOF TEXTS.**

Isai. 32:1-18. Pointing forward to the time when the Spirit shall be "poured upon us from on high" [Pentecost] and when the "eyes of them that see shall not be dim," the prophet affirms that thenceforward the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, "quietness and assurance forever."

Dr. Carroll's comments on this passage (p. 5), are in utter defiance of context and the chronology of the passage. The "shall be," instead of pointing to some future effect of faith remotely subsequent to the exercise of faith, pointed forward to the day of Pentecost as the date of the special privilege which the prophet was describing—that "quietness and assurance forever."

This passage finds distinct New Testament echoes in the following:

John 7:38-39. "He that believeth (which is every believer) on me, as the Scriptures hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Then follows this inspired explanation: "But this spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive (future at that time, one year and a half before Pentecost): for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." Note, we have here:

1. The same date, Pentecost.
2. The future tenses, "shall" and "should;" again, because Pentecost was more than a year ahead when Jesus uttered these words.
3. A privilege which even believers during the personal ministry of our Lord did not enjoy, and should not, until the appointed time!
4. In its effects it is likened unto rivers of living water, flowing from within the believer, which can mean nothing less than that the truth and consciousness of their salvation shall be perpetual, and independent of all outside testimony. The exact parallel is in John 4:14, where this fountain of
water (truth) is everlasting life," and where Jesus declares that those who once drink shall never thirst." The same date! and so the future tenses again, "shall be" and "shall never thirst."

I. Pet. 1:10-12. The prophets prophesied of a certain "grace" that was not for themselves, but was received for those who were to live in that same future period. For Peter adds: "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now (this was after Pentecost, remember) reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven."

Same date—Pentecost. Same privilege—a grace not enjoyed by Prophets, Patriarchs or by those who lived any time before the gospel was preached "with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven."

Eph. 1:13,14. Here it is the Holy Spirit of promise, that seals the believer with an assuring pledge of his eternal security. That Spirit, in that effect, was promised to believers after Pentecost should come and not before.

Heb. 11:39,40. "And these all having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise [What promise?] God having provided some better thing for us [What better thing for us?], that they without us should not be made perfect." [How made perfect?] If Dr. Carroll had understood this one scripture, he would never have erroneously accused us of having "two plans of salvation; two laws of life, etc."

For while Paul here manifestly teaches that the ancient worthies were saved by faith, as we are, he also as certainly teaches that the promised Spirit was to bring to us something better in the way of christian privilege and should make every believer "perfect," which (Heb. 9:9; 10:14) he explains to be a perfection of conscience, or perfect and perpetual freedom from a sense of condemnation for sin. A conscience purged from dependence upon dead works, that sees "eternal redemption" secured in Christ and which, when once purged, Paul declares, should have "no more conscience of sins," no more remembrance of sins—that is, as a source of condemnation. Such, he adds, are "perfected forever;" that is, a perfect conscience or one that sees itself perfectly relieved of condemnation through the one offering of Christ, will so remain "forever"—a perfect conscience. If Dr. Carroll will studiously prepare a sermon on
Christian or gospel perfection according to Paul in Hebrews ix and x he will convert himself to the view above presented.

But enough on this point. There is a deep conviction in the writer's heart that there is a great bulk of scripture along the line of these last quotations that is commonly overlooked or superficially classed where they do not belong.

The best scholarship among us is challenged to test and overthrow, if it be possible, the above scheme of interpretation.

Pentecost then is the dividing line, this side of which no doubting believer can be found.

And Dr. Carroll had no need to impugn our motives and attribute to us unworthy design in fixing upon Pentecost as the dividing line. The Holy Spirit himself, Bro. Carroll, is the author of this date which seems to give you so much trouble.

Back of this, by reason of the dimness of the object of faith and for lack of the Spirit's testimony, confusion and doubt might temporarily disturb the strongest and best, as in case of Thomas and of John the Baptist. But will Dr. Carroll put his keenest optics to work and find us a doubting Thomas or a confused John this side of this inspired dividing line? Since Pentecost, it can be truthfully said of every true believer, as Paul said of the Roman believers: "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Those that have not this Spirit of adoption, but have instead the spirit of bondage which again fears, are not believers—that is all. They have missed it, and it is no kindness to them to try to patch them up or white-wash them over.

Dr. Carroll's mention of conspicuous examples of faith anterior to Pentecost, as the Syro-Phoenecian woman and Abraham, was made in confidence, as of weight in his argument and as cases in point, simply because he never has recognized the Bible distinction between that act of faith which saves and those subsequent acts of faith by which we serve as christians.

The Syro-Phoenecian woman's faith concerned, not her salvation, but healing for her daughter.

Abraham's faith concerned God's promise to give him a son in his old age. It has been explained already that by special visions and personal manifestations God cultiva-
ted and fostered the serving faith of those whose saving faith, by dimness of object and by lack of the Spirit's witness, was flickering and unsteady.

AN IMMEDIATE AND CHANGELESS EFFECT.

It is accounted no weighty burden, as Bro. Carroll seems to view it, to undertake to prove that the "assurance of faith" immediately follows faith, and that the Holy Spirit instantly adds his testimony to that of our own consciousness, which itself is an immediate result of an assuring faith, and witnesses in such clearness and emphasis, that the believer possesses an abiding assurance of his salvation. There are four lines of testimony to one's saved state:

1. The believer knows himself saved first of all by believing the assuring words of Jesus, who promises to keep him from perishing and to give him everlasting life, if he will only believe. (John 5:24).

2. He knows himself saved, next, by resulting consciousness. The Scriptures speak of this as the "spirit of the man that is in him" and "our spirit." Faith is a conscious exercise, and being such impresses our consciousness in the instant, and so the believer receives by his very faith an instinct which spontaneously witnesses that he is a child of God. (Rom. 8:16).

3. The Holy Spirit is the next witness. He is just waiting to witness to the truth of the believer's salvation, as soon as it is a truth; and it is a truth from the moment he believes. Also, his testimony is designed to corroborate the testimony of Jesus, received by faith, and the testimony of the man's own spirit. And, therefore, as faith instantly impresses consciousness the believer's spirit instantly testifies and the Holy Spirit immediately takes the stand and adds his testimony. This settles it. For even the law saith "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." And here they are: 1. The promise of Jesus received by faith. 2. Personal consciousness. 3. The Spirit's Witness.

These three accompany faith in every case under the Dispensation of the Spirit. It is the third which the pre-Pentecostal saints never had at all, and they possessed even the first two in a reduced measure, owing to the two lacks already particularly described.

4. The last line of testimony is strictly experimental. It concerns the fruits of righteousness in our lives, and ma-
tures with growth in grace and divine knowledge. This is the "assurance of understanding," before defined. This is the special subject of John's First Epistle. Here is where there are degrees, variations and fluctuations. But these changes never produce doubts in those who have hitherto received the other three testimonials to their salvation, above pointed out. But let us return to that one which is characteristic of the Dispensation under which we live.

The Holy Spirit is not a hired witness, but a glad and voluntary witness to our salvation. Hence, he witnesses the fact that we are saved as soon as it is a fact.

The Holy Spirit seals the believer, but surely God does not have to be urged and entreated to seal his own property as his own.

The Holy Spirit anoints believers. They are entitled to His anointing because they are both kings and priests unto God. But the king or priest did not have to stand at the door of tabernacle or temple and plead for the anointing. It belonged to his office. The anointing belonged, too, at the very threshold of priestly and royal life. Think of a priest exercising the functions of the priesthood, or of a king in Israel occupying the throne, for a season, without being anointed, and you have the grotesque figure presented in the mixed theology of these brethren who fight Bible assurance, of a Christian who is both king and priest from the moment he believes, going without the divine anointing without which he cannot perform the sacred duties of his double office before God and the world.

How can a man labor in peace and power to save others whose own salvation is yet a problem of doubt or uncertainty?

Dr. Carroll, confounding this office of the Spirit with the "filling of the Spirit," which endows for service, concludes that, as the latter is to be sought by prayer and special entreaty, so must the former.

RECEIVING CHRIST.

Dr. Carroll expounds his text (John 1:12) at last—and such an exegesis! He felt sure he was about to annihilate something! (See pp. 24, 25, 26).

He ventures to say, "Saving faith is receiving him, not receiving what. It has no respect to a proposition, but to a person."

But saving faith receives both "him and what." Receives him in his true character as a Deliverer and Re-
deemer. It has respect both to him as a person, and to his proposition to save.

Christ, without the gift he offers, is no more to the poor lost soul than any one else. Christ, aside from his proposition, never to let me perish but to give me everlasting life, is not my Savior. He says more than "Come unto me," as Brother Carroll quotes him. He says: "Come unto me and I will give you rest." Here is a proposition to faith, surely. "If you come I will give you rest," says Jesus. Rest! the very thing he and I are in dispute about. But in John 6:35, coming to him is defined to be believing in him. Therefore, he who comes to him in faith receives this rest as soon as he comes. Even as Paul declares, "For we which have believed do enter into rest." (Heb. 4:3).

Paul says more than, "I know whom I have believed," as Dr. Carroll quotes him. He says, "I know whom I have believed (trusted is the marginal reading), and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (II Tim. 1:12).

Saving faith then with Paul was more than accepting Christ as a divine person; it was committing his soul to him as a divine person in perfect confidence for everlasting keeping—"against that day," the day of Christ's Coming and the close of this Dispensation. The word for "committed" is the word for making a "bank deposit."

Saving faith with Paul was making a bank deposit of his soul with Jesus in the full persuasion or assurance of the everlasting security thus vouchsafed to him.

Brother Carroll quotes Scripture like a Pedo-Baptist—he chops away the part that militates against his misshapen theology.

Again, he insists, "It is not at all of the essence of saving faith to take hold of any of the benefits which flow from Christ." (p. 26). Surely, a Baptist preacher is hard pressed, or has a purpose to serve, to be driven to commit himself to such an impossible and ungospel proposition. By this, believing in Christ is no more than believing in George Washington. I believe in George Washington, but expect nothing from him. So the sinner is to believe in Christ abstractly, without expecting any benefit from him whatever.

I am going to make one admission to Brother Carroll and he is welcome to all the comfort he can get out of it: Such saving faith as he teaches never assures; for it does not save.
He who expects nothing from Jesus Christ ought not, and will not be disappointed, if he gets nothing.

Dr. Hovey rightly says, by Christian faith "is meant a genuine trust in Christ as Savior,"—that is to save. Man. Theol. p. 262.

Dr. Carroll's saving faith lacks the saving and assuring element of "trust."

Dr. Carroll's favorite illustration here is of a woman's receiving a man as her husband. But what woman ever received a man in the abstract, without reference to what the man is and shall be to her from the moment of their union at the marriage altar. Does a woman receive a man as her husband without any reference to benefits and comforts she is to receive from him? Does she? My dear Brother, your illustration is as unfortunate for your case as are your scriptural citations.

Yes, Dr. Carroll's text (John 1:12) makes receiving Christ and believing in Christ identical. Hence, as soon as one thus receives Christ he has power given him to come out of the family of Satan into the family of God. For Paul says in Gal. 3:22, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." But this faith that introduces into God's family is a trustful reliance upon Jesus as Savior, as before pointed out. Faith is confidence in Jesus to save.

Dr. Carroll (p. 26) crosses over and argues on my side of the question, and it is the first time he has reasoned in a straight line. "Faith precedes the Witness of the Spirit." Why, certainly. "And the faith that precedes the Witness of the Spirit makes us sons of God." Of course. "And it is precisely because we are sons that the Spirit of his Son is given to us." Most assuredly.

"How soon after, the Scriptures never say"—he adds. What? Indeed!

If it is because we are sons, God sends into our hearts this testimony of the Spirit to our sonship, this reason or ground of this blessing holds as soon as we become sons. Mark: It is not because we are obedient sons or faithful sons, etc., but simply because we are sons. (Gal. 4:5, 6). Of course, nobody holds that the "Spirit's Witness is identical with faith or simultaneous with it," as Dr. Carroll supposes. But the Spirit's Witness immediately and invariably follows.

It is a promise made to believers as such, and not a premium offered to Christian faithfulness and prayfulness.
But a believer is a believer as soon as he believes. Hence, the promised Witness of the Spirit is his as soon as he believes.

The promise of the Spirit’s Witness within is conditioned upon faith alone, with no further condition, giving the believer a right to it as soon as he believes. Witness the following Scriptures:

John 7:38,39: It is “he that believeth,” or every believer as such, that is to enjoy this blessing of the Spirit, under his gracious Dispensation.

The promise to give a watch to every one who asks for it, makes it the right of every one who asks, as soon as he has complied by asking, to claim the watch. Indeed, the offerer will not wait for the demand to be made, but will bestow the gift promptly upon every one asking for it.

Just so with Christ and the believer. As soon as one complies by believing, with the only condition, the blessing of the Spirit’s Witness is instantly bestowed. There appears no reason for a moment’s delay.

The above reasoning applies as well to Eph. 1:13, 14. It is after they believed, not after they had believed and shown a certain amount of diligence and the like, that the Ephesian Christians were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise—that is, promised to such as would believe. That promise, being conditioned upon faith, is fulfilled as soon as the condition is supplied, namely, as soon as one believes. Why would God withhold the promised Witness for one moment after the prerequisite and required condition is fulfilled by the trusting soul?

I Jno. 5:10. “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.” Then every believer has this inward witness and has it from the time he becomes a believer.

For I Cor. 2:11 makes this inward consciousness an immediate instinct of faith; and Rom. 8:16 couples the Witness of the Holy Spirit with the witness of our own spirit or consciousness. Hence, faith produces its immediate impression upon our own spirit, making it a witness, and instantly the Holy Spirit gladly witnesses to the same truth—that we “are the children of God.”

Dr. Carroll’s great mind would get all this right if he would ever consent to having a trusting element in his saving faith. But his only possible escape from the admission that saving faith is also an assuring faith, by virtue of the Spirit’s promised Witness, is to reduce saving
faith to the limits of Campbellite credence, without any expectation or thought of salvation through the merit of the Redeemer. As his believers believe for nothing, it makes nothing against their claim of faith, if they are found to disbelieve or doubt.

Paul teaches, (Rom. 4:20-25), that it was because Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, and because he was fully persuaded ["fully assured"—Emp. Diag.] that what God had promised, he was able also to perform, that his faith was imputed to him for righteousness. And Paul says, so shall it be with us if we believe—believe how? Not staggering at the promise by unbelief, and in full assurance that God will keep his promise to the trusting soul, and to us because we have trusted.

Hence, that is not saving faith which, through unbelief, staggers or doubts and that is less than "fully assured" of the promised blessing.

Hodge, as quoted by Boyce, speaks of the "assurance of personal interest in Christ’s salvation" as the experience, "not of an early" "but of an advanced stage of Christian life." [Carroll on Ass. p. 13.]

But not one scripture is cited in proof and can not be. It is the Third Assurance that belongs to matured Christian experience. But the "assurance of faith" dates with the faith—that is not faith that fails to assure.

But can a man know whether or not he has believed? Certainly so. Faith is not an unconscious exercise. Paul reasons thus: "What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him?" This is enough to insure personal consciousness of faith. But Paul adds: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Cor. 2:11, 12.)

This leaves no ground for unconsciousness or uncertainty about faith or about that which faith apprehends. Paul further argues, (1 Cor. 2:14), that it is the natural man, the unbeliever, that can not receive or know these things, and concludes this line of thought with the strong words: "But we have the mind of Christ"—that is, about our own salvation. To have his mind is to look at the matter of our security as he does. But if we have believed and are saved Christ knows it, and if we have his mind about it we know it as well as he does. Bless God!

This is about as strong as our dear Lord states the case in John 10:14, "I know mine own and mine own know me."
Dr. Carroll believes the first of the propositions stated by our Lord and denies the other. I heartily believe both. Whenever I am agnostic and sceptical enough to deny that those who are really the Lord's know him, I shall also deny that the Lord knows those that are his. For both these declarations are divine and they stand or fall together.

This is pure, unadulterated agnosticism that has sprung up among us these last years. Baptized agnosticism!

DR. CARROLL'S UNANSWERABLE SCRIPTURE ARGUMENTS ANSWERED.

Bro. Carroll evidently labored. He was conscious of carrying a mighty logical burden in his effort to destroy faith in Bible Assurance.

He argues mostly on false issues. He must know that the major part of what he has printed has utterly no force against the real issue between us, as I have stated it.

Mark. He goes through a dozen pages of his argument on the Scriptures before he reaches his "unanswerable Scripture arguments." And, I am sure that no Pedo-baptist in his despairing effort to prop up his tottering fabric of error and falsehood, ever quoted Scripture more recklessly or in more manifest consciousness of having a doubtful cause to maintain.

Let us pass them in hasty review:


Answer.—But "of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth." (Jas. 1:18, Rev. Ver.). "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God." (1 Pet. 1:23). And, therefore, as truth is used in producing spiritual births, God's babes, to begin with, have to know enough truth to make them free from sin's condemnation and a sense of it. (John 8:32, 36).

They exercise conscious faith and receive conscious justification and enjoy conscious peace, in their first breathings of spiritual life. Beyond this, is ample room for development through time and in eternity. "Grow in grace"? Certainly. But one must be in grace before he can grow in it. Dr. Carroll surely would not favor the scheme of growing into grace.

2. "The Word of God warns us to be tender with the little ones." (Matt. 18, 6).

Dr. C. construes "little ones" here to mean doubting ones. He knew better than that. He rivals the supporters
of infant baptism in their perversion of this text. Attention to context would have instructed him that our Lord was speaking of the sin of causing to stumble, or do wrong, young disciples, who, by their inexperience, are more easily led astray. But what has this to do with assurance?

3. "Genuine believers are to be confirmed, established and rooted in the faith."

Dr. Carroll is not ignorant of the fact that the phrase "in the faith," (Coll. 2, 6, 7; Rom. 15:1, etc.), stands for the entire system of Gospel truth. Similar in force to the exhortation, (Phil. 1:27), to strive "together for the faith of the Gospel"—namely, for the great body of divine truth.

The reference, therefore, is not to such as are supposed to be weak in saving faith, but ill instructed in general Bible theology. Such are to be received, instructed, strengthened and established in all the doctrines of Scripture. Peter says "Add to your faith courage," etc. But it is add to your faith. The faith which saves and assures, as before pointed out, must be possessed before the heavenly addition can begin. We never add something to nothing.

4. "A bruised reed shall he not break and the smoking wick shall he not quench," etc. Dr. C. and I are agreed that this passage, in touching figures, sets forth the gentleness of Christ. But instead of weak and failing believers being here symbolized by "bruised reed and smoking wick," true penitents with contrite spirits and broken hearts for sin are thus described. His promise is to sustain them in their crushed and bleeding state until, for them "he send forth judgment unto victory," that is, until his righteous judgment is pronounced, giving them victory over sin and death. How apposite the words that follow: "And in his name shall the Gentiles trust," showing that he used those figures to encourage the penitent to trust and be saved.

5. "God has always been tender with the hands that hang down and the weak knees." (Heb. 12:12.) In this instance the reference is to those whose failing strength is caused by the severity of God's paternal chastisements for sin. They are exhorted to "lift up the hands which hang down and the feeble knees" in view of the fact that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," etc. The right use of this passage, therefore, is to comfort the afflicted and not to antagonize the Bible doctrine of assurance. Dr. Carroll has the hands growing "so weak they can not hold on." Hold
on to what, Doctor? This is Methodist religion you are figuring on. Like the Psalmist, quoted by the Doctor, the genuine believer, though cast down by sense of personal unworthiness and despondent by reason of sin, can ever say, "I shall yet praise him"—this state shall not always last, for I hope in God, not in myself.

6. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove yourselves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." (2 Cor. 13:5.) Here, again, "the faith" signifies the whole system of truth. They were to examine into their soundness in general doctrine, in view of the teachings of a false philosophy that had been mixed with divine truth by such as were tinged with the Greek Philosophies in their midst. But our brother quotes this passage with unwonted rashness. His usual prudence would have chopped away that last, death-dealing clause, "Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" That is, all except "reprobates" do know that Jesus Christ is in them. This much knowledge, therefore, they possessed before their self-examination was to begin. Knowing this much, they could profitably examine into their doctrinal standing. Unless a man is a "reprobate," then, he knows Jesus Christ is in him. Therefore, all of Dr. C's believers, that do not know that Christ is in them, are "reprobates"—according to Paul.

7. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." (2 Pet. 1:10-11.) To "make your calling and election sure" is to make sure that you were really chosen of God and called by his gospel, "ye shall never fall." Such, he affirms, never fall, and as only such are really saved, none of the saved will ever fall. It is sad to see Dr. C. and the advocates of Apostacy making common cause in the perversion of this important scripture. The whole context shows that Christian fruitfulness is the subject considered. And with one dash of the brush Peter paints the sad picture of those whose spiritual vision is dull and who are spiritually near-sighted. Instead of "having grown they have shrivelled." Indeed, they live for all the world as if they had no memory of their pardon, seemingly so careless and ungrateful. This is what it means.

8. "Some made sad whom the Lord has not made sad; and some made glad whom the Lord hath not made glad." (Ezek 13:10-22).
The application of this passage turns upon the fact as to which one of us teaches falsely on "assurance," Dr. Carroll or myself, the "Assurance Baptists" or "Anti-Assurance Baptists," to adopt the Doctor's own classification.

I am sure that Brother Carroll's teachings will solace thousands whom the Lord has not comforted; and that all who receive this false comfort and never correct the awful mistake, will one day be made eternally sad.

I would rather disturb ten thousand who are really saved (But this has never been done since the Witness of the Spirit was given), than to make one solitary unsaved soul think he is saved. The devil gives opiates enough to drug men to eternal sleep, without having the aid of professed Gospel teachers in this fatal business.

If a professor of religion can be disturbed, it is because he needs to be disturbed; and better let it be done before it is too late.

And, I am sure, that the strong teaching of assurance as expounded in these pages will less likely produce a false assurance and a delusive peace than the namby-pamby stuff that is opposed to this view.

Sure it is, no man was ever saved by the "saving faith" (?), advocated by Dr. Carroll in his tract. If he preaches as he writes, the only chance for the sinner to be saved under his ministry, is for him to turn from his erroneous teaching and "trust Jesus Christ to save him anyhow."

Dr. Carroll, if he was ever clear and sound in the Gospel, has allowed himself to be driven from it, to "another Gospel, which is not another," by his prejudice against the so-called "Martinism."

His great name and extensive popularity have served him well in shielding his unbaptistic utterances and his semi-Arminian deliverances from condemnation and contempt.

No other Baptist preacher in all the land could have survived the publication over his own name of such crudities of theological statement and follies of Biblical interpretation, as are contained in Carroll on Assurance, and which have been exposed to view in this tract.

What he says under the head of false assurance and its fruits may be dismissed in brief.

1. He can not justly accuse the assurance folks of boasting any more, since he has stepped to the head of the
class of boasters, in claiming superior piety for himself and
his supporters. (Pages 30 and 31).

2. Those who maintain our view will compare credit-
ably in piety, liberality and faithfulness, with those of his
view. Neither side ought to be held responsible for the
vagaries or inconsistencies of extremists and fanatics.

3. Both sides have in a measure been unwise and im-
patient and so have contributed to alienations and separa-
tions. Local divisions have not been caused by the doctrines
we hold. For the writer of this Tract allows no man to sur-
pass him in the strength and definiteness with which he
preaches assurance as exclusive of doubts, and yet, it is
known and admitted that instead of divisions being created,
they are healed everywhere he has labored, and strong and
happy unity established.

Hence, division and strife must be attributed to some
other cause, as personal imprudence and impatience on both
sides, etc. Violence in opposing assurance, instead of ap-
peal to Scripture, has done the most harm under my obser-
vation. But, doubtless, both sides need more the patience
and meekness of Christ.

THE PROPOSED REMEDY.

The first five points under this head come to one: "Let
the Bible decide the issues between us."

This is right, Brother Carroll. Nothing less and noth-
ing else could be right. But it is the Bible self-interpreted,
as say all our Confessions and Articles of Faith. The Bible
under free, fair, full, fraternal discussion. Not as explained
by Dr. Carroll, as a kind of Baptist Czar or Dictator.
The humblest believer in all our ranks has as much right
to be heard as Brother Carroll or myself.

Moreover, the Bible before a Bible Court—not Board
meeting or Association or Convention, but before the indi-
vidual local Church, trying each case as it arises.

When the Galatian Churches erred touching the rela-
tion of faith and works, Paul did not assemble all the other
Apostolic churches and pass resolutions of condemnation
to lash them back into line—the less presuming to judge
the greater, the human, the divine. He simply brought to
bear upon them his personal influence in solid instruction
and moving exhortation. And thus was healed this first
breaking out of Arminianism—which is a kind of native
humor in mortal blood.
Let us require that "assurance be kept in its right Scriptural place," of course. But who is to decide what is its right Scriptural place? Not Bro. Carroll and his Metropolitan Church, or Bro. Carswell and his plucky host at Gonzales. The smallest Country Church under the blaze of our Lone Star has equal right to assume to exercise the functions of a State-wide Presbytery or Parochial Church Court as either of these.

But each church must be let alone in the exercise of free jurisdiction over her own members.

But who is to correct a Church, if a Church goes wrong? Nobody on earth, certainly, has such a grant of power. For the local Church is the biggest, divinest thing on earth.

God alone can command his Churches. If they obey not His voice and violate his sacred will incorporated in the Holy Scriptures, he can send them leanness of soul, as he does do, or even remove their candlestick altogether, as he has done.

But how dare any body else TOUCH the Lord's anointed Churches? No Mission Board, Association or Convention has any Scriptural right to censure the least of these Churches, or any minister of their approval, or any member in their fellowship.

So teaches even the Phil. Confession. (Art. xxvii, § 15)

Our troubles come from violations of our own New Testament Church Polity, by carrying these strictly ecclesiastical questions beyond ecclesiastical bounds. Our editorial agitators and partisan leaders have exaggerated our differences, promoted misunderstandings, provoked divisions, fostered alienations, dishonored worthy men who are in high honor with their Churches, and assumed prerogatives belonging to the Churches alone and that angels would not dare usurp.

Before God, I say it. There is no need of all this. No grounds for it. There are no differences among us that can not be healed by mutual forbearance and loving counsels together in our Master's spirit of gentleness.

The Author of this tract stands for purity of doctrine, practice and life, and unity in our denominational teaching. But these are to be gained and promoted among Baptists, not by the arts of suppression, by one-sided discussions, or by arbitrarily assuming that all our differences have been traditionally settled for us in certain antiquated Confessions and Declarations; but by freedom of investigation and
utterance — the Bible being our only law and the local church our only jury.

May God graciously overrule all, lead us all, use us all, reign in us all, and at last crown us all at his right hand. Amen.

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E. R. CARSWELL, Gonzales, Tex.