

O reader! where are you? Can you blow the trumpet of discord and party triumph, or will you give the true and certain sound for holy harmony and inspired union?

The world, it has been affirmed, will not and cannot be converted to Jesus until there is union among his professed people. Here are some of the reasons:

1. Error is the root or source of division. Truth does not alienate men. Division is hence an infallible symptom of carnality or corruption. Intelligent men of the world, infidels, and moralists see this; and they are determined to stand aloof from religion if this be it.

2. While the Presbyterian is excluding the Independent, and the Baptist the Methodist, and the Episcopalian the whole of them, their force is weakened against the world, so-called; for instead of directing their energies against the unconverted community, they are hot at work keeping up their own metes and boundaries, and frequently attempting to rise above each other as parties. Every one fully intent on making it most evident that his party is the true church.

3. The Lord designed that the undivided harmony of his people should be a marked testimony to all the world that he was Messiah, the Son of God, the Saviour of men; and by the endless and confused jangles of the current professions, this capital evidence in respect to Jesus being the Christ is practically lost to the world.

4. Whatever truth there is among religionists, is, by reason of dissension, neutralized by a spirit so different from the spirit of Christ, that even when efforts are made to convert men, there is too much feebleness and too little spiritual vigor to make what is done effectual.

5. Yet if all the world were even to yield to existing systems of religion in what is called christendom, many of these systems would have to be overturned and the religion of the only Saviour introduced in their places, before it could be affirmed in truth that the world was turned to the Lord.

It may therefore be pronounced a shame as well as a sin that there are such divisions as at present exist among men who say they are following Jesus the only Redeemer. For not only are the enjoyments and living fruits of christianity mutilated, minced, and murdered among professors themselves, but the world is stereotyped in unbelief by reason of these shameful, Christ-dishonouring, and perdition-leading strifes. With one of the distinguished men of the last century let us therefore say, "Would to God that all party names, and unscriptural phrases and forms, which have divided the christian world, were forgot; and that we might all agree to sit down together, as humble, loving disciples, at the feet of our common Master, to hear his word, to imbibe his spirit, and to transcribe his life in our own!" These words are no other than the words of John Wesley: words which should find a ready admittance to every heart, and which, too, should have the practical effect of loosening party ties and begetting the true desire and active resolution to unite upon the broad principles of biblical truth.

D. OLIPHANT.