

futile and abortive, is as evident to my mind as that human power cannot redeem a lost soul or create a new heaven.

Nothing is easier, when men's ears are open to the subject, than to effect Christian union. It follows indeed as a consequence without the least special or direct effort. Union, like division, is an effect. The gospel produces the one; something more or something less than the gospel produces the other. We cannot prevent unity where the gospel is received. As well try to disconnect heat from fire—the power of quenching from water—or light from the rays of the sun. No man ever thinks of making a fire, and then helping it to be hot or putting heat in it; but this, were it to be attempted, would only be similar to a grave effort to make and execute a scheme to unite Christians. The union is in the truth,—it is embodied in the very elements that make Christians; so that men are united and converted at the same time; not converted, and then united either soon or long afterwards by other means and instrumentalities.

It will however be necessary to consider in a less general sense the uniting nature and power of the gospel. Let us bring before our mental vision a distinct case. For example, let us suppose that the faithful apostle Paul receives a new message from Jesus, and is told to go into the city of Syracuse to labour as a herald of the gospel. When the apostle arrives among the Syracusians, he enquires, like a true workman, for the best place in the city for a fair hearing, and he finally concludes to preach in the City Hall. The people flock together. Paul appears. He preaches. What does he preach?—Messiah come—his design in coming—his wonderful life—his teaching—his works—his heavenly mercy—his friends and enemies—his apprehension—his death—his mourners and burial—his revival to life—his interviews with the living after his resurrection—his ascent to the royal realms in the heavens—his intercession for the guilty—his message from heaven by the Spirit—his offer of remission of sins to sinful men. Among all these statements, sometimes called facts, he dwells with marked emphasis upon these three,—first, the object Jesus had in taking upon him the form of a servant and appearing among men; second, the purpose of his death on the cross; and third, the authority he exercises in his sovereignty at God's right hand far above principalities earthly or heavenly. He gives prominence to these pre-eminent facts, and makes every other statement, incident, item of history, or portion of prophecy cluster around them, whether he refers to the Saviour himself or to man's interest in his salvation. Paul will say