

than he that said, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness." No necessity can justify such a division. Holiness and love to God are but two names for one thing. Love to God, and love to man, are like soul and body, that are separated no way but by death. Love and peaceableness differ but as reason and reasoning. Love may be without passive peace, from others to us; but never without active peace, from us to others.

I have had so great opportunity, in my time, to see the workings of the mystery of iniquity against Christian love, that if I be ignorant after such sad experience, I must be utterly inexcusable. God knoweth how hardly sin is known in its secret root, till men have tasted the bitterness of the fruit. Therefore he hath permitted the two extremes to show themselves openly to the world, in the effects; and one must be noted and avoided as well as the other. I thought once that all that talk against schisms and sects did but vent their malice against the best Christians, under those names; but since then I have seen what love-killing principles have done. I have stood by while churches have been divided and subdivided,—one congregation of the division labouring to make the other contemptible and odious; and this called "the preaching of the truth, and the purer worshipping of God." In a word, I have long seen that envious wisdom (whatever it pretends) is not from above, but is "earthly, sensual, and devilish;" and that "where envy and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work."

I know that dividing principles and dispositions tend directly to the ruin and damnation of those in whom they prevail. That which killeth love, killeth all grace and holiness, and killeth souls. That which queneth love queneth the Spirit, a thousandfold more than the restraining of our gifts of utterance doth. That which banisheth love banisheth God. That which is against love is against the design of Christ in our redemption, and therefore may well be called antichristian. They are dangerously mistaken who think that Satan hath but one way to men's damnation. There are as many ways to hell as there are to the extinguishing of love. And all tendeth unto this that tendeth to hide or deny the loveliness, that is, the goodness, of them whom I must love, much more than that which represents them as odious. Satan will pretend to any sort of strictness by which he can mortify love. If you can devise any thing that will help to kill men's love, and set the churches in divisions, Satan will be your helper, and will be the strictest of you all. He will reprove Christ as a sabbath-breaker, as a gluttonous person, and a wine-bibber, a friend or companion of publicans and sinners, and as an enemy to Caesar too. We are not altogether ignorant of his wiles as young and inexperienced Christians are. You think, when a wrathful or vicious heat is kindled in you against men for their faults, that it is certainly a zeal of God's exciting. But mark whether it hath not more wrath than love in it; and whether it tend not more to disgrace your brother than to cure him, or to make parties and divisions than to heal them. If it be so, if St. James be not deceived, you are deceived as to the author of your zeal; (James iii. 15, 16;) and it hath a worse origin than you suspect. It is one of the greatest reasons that maketh me hate Romish Church tyranny, and religious cruelties against Dissenters, because as they come from want of love, so I am sure that they tend to destroy the love of those on whom they are inflicted, and to do more hurt to their souls than to their bodies. The devil is not so silly an angler as to fish with a bare hook; nor such a fool as, when he would damn men, to entreat them openly to be damned; nor, when he would kill men's love, to entreat them plainly not to love but to hate their neighbours; but he doeth it by making you believe that there is just and necessary cause for it: so that you may go on without scruple, and do so

again, and not repent. Even they that killed Christ's Apostles did it as a duty, and a part of the service of God; (John xvi. 2;) and Paul himself did once think verily that he ought to do many things against the name, and cause, and service of Jesus; and as he did, so he was done by. As he measured to others, it was measured to him again. But believe it, it is apostasy to fall from love. Your souls die when love dieth. You die while you have a name to live, and think that you grow apace in religion. Therefore better understand the temper, and when backbiters are deriding or vilifying your neighbours, take it to signify, in plain English, "I pray you love not these men, but hate them."

When love is dead, and yet religion seemeth to survive, and to be increased by it, think what a degenerate, scandalous, hypocritical religion that will be, and how odious and dishonourable to God. To preach without love, to hear without love, to pray without love, and to communicate without love, to any that differ from your sect, O what a loathsome sacrifice it is to the God of love! If we must leave our gift at the altar till we are reconciled to one offended brother, what a gift is theirs who are unreconciled to multitudes of their brethren because they are not of their way! yea, that make their communion the very badge and means of their uncharitableness and divisions! Sirs, these are not matters of indifference, nor to be indulged by any faithful Pastor of the church!

Perhaps, reader, thou art one of them who think that the settlement and happiness of the church must be won like a game at foot-ball, and therefore scruplest not to toss it in the dirt, and tumultuously to strive with and strike up the heels of all that are against thee; so that peaceable passengers cannot safely come near your game or pass the streets. But when you have got the ball, have you done the work? Are you still so ignorant as not to know how uncertain still you are of keeping it; and that one spurn can take it from you? And suppose you could secure all the conquests, are the churches healed ever the more? Men's hearts must be conquered before this healing work is done; and therefore the Apostle saith that "we are more than conquerors," when we are "killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep to the slaughter;" that is, more gain and honour to ourselves to suffer in faith and patience by our enemies than to conquer them in the field; and it is more profitable also unto them, and tendeth to a more desirable conquest of them; because when we are conquerors by force, we do but exasperate them, and if we hurt their bodies, we harden them the more against our cause, and against the means of their own salvation—Our patient martyrdom and suffering by them may tend at least to open their eyes, and turn their hearts, and save their souls, by showing them the truth, the goodness, and the power of Christ, and of his word and spirit. This is the meaning of being "more than conquerors."

The soul is the man; and love is the Christian life, and the true cement of the church's unity. And love must cause love, as fire causeth fire. Hurtful wrath doth most powerfully quench it, and hath been the wolfish scatterer of the flocks of the church of Christ. And must that be now the way to build it which hath so long been the way to pull it down? It is love that must be our union, and love that must cause it, or we shall never have the union of a Christian church. By this shall all men know that you are Christ's disciples, if ye have love one to another. If you believe not this, pretend not to believe in Jesus Christ, who doth affirm it. Times of most temptation are times of greatest danger, and commonly of greatest sin; and all faithful Pastors must know what are the special temptations of the time and place wherein they live. When had we ever greater temptations to love-killing principles and practices than now? The harder it is for men to love them that hate them, that censure them unjustly, that revile them, and reproach

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