

## The Message of the Disciples of Christ 17

ciples is not an invitation to all Christendom to come over and join us. That is not now and never has been the position of the Disciples, and those who have so interpreted their message understand neither the message nor the greater problem of the union of Christendom. For instance, if even one of the larger communions should decide at their next annual gathering to abandon all of their denominational machinery and join the Disciples, it would well-nigh swamp us, for already we are taxed to our limit, and often beyond it, in our effort to take care of our rapidly growing membership, and to-day that condition presents the most serious internal problem among us as a separate communion. No, it is not for other communions to come over and join us. Were that true, our message would parallel that of the papacy and the Lambeth quadrilateral, but it makes no such proposal. It cites those facts upon which most Christians are agreed, leaving the interpretation of those facts to private opinion.

And, second, let me say that because we take the New Testament as our sole rule of faith and practice and wear the names Christian and Disciples of Christ, we do not claim that we are *the* Church at the exclusion of others, neither do we recognize that any other communion can claim that to itself. Its claim is as out of place as ours would be. We are dealing in facts, not