

will thoroughly extract the color or stain of scarlet or crimson from wool and leave it white as it was in nature. A most beautiful and powerful illustration of the power of the blood of Christ. All the blood shed for sin from Adam to the tragedy of Calvary, could not eradicate the stain of sin from the host of the sinner, but the blood of Christ could and did. It is all vain for the transgressor to seek a perfect remedy for sin and his guilt only through the sacrificial blood of the Son of God. His blood can wash the sin-stained heart and make it white as snow, or in other words bring it back to its original whiteness. "The blessed Jesus loves the sinner so." The apostle Peter brings this thought out most clearly in 1 Pet. i. 22-23. Seeing you have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfaded love of the brethren from the heart, or, as in the margin, from a clean heart, fervently having been begotten again, not of corruptible but incorruptible through the Word of God which liveth (R. V.) Christ will not dwell in an unclean temple, 2 Cor. vi. 16. It is quite impossible for us to realize and fully comprehend in all its parts so as we can bring our feelings of joy and consolation that dwells in the thought of our hearts being washed clean from all the stains of sin, and Christ making His home therein. My dear reader, how strictly should we watch our own thoughts, how strictly should we watch our stain our clean-washed hearts. Col. iii. 17, is in point. Whatever you do in word or deed do all in (by the authority) of Christ. If all would do so we should not hear of any making shipwrecks of their faith and going down to ruin. What an appalling thought. Be you steadfast, unmovable, firmly established in the work of the Lord, for as much as you know your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

If all would do in word and in deed what the Lord has given authority for, church troubles would be unknown, and no innovations hoisted into church order or worship as is done in many cases to mar the happiness, harmony and prosperity. O may the children of God be wise in their day, so as to shine like the stars in the heaven, or like a lighted candle on a stand. If any are not so they will be exceedingly sorry when it is too late. May the rich blessing of God rest upon all His dear children.

JOSEPH ASH.

THE DIFFERENCE.

While the evil of divisions in the religious world is acknowledged and regretted by the professed followers of Christ, yet the cause of these divisions is not generally understood. It is, in most cases, taken for granted, that if we differ we must divide, that the differences now existing is the cause of the unfortunate divisions. A clerical friend once said to the writer, "We need not expect Christian union while the differences exist. If we can't agree in our ideas we can't agree to unite." This voices the minds of nearly all who talk about Christian union. If this is true, it is not possible for Christians to unite, as no two thinkers can think alike. Take any question or subject we please, we find with all our candor and honesty, that while we may agree in the main points there are other points about which we will differ. We might as well expect to find two faces alike as two minds alike. It is because of this fact that many suppose divisions are right and necessary. But is it true that when differences exist, divisions will also exist?—that when we differ we divide? Let existing facts answer this question. Take any body of people, or denomination, and we find differences as great and as important among them as we find between different denominations. If the difference divides churches of different order, why not divide churches of the same order? This fact, of existing differences in the same church, proves,

beyond a doubt, that union can exist when there are differences. But, says one, "it is the special points of difference that make the distinction and prevent organic union." We will submit the facts in the case to show the mistake of this idea. Think now of some special particular point of difference between churches of different order, and see if I can't find the same points of difference in churches of the same order. If you are in doubt about this call for the proof and I will produce all the cases needed when persons differ as widely and on the same points of difference with their own church members as they do with the members of other and held in Christian union and fellowship by their own church. Here we find the fact, that union and fellowship exist in the same church between persons who differ on the same points, that is said to necessitate a division between persons of different churches. This shows us the possibility of union between those who differ and the folly of letting our differences divide us. These differences that now exist in the churches of the same order show also the fallacy of the statement "that when we differ we must divide."

Why is it, then, we divide if the difference don't necessitate a division? This can be answered by asking why it is Bro. A. can't fellowship Bro. B., because he (Bro. B.) don't believe in baptism but immersion, when at the same time his good Bro. C., whom he fellowships as a member of his own church, is just as strong a believer in immersion, and would not submit to any thing else but immersion. And why is it Bro. Wise rejects Bro. Steadfast, and will not unite with him because he believes baptism is an essential condition of salvation when he knows that many of his brethren with whom he holds church fellowship believe and teach the same thing? There is but one answer to these questions, *i. e.*, in one case the difference is made a party line, in the other it is not. Hence we can plainly see that the divisions are not because of our differences, but because of the use we make of our differences. It is the party line that divide us. We know that the material out of which we build the line fence between us and our neighbour is not the fence, and unless we use the material the fence will never be built. The material will not divide, but the fence will. How unwise to say because I have a pile of boards that there must of necessity be a fence between me and my neighbour. It is equally unwise to say my differences is the party line or division between me and my brother. While we admit the difference or opinions are the material out of which we make the division, all must admit that the material is not the division, and that we can have the material and yet not be divided.

The evil of our views and opinions is not, then, in our possession of them; they are harmless things when in their place. It is only when we use them and exalt them to shibboleths of party that the evil is seen and felt.

The magnitude of this evil can be measured when we take into consideration the fact that these different opinions, out of which we are building walls between God's people, are admitted to be of no saving importance whatever. This will be seen in the following conversation that took place, not long since, between two preachers.

"Bro. A., do you think I am a Christian and a saved man?"

"Most certainly I do."

"Are you not aware that I am not a member of the —— church?"

"I am, and what of it."

"Nothing more than this, that the conditions of membership in the —— church are not essential to salvation."

"How do you make that out?"

"By your own admission."

"You say I am a saved man, and yet not a member of the —— church. This being so, how can you make out the conditions of membership in said church essential to my salvation. Can you save that which is already saved?"

"Do you mean to say that the members of the —— church are not Christians?"

"No indeed. I intend to say only that they did something else after they became Christians to constitute them members of the —— church, and that this something else is no part of the essential conditions of salvation, but is the stuff that divisions are made of."

"Are you not guilty of the same thing you condemn in others?"

"I think not, Bro. A."

"Do you not receive into the church those whom you admit are Christians?"

"No indeed. Whatever constitutes them Christians, constitutes them also members of Christ's church. We hold essential to church union only that which is essential to union with Christ. The conditions of salvation from sin are the conditions of church membership. When we are in Christ we are in His body or church. To demand more than this is going beyond God's demands."

"But what you consider essential to salvation are mere opinions, and are not accepted by others?"

"Wrong again, Bro. A. You admitted that my salvation was accepted. How could this be if what I did is not accepted? The fact that my salvation is not in dispute is sufficient evidence that what I accept as essential to salvation is not disputed. Let us note this fact that the gospel—the principles of salvation as accepted by the apostle Paul and the Eunuch and others—are not in dispute to-day. If we would stop here and be satisfied with being Christians only we would all be united, for in this we all agree. But in opinions we all differ, and these are not essential to our salvation, yet with them we build of something more than Christians, and thereby divide the people of God."

Here is "the difference."

H. MURRAY.

ANALYSIS OF MAN—SIN AND STATE OF THE DEAD.

BY IRA C. MITCHELL.

[The following brief notes of a sermon preached in Coburg Street Christian Church, St. John, N. B., in August last, are furnished for publication in fulfilment of a promise extorted by several of the audience. The discourse having been without notes, I am wholly dependent on memory, and nothing more than the substance can be expected.—I. C. M.]

TEXT.—"O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?"—*Romans vii. 24.*

This language suggests the following queries:

1st. What is the cause of the wretchedness of which the apostle speaks?

2nd. What is the deliverance contemplated?

3rd. How is that deliverance accomplished?

From a materialistic standpoint there is no sense in the text or context. If a man is all body there is no way of delivering him from that body but by annihilation, which is really the heaven of the materialistic philosophy. But inspiration represents a human being as "fearfully and wonderfully made," consisting of "body, soul, and spirit." 1 Thess. v. 23. In this triune nature the inspired volume considers him, and in the seventh and eighth chapters of the Roman letter, the author analyzes him and describes the outer and inner man as being contrary, the one to the other, and waging an unceasing conflict with each other. "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Verse 18. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." Verse 22. There