

to the express injunction of Christ himself, and the example of his followers when corruption and sectarianism had yet no place in the church.

But perhaps you ask how we know our brethren in the Lord, or what rule we follow when sitting at the table of fellowship. Our infallible Guide-Book prevents all difficulty. To it we appeal, and abide its commands and models. Our own feelings, views of expediency, theological opinions, educational prejudices, and religious likes and dislikes, have nothing to do in settling the question; but it is settled for us, and we submit both with pleasure and profit. If you ask for a more definite knowledge of our practice, and desire to ascertain how we know who are our brethren in the Lord, the answer is also at hand. Every one who believes that Jesus is Christ—who has confessed him as the one Lord—and who has openly obeyed him in having submitted to the baptismal death and resurrection,—every professor, I say, who has thus shown that he has the “one faith,” acknowledging the “one Lord,” and yielded to the “one baptism,” is divinely and not humanly introduced into a state to receive all the privileges found in the Christian church; for through faith, and the obedience of faith, he has passed from the world into the Lord’s kingdom, where every subject has a divine right to all the “means of grace” which this gracious kingdom affords.

Our fellowship, then, you perceive, is not Baptist fellowship, neither, in the party sense, is it Disciple fellowship; but it is the Lord’s fellowship for those who fellowship the Lord. In other words, to commune with any one who is called a brother, we ask not if he is a Baptist, or a Disciple, or neither; but we ask if he believes in Jesus, confesses him as the only Lord and Saviour, and if he has put on Christ after the primitive fashion. Thus you see that we stand upon lofty ground, far above the peaks and pillars of partyism. All who are “in Christ” are our brethren; God has received them, and we receive them; and the New Testament tells precisely who are in Christ so plainly and palpably that doubt and wavering are excluded. Whether, then, you call this close communion or open communion, is, to me, of little consequence; it is doubtless the communion authorized by the Head of the church, and vividly recommended by the apostles’ practice.

You Baptists, on the subject of communion, are almost as consistent as other parties. In advance you are not. To go no further back than the last two years, and to go no further from home than our own country, what shall be said of the twenty-eight thousand Baptists of Canada