

The same prominence that our blessed Saviour himself gives to unity in the church, we find insisted upon throughout the writings of the Holy Apostles. See what a contrast St. James draws between strife and unity in their results.

"For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

What does St. Paul say, "Fulfil ye my joy, and ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." See how vast an importance he attributes to unity. His intensely earnest wishes for their welfare will all be fulfilled, if only they are of one mind.

St. Peter is not less emphatic in his testimony as to the need of unity: "Finally, be ye all of one mind; having compassion one of another; love as brethren; be pitiful, be courteous."

Surely, then, my brethren, we need to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, in praying for a spirit of unity. If we try to forward the work of His Church without it, we shall surely fail. We shall be resisting the Holy Spirit, we shall drive Him from our midst, and so dry up the fountains of spiritual life, both in the Church collectively and in ourselves as individuals. Can earnest effort and unremitting toil on the part of the husbandman make up for the want of the dews and showers and sunshine from on high? Will not his labor be utterly thrown away? The trees and plants and flowers will fade and wither and die in spite of his efforts. So it is with the spiritual husbandry. No worldly wisdom, no human energy, no mental power, will secure the progress of the Gospel if the presence of God the Holy Ghost is denied. There will be no times of refreshing for God's heritage; the channels of grace will be dry; the collective action of the church will be weakened, her right arm will be paralyzed, she will become shrunk and withered and ready to die.

Now, then, my brethren, while our period of probation still goes on, while as yet the startling words of an unchangeable doom—"Too late! too late!" have not sounded in our ears; now, in this our accepted time, in this the day of our merciful visitation, let us pray for grace that we may "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."