

Original Contributions.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

I. CORINTHIANS, I. 10.

The greatest obstacle today, in the way of successful missionary work in heathen lands is, perhaps, the disagreements in doctrine among those who profess to belong to the Christian army of workers and to be guided by the one Divine Head. To belong to Christ and yet not agree with others who profess to belong to Christ must certainly seem very strange to the minds of educated and thinking heathen.

Paul asked: Is Christ divided? The heathen ask: Is Christ divided? The agnostic asks: Is Christ divided? The atheist asks: Is Christ divided? The Romanist, seeing the divided state of Protestantism, asks: Is Christ divided?

How can Protestantism satisfactorily answer? How meet the difficulty? How inspire confidence?

In order to establish confidence that which divides—separates—must be abandoned, and all who believe in the one Lord must come together in the unity of the faith and show to the world that they not only believe in the one Lord, but they are united to the one Head and are enlightened by the one Spirit—hence, “are of one mind and speak the same things.”

If we who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, continue as we are doing now, and succeeding generations follow in the same footsteps for one thousand years, Christian union will be just as far off as ever.

The time has almost arrived to hold union meetings. But, to hold union meetings, in the usual way, does not lay the foundation for union—unity; because it is not union, it is only toleration, hardly that.

In modern union meetings the representatives of the different denominations dare not speak out what they believe—“tell it all.” They dare not give a reason of the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear, or any other way. Why? Because the ground of hope of one would not agree with the reason of the hope of the brother from the other denomination, who is *playing union with him*.

To speak the reason of *your* hope is to *advance* the doctrines of *your* sect and disparage that of your brother; hence you must bury, for the time, what you really believe—refrain from giving a reason of the hope that is in you, lest light be thrown on the different creeds and some party suffer by the comparison. This is the same old system which has lived through the “dark ages” and is worthy of some consideration because of its antiquity.

Jesus said: He that doeth truth cometh to the light. He that doeth evil hateth the light. But during the age of darkness, before the reformation, and even now, leaders of the people would shut them up in darkness, so as to make them more easily led—in their way.

We do not wish you, say they, to read the books of that other denomination, or hear their preachers. They will lead you astray. They are enemies of our church—our creed—our system; it is utterly dangerous to have anything to do with them.

Afraid of the light! Afraid of investigation! Any system of religion which is afraid of the light—afraid of investigation—is not that authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ, or proclaimed by Paul. Jesus said: “He that walketh in the night stumbleth. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life.” “Search the scriptures... they are they which testify of me.”

Paul said: “Prove all things and hold fast that which is good.”

All who love truth and righteousness are anxious for light. They court investigation. All who fear the light, fear investigation, have something to hide.

In I Cor. i. 10, there are five things specified by Paul: (1) That they all speak the same thing. (2) That there be no divisions among them. (3) That they be perfectly joined together. (4) That they be of the same mind. (5) That they be of the same judgment.

This alone is Christian union. This is the grand preparation for success in winning souls to Christ.

In Jesus' day, the Jews compassed sea and land to make one proselyte, but after his conversion, he was, to say the least, no better than he was before. So it may be in the conversion of many persons today. Converted to a sect—church—denomination; and, instead of partaking of the spirit of Christ, partaking of the spirit of the denomination—selfishness, narrowness, cunning and sometimes dishonesty. The narrowness of the sect spirit will separate the person converted to a sect, from the members of every other sect. In this there is no union, nor is there any striving for the forwarding of the cause of Christ, but, rather, *Our Church*.

Oneness is possible, else Jesus would not have prayed for it, John, xvii. 21, “That they all may be one as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” But there is only one open door. What is it? Being converted to Christ—not a church. I would not give ten cents to procure the conversion of ten thousand persons if only converted to a church, even *our church*, or *our church*. If a man is converted to a church he will partake of the spirit of the church, and be like it. But if converted to Christ, he will partake of the spirit of Christ, and, partaking of His spirit, he will learn to imitate Him, and so will grow into His likeness, and love every other one who bears the same likeness. This will lead to Christian union—oneness in Christ.

All will learn in the same school. All will be of one mind. All will be of one judgment. All will be perfectly joined together—in Him. Then, all will speak the same things. Then, again, all thus standing out before the world as a noble witness for Christ, the world will be constrained to believe that the Father hath sent the Son. So may it be.

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Montague, Dec. 24th, 1891.

EPISTLE OF ELIHU THE BUZITE.

Yea, hath Bildad spoken? Hath he become greater than God, or has the wisdom of the Almighty become contemptuous in his eyes? For the Lord hath established His kingdom in righteousness; in the perfection of wisdom hath He ordained the worship of His tabernacle. According to His divine power hath He given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness. Even so hath He charged His prophets to teach the people to observe *all things*—not whatsoever others do, or whosoever seemeth pleasing to the people—but, all things whatsoever I (The Lord) have commanded you. So hath God written in His Covenant all those things which are profitable, that the man of God may be perfect, and completely furnished to all good work. Behold the curse of the Almighty and jealous God shall fall upon him who adds to, or takes away from these things, for the mouth of the Lord hath proclaimed it. Behold the Lord hath appointed that under His new Covenant men shall worship Him, not with sensual things; not with fleshy service; not in “carnal ordinances” as under the old Covenant, but in spirit and in truth. Therefore must the worship of God be spiritual, and not corrupted with sensual things. Mark well, O ye servants of the Most

High, that holy men of God, both in the early and latter ages, even all the ages of the world, have not ceased day nor night, with strong crying and tears, to warn the people against departing from the Lord's appointments, and walking in the light of their own eyes. Observe I pray thee, how the Lord hath visited His people with chastisement when they corrupted the worship, and would not harken unto the entreating voice of the prophet. Observe how the faithful and God-fearing men of these latter days earnestly plead with the people to return and abide by a “thus saith the Lord.” Observe also, that as there were false prophets in the olden times, so now have arisen also false teachers among you, who stealthily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the authority of the Lord's anointed, and teaching that ye may do all things whatsoever the Lord has not forbidden. And now, behold, there cometh forth Bildad with ridicule and burlesque to cast reproach upon those faithful servants of the Most High God, who defend His temple against the pollutions of thieves, robbers and false teachers, and latter day hirelings. The labor of godly men is to guard and keep pure the worship of God; to cleanse the temple service of sensuality; to restore and maintain its spirituality. The glory of Bildad is to degrade, to corrupt and sensualize the worship. And this he does after the dictates of his own lusts, by mixing sensual things with the spiritual worship which the Lord has prescribed. Who art thou, O Bildad, that thou esteemest thyself wiser than God, and presumest to add to the things which He hath appointed for His temple service? Hast thou not learned that the Lord's temple is His people, and not the house where they assemble to worship? Hast thou not known that the Lord is worshipped in His temple, the congregation of His saints, and hath no respect unto thy tabernacle and thy clocks upon the wall. Thy tabernacles, and thy pulpits, and thy cushions, and thy clocks upon the wall are no part of the worship, and are therefore not analogous to those subversions of the ministration, and those strange offerings in the which thou hast thought to defend with thy sophistry. Hast thou no reverence for the prophets and holy men of God, who in all the ages have pled for a “thus saith the Lord,” and trembled at His word? What man is like Bildad, that drinketh up presumption like water, and spueeth out scolding like a river; who goeth in company with the despisers of government, who speaketh great swelling words of profanity, beguiling unstable souls, speaking evil of dignities, and running greedily after the error of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loveth the wages of unrighteousness? Behold thou art in bad company, O Bildad. Take heed lest thou be partaker of their evil deeds. Thou who callest thyself Bildad, and gloriest in thy shame, art not Bildad the Shuite. Thy manner of speech betrayeth thee. Bildad the Shuite was a godly man; even one who feared and glorified God, ascribing dominion and majesty to His name, neither scoffed he at a “thus saith the Lord.” But thy speech and thy presumption are like unto Bildad the Korathite. And behold how like unto thy father Korah is the manner of his son. Korah, Dathan and Abiram with their company of two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, were famous men in the congregation—men of renown. Exceedingly popular were these leaders with the people, while Moses was a meek and humble servant of God. Yet God had appointed him to be leader, commander and teacher of the people. He guarded with vigilance the service of the sanctuary, as the Lord appointed, and sought not to add anything to the things which the Lord had commanded. But there were then—as there are now—those who were dissatisfied with the Lord's appointments, and lusted for something else; some change; something new; something to please themselves; or something