

where we shall find it best for our souls ?—This is just the way, Brethren, in which the hearts of the simple are deceived. But let us see what we could say to a man asking these questions.

The word of God tells us, that they who cause divisions, or, in other words, who separate themselves without sufficient reasons, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, and are carnal, and their sin is so great before God, that St. Paul advises the Romans to “avoid them.” We should not, therefore, adopt a step of this kind hastily. No doubt they who left the Church, or who were so inclined, in the Apostle’s time, also thought that they had good reasons for so doing. In all times, and in every place, there have been people of a discontented spirit, who easily found fault with the established order of things, and thought that they could devise some better way of governing, &c. &c. But we cannot be too guarded against the deceitfulness of our hearts in these matters, as well as in those of a different nature. “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” If we were willing to find fault we might invent a thousand different things, and reject the very best ordinances of religion, merely to please ourselves.* I would therefore ask a man about to leave the Church in order to join a sect, what will you gain by the change? Are you aware that you must by so doing,

* There are but two cases in which it is lawful and necessary to leave a church; viz. :—First, when it teaches any doctrine *plainly forbidden* by God’s word,—1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5, and 2 Tim. 11, 16, 17, 18.—Secondly, when a Church is in a state of schism, or of unjustifiable separation from another church, as our text directs us.

com
Apost
not
but
scienc
God
impor
separa
Churc
bat w

* Do
format
do awa
lent Re
since t
the err
against
Church
abhorro
such v
schisin
presen
numbe
them a
more a
commu
causing
as the
ed and

The
have e
it coul
are als
schism
used a
christi
such o
ing off
how n
of the
with o