

or that, is a Christian. The trouble is that people confound the organization with the Church. The Church of the living God is composed in its largest sense of all who are saved by the covenant mercies of God in Christ Jesus that have lived, are now living, or who have passed on to heaven. Another meaning is that called the Church militant, composed of those who are now living; others again attach the meaning to the particular organization with which they may be connected, while the building itself is called a Church. The Church can always be divided into two—the spiritual and the temporal, but you must not confound the two. This stone building does not constitute the members of Bond Street Church. *We*, its members, are the real Church; even the characteristics which distinguish the Congregational Church are not *the* Church, but the Christians back of all that constitute it. We are Christians (if we are right) before we are Congregationalists, and because we are Christians we seek some organization through which to work. The true Church is spiritual, and its ideas and principles are truth. Now, the Masonic body is an organization, and so far as it practises the great truths of the Gospel is as much a Church as Bond Street Church. It is the *practice of the truth* that makes a Christian whether he is in this organization or that. Masonry as an organization does practise some of the great principles and truths that Christians do. What Church therefore is *before* it? Will you tell me of one virtue or grace that Masonry does not enforce or teach? Masonry asks you to be industrious, temperate, benevolent, and charitable. If we are true Masons, and if we practise the virtues that every Church teaches, why do you say we are not a Christian organization? I can say that the Masonic body is not a Congregational, a Methodist, or an Episcopalian organization, but to say that Masonry is not Christian is to say what is not true. (Applause) If any