

THE

# HOME AND FOREIGN RECORD

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### GATHERING OR SCATTERING ?

Christ makes Himself the living Centre around which men are collected. All true Christian workers are gathering others to Him to whom they have themselves been gathered, and all professing Christians, even though nominally working for the Master, if not gathering to Him, are scattering abroad. The tendency of their lives is to drive men from Christ, and according to Christ, there can be no neutrality between gathering and scattering. As surely as we must be for Christ or against Him, so surely must we be either gathering or scattering.

*You are a Teacher in the Sabbath-school.* Some in your position have been known literally to scatter their classes, others literally to gather them. Which have you done? Indolence, inactivity, harshness, or apathy will do the one; and earnestness, attention, kindness, and zeal will do the other. Are you gathering your pupils to Christ? or are you repelling them. Do they ever sav in their hearts "it is not worth being such a Christian as my teacher?"

*You are an Elder.* Are you gathering or scattering? You have it in your power to encourage or discourage all who come around your church. You can censure the minister, neglect his services, chill his friends, heat his opponents, and let all come to know that you, at least, have no very exalted opinion of him; or you can throw an expression of hearty appreciation of him into your manner, and of welcome to all visitors. Of course you are at liberty to deal with him as a man as with any other, but remember, as a minister, he is the prominent witness for Christ in your little community, and you are to be helps to him. Are you gathering or scattering?

*You are a Communicant.* Are you gathering or scattering? The Church's members in a particular congregation ought to be as a family, tenderly united together, sympathizing in each other's joys and sorrows, praying for and loving one another, and in all ways of mutual helpfulness rendering the Church below an image of what heaven shall be. This would make the Sabbath services a joy and rest to the hearts of men weary and burdened with weekly toil. But a few communicants of hard and bitter, or of proud and selfish spirit can spoil all that. The electric influences radiate from the pulpit, but they are non-conductors. They attract none, they drive away many, and people of Christian, or even of only fine natural, sensibilities who mark their manner, or hear their speech, seek elsewhere for something in common with themselves. Are you gathering or scattering?

*You are only a Seat-holder.* Are you gathering or scattering? You remember that Sabbath when a timid youth came in—looked about him—paused awkwardly at your pew because it was but half full, and you sat motionless while he stood helpless, wishing himself well out of the place? I am afraid he never came back. Are you trying to give an air of quiet solemnity and