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was amongst the disciples." But be it so. I am not seeking for a perfect church. I am occupied with a much simpler thing. I am seeking a path for myself in which I shall not have my conscience bound by any authority to do or to sanction what the word of God and conscience condemn. It is a very simple question for a disciple of Christ to ask himself. By what authority am I bound to go on with what I see to be wrong? And why am I to acquiesce in a state of things, ecclesiastically or otherwise, merely because it exists, when, at the same time, I see so many things in it which are plainly contrary to the record of Christ's will? I speak not now of Church, or Dissent, or Free Church, or any other system, in particular, but of all. And I ask, where does Christ bind His disciples to association with that which is evil?

Imagine what would be Christ's judgment of the present state of things if He were now personally present—if He were to appear in *glory*: the conclusion is plain. Ten thousand things, which now find their place and approval in the systems of men, and which bind Christians to association with them, would be withered up by the very first beam of that glory; while "the shaking of heaven and earth," which will actually take place when He does appear, will be but the overturning of all that men are, in Christ's name, so strangely seeking to uphold. But Christ *has* visited the scene. And He has caused a record to be made of His moral judgment about it. He has walked amidst the candlesticks, and has declared that unless there were repentance, even in those early days of decline, and doing the first works, He would "remove the candlestick out of its place." He has declared that He *will not* put His stamp of approval upon anything that falls short of the expression of the Church's "first love." And, alas! the succeeding epistles to those apocalyptic churches only show the deepening shades of moral declension, until Laodicea causes him to reject it altogether. And then the whole book gives the programme of the whole character of evil of the latter days, until Babylon's corruption and Babylon's doom are the final issue.

I know well that any feeling of dissatisfaction with the existing state of things is readily imputed to restlessness of mind, or to wildness of views. But, be this as it may, one thing is certain, that God never binds any evil on the consciences of His people, however, in departing from the evil, they may provoke the opposition, not of the world alone, but of those who have other objects than to do His will; or at least have another standard than His word by which to judge of that will.

"But where," it may be asked, "is the refuge for the isolated believer amidst this confused and jarring scene?" For if it be deemed a fruitless hope to look for a restored-unity to the Church, it does not set aside the fact that *division and sectarianism exist*. And if so, it appears to me there exists but this alternative for the Christian, either to coincide with that which the word of God condemns, or to seek a path where, at least, he may be individually free from fellowship with the world and the evils of sectarianism; and be free also from the *spirit* which at first produced, and still perpetuates, these evils. "Are ye not carnal and walk as men?" is as much a beacon to warn of danger and shipwreck of the Church's interests now, as it was in apostolic days.

"But where," it may be repeated, "is any place of rest for him, if he breaks through those ties which bind him on every hand?" The answer is presented in one single sentence of Scripture—so much misconstrued, so little valued, so often overlooked, and yet presenting so perfect and gracious a provision by Christ Himself, that nothing but heaven itself can go beyond it. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."