



Published under Direction of the Upper Canada Bible Society.

VOL. VI.

TORONTO, MARCH, 1875.

No. 2

CHRISTIAN UNITY MANIFESTED.

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The oneness of all who truly believe in Jesus Christ is a fact declared by divine authority. It is affirmed in terms so definite and precise that they cannot be mistaken. It is made clear by illustrations that cannot be misapprehended. The person who denies, or even questions it, must be convicted of ignorance or unbelief of the Scriptures. The exposition of the Christian religion which does not set it forth as a principal truth, is not only defective, but radically erroneous. It lies in the centre of the purpose of redemption, and is accordingly chief among its issues. It is distinctly stated to be the purpose of God to gather together all in one in Christ. In his prayer for the consummation of this purpose Jesus desired that all might be one. Believers are described as lively or living stones built up into a spiritual house, as branches of the one vine, as members of the same body. This unity is not external and arbitrary, but internal, vital, and natural; for believers are said to be quickened by one and the same principle of life, to be renewed, sanctified, and inhabited by one and the same Spirit, and to be made partakers of the divine nature, which is changeless and cannot be diverse.

In view of all this, it is proper to affirm, that the unity of believers is not to be contemplated as an object to be obtained. It is a fact accomplished. In so far as men are believers they are one in Christ Jesus.

The various schemes, the intention of which is described as "the promotion of Christian unity," if intelligently conceived, are not aimed at the production, but the manifestation of the oneness of believers. In so far as they tend to the accomplishment of this purpose they are justified and warranted by the New Testament. The prayer of our Lord "that they may be one," was not superfluous. But it certainly was if it implored the unmanifested unity of believers. For this is involved in the very fact that they are believers, in respect of this they are in Christ and of the Spirit, and therefore must be one. Jesus accordingly asked for something more.