

ours to me, that, if you would only be as candid and reasonable as I have formerly found you, this end might be very easily gained. I do not insinuate that any of you wish to be unreasonable. But you must have often observed, that persons engaged in dispute, do not always approve their own conduct, when calm reflection returns. Keenness of debate will, at times, make even reasonable and religious men overlook points of importance which should be considered with care. Allow me, therefore, to suggest to you a few remarks, which persons in your situation might usefully weigh ; and let me entreat you to hear them with christian affection. I can have no wish to displease any of you : but truth is the foundation of peace ; and I do wish to tell you the truth. May you all receive it, as the truth ought to be received ; all feel its influence, and again walk in unity and peace of the gospel.

~ I do not say that disputes should never exist in the church. It is possible for even the peace of the church to be too dearly purchased. Of this you are aware, however, that, among the friends of religion, they are always unseemly. The contention of christians is so utterly repugnant to a religious profession, and so completely opposite to the design of the gospel, that very few causes can authorize its introduction into the church. Besides, upon the subject of peace, the injunctions of Christ are so plain and explicit ; that he who interrupts the harmony of the church, ought to be well assured of the validity of his reasons. With much fervent prayer and meditation, he should bring the point of debate to the test of scripture ; and before he proceed, the trial should leave upon his mind an impression, that his conduct will receive the approbation of Christ. Be sure, brethren, that you can contemplate with confidence, an appearance before him who shall judge the quick and the dead ;