

3. In choosing men to rule (if you would endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of peace thereby), be careful you choose men of peaceable dispositions. That which hath much annoyed the peace of churches hath been the froward and perverse spirits of the rulers thereof. Solomon therefore adviseth, That with a furious man we should not go, lest we learn his ways, and get a snare to our souls, Prov. xxii. 24, 25, and with the froward we learn frowardness. How do some men's words eat like a canker; who instead of lifting up their voices like a trumpet to sound a parley for peace, have rather sounded an alarm to war and contention. If ever we would live in peace, let us reverence the feet of them that bring the glad tidings of it.

O how have some men made it their business to preach contentions, and upon their entertainment of every novel opinion to preach separation! How hath God's word been stretched and torn to furnish these men with arguments to tear churches! Have not our ears heard those texts that say, "Come out from among them, and be separate," &c., and "Withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly!" I say, have we not heard these texts that were written to prevent disorder brought to countenance the greatest disorder that ever was in the church of God, even schism and division! whereas one of these exhortations was written to the church of Corinth, to separate themselves from the idol's temple, and the idol's table, in which many of them lived in the participation of, notwithstanding their profession of the true God; as appears, 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17, compared with 1 Cor. viii. 7, and as 1 Cor. x. 14, 20, 22, recites; and not for some few or more members, who shall make themselves both judges and parties to make separation, when and as often as they please, from the whole congregation and church of God, where they stood related; for by the same rule, and upon the same ground, may others start some new question among these new separatists, and become their own judges of the communicableness of them, and thereupon make another

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