

could suffer for the truth's sake, but never yield to what they thought error—our brethren of the Presbyterian Church? Shall they be excommunicated, or, rather, not communion with, although they have done so much to demonstrate that they are of the elect of God also? Will you deny them the kingdom of heaven, because they prefer to worship without your forms or order, although they have been such defenders of the faith, and have served as the heavy artillery in the army of the Lord of Hosts? You must either anathematize them, or give them your benediction; for they either enjoy the grace of life, or they are dead in sin. We call them "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

Once more. Another tribe of God-loving people (we would say, of Israel) comes to view—a conscientious, honest, and devout family. They have given us one book, which alone would stamp them taught of God. Shall the fellow-worshippers with John Bunyan be again cast into prison for presuming to call themselves a Church of God? Will you, can you, force a man to become a willing and obedient disciple of your school, and yet thank God in your Liturgy that his service is perfect freedom?

Now let us look this question fairly in the face. The denominations of true believers are either parts of the one only true Church of Christ, or they are not. If they are not, let me ask, what are they? Will they be saved, dying as they are? Have they less grace, knowledge of God's Word, than you? Have they less zeal for His glory? Have they less devotion to His cause? Do they live less holy than the other? Apply the Saviour's test, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Are their arms loaded with fewer sheaves as they return from the harvest field? Are their talents all buried? Could they receive these graces, except they were given from above? Does God own them, and do you disown them?

Let us be done with talking of the *Church* and the *Meeting-House*—it is just as much the one as the other—St. Paul's meeting-house, Trinity "meeting-house" or church, the Baptist church, Methodist church, Presbyterian kirk, or meeting-houses. When you are talking of the *building* they are all "meeting-houses," "churches," "chapels," "tabernacles," "sanctuaries," "houses of worship," or the "Lord's house," according to the rule or preference of some local power. When you are talking of the host of God's elect—all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation—then there is but one church, as there is but one body, one bride of Christ.

To say that the dissenters, so called, the denominations of the Christian religion, are children of God, and yet not members of His church, but are "irregular," is to bring a charge against their Father, which we are not prepared to suppose those who are so fond of using this expression to avoid an unwilling admission, for a moment would intend to suggest.

We, therefore, unhesitatingly affirm that, according to the Scriptures, all believers are members of one and the same church, and that that church is *the body* of which Christ is the Head.

Our second thought is, that this body or church received and receives its life and nourishment from one and the same spirit. The text teaches us that all who are baptized into this body are so by one spirit, and have been made to drink into one spirit; and other portions of God's word clearly show that the change which must be made before any child of Adam can properly be called a member of Christ, is a purely spiritual change: "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," "born of the Spirit," "born from above," "born of God." Now it is impossible for any ordinance, sacrament, rite, minister, or even the Bible itself, to change the heart of the sinner; all these instruments may be, certainly some are (the truth of Scripture always), used, but it is always the Holy Ghost who converts the soul, changes the nature, causes the adoption, and brings the soul, dead in sin, to the life of faith and love in the Son of God.

So, therefore, as one blood flows in the veins of all the human family, one spirit energizes the entire family of believers in Christ. There is a great difference, in many respects, between the cultivated, pious European and the uncultivated and savage African, but they are brethren; for God "hath made of one blood all nations of men." There is a great difference, also, in many respects, between a Christian of the stamp of the Apostle Paul or the sweet-spirited Stephen, and the penitent thief on the cross; but they are all brethren, born of the same spirit, and members of the same household of faith. How long will we be in learning this truth—that he is not a Christian who is one outwardly merely, but he is a Christian who is one inwardly? As, therefore, all Christians are joined together in one spirit, so do they mind the things of the same spirit. They are moved by the same Holy Ghost to godly sorrow for their sins—they all have the same repentance unto life. They are all led alike to the cross of Christ for pardon; they are relieved by the same assurance of forgiveness; they enjoy the