

ones. Indeed some of the plainest and most direct precepts are utterly neglected; the precept against eating blood, and suing brethren in civil courts are not considered binding. The directions for the observance of love-feasts, anointing the sick in order to their cure, the kiss of peace, and washing each other's feet, are equally explicit and obsolete. Now, in contrast, consider the admittedly binding force of indirect precepts. The substitution of the Lord's Day for the Sabbath, and its observance in a different manner from that of the Jewish seventh day of the week, are taught us very incidentally, and only by way of inference; yet they are felt to be of universal obligation. Infant baptism, again, has only an indirect authority in the New Testament, and is only arrived at by arguments derived from the Old Testament, applied by parity of reasoning to the New. Yet for all that, it is the well-nigh universally observed law of Christendom. On the other hand, contrast with the obedience rendered to these indirect revelations of God's will, the reception given by the Christian world to the direct, plain and incontestible commands to maintain the visible unity of the Church. We say *visible* unity, because though well aware of the tradition which makes the word of God void, and says that it is *invisible* unity of spirit that is intended, yet we cannot honestly read the New Testament without feeling that in Apostolic times, Excommunication was a fearful reality. It never once occurred