

Life in the church must come from union with the foundation. In this the Christian Church differs from all other organizations, societies or associations of men. Every member of a society brings his own life into it, and the organization exists by virtue of the life in its members; but every member of the church receives his life from Christ, and the church exists by virtue of the life which is in Him. No matter what name a body of men and women may call themselves, they cannot be spiritually vitalized unless they are built on Christ. Nor does the *unity* of the church depend upon name or polity. We may be called Episcopalian, Congregationalist or Presbyterian; we may be governed by bishops or presbytery or the congregation, yet have unity only in name. It is the unity of faith and life which makes us one. It is the fact that we are built on the same divine foundation, which gives catholicity to the church. And union with Christ unites us one with another and makes us members of His own glorious body, the church. Moreover, the foundation will give its *own form* to the superstructure, so Christ fashions His temple. We cannot build on Christ without resembling Christ. This is the touchstone by which we may know the true church. Does it resemble Him? Does it bear His image? Is its character and mission like His? As Lessing, the German philosopher, said, "I will know the true church when I discover which does the most good." In contemplating this divine foundation on which the Church of Christ is built we can say:—

"God hath a sure foundation given,  
Fixed, as the firm decrees of heaven,  
The changeless everlasting Rock,  
That braves the storm and bides the shock.  
There build; the gates of hell in vain  
Against that Rock their war maintain:  
Christ is the Rock, the corner stone,  
God rears his beauteous house thereon."

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH.—"*I will build my Church.*" It is Christ who builds His church. It is erected by the power of a divine Saviour. It is an ascended and glorified Lord, who *superintends* the work; nay more, it is an everpresent indwelling Christ who *does* the work. While we remember that in His incarnation, death and resurrection, He laid the foundation, let us not forget that it is by his spiritual power He builds His temple; nor will His work be completed until His church is perfected and the world redeemed. Christ is the builder. "*I,*" not *you,*" will