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"FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD."—Paul.

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ADDRESS BEFORE THE AMERICAN CONGRESS OF CHURCHES.

BY FREDERICK D. POWER.

A divided Christendom is a state unknown to Christ and the Apostles. Is Christendom divided? Then the divine will as revealed in the sacred oracles is disregarded, the divine purpose in the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ on earth cannot be met, and living in division we are living in disobedience and sin. A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, still less subdue other kingdoms. Aggressive Christianity in the beginning required the existence of certain conditions in order to success. It demands the same to-day. Union was strength; division weakness. Continuing steadfastly in the fellowship of the gospel; workers together with each other because workers together with God the early Christians carried everything before them. With schism and sect came confusion, weakness, shame, apostasy and death.

In the tender closing prayer of his life our divine Lord appeals to his Father: "I pray not for these alone but for them also that shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." It is a petition for millions, yet unborn: the disciples in all ages and in all lands, and that lays before God the most pressing want of his people. Who will charge Christ with praying for what his church does not need? Who will say that the Son of God asked an impossible thing and upon the granting of an impossible thing made the conversion of the world to depend? Who has not found sectarianism and the conflicting teachings and systems growing out of the present abnormal, distracted and unholy state of things in the religious world a pregnant source of unbelief and an ever-present stumbling-block to the conversion of men?

In harmony with the Master's prayer was the teaching of his apostles: "The God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded, one toward another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Mark them that cause divisions among you and avoid them." "I beseech you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For whereas there is among you envying and strife and factions are ye not carnal and walk as men? While one said I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or wore ye baptized in the name of Paul?" "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father

of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all." And primitive Christendom was blessed with such apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ till all should come into "The unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect church, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that they be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, but speaking the truth in love might grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

In the spirit of such prayer and testimony early Christendom was united. The foundation was one—Christ; the superstructure was one—the church of Christ. Sects, with party creeds and names and objects, building up over against each other, and wrangling and warring over the spoils, were unknown. The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul. In the very founding of the church the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile was broken down; Christ making in himself, of twain, one new church, so making peace. Strongly-marked differences, hostilities engendered through centuries, existed between these two classes of converts.

The harmony of the church was disturbed, division threatened. Paul, a Jew, representing the Jewish converts, writes under the direction of the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles: "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation laid by apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Originally, then, the church was one, built not upon a human basis, but upon the foundation laid in Zion by apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone, and to give authority to its teaching, power to its ordinances and triumph to its labors in our day it must be restored to its ancient apostolic oneness in doctrine, in spirit and in life.

Christ's prayer, apostolic teaching and the example of the early church, however, are not the only voices that proclaim division among God's people as carnal and hindrances to the conviction of the world of the truth of Christ's mission to men. How does common

sense admonish us? What strength in combination, concentration, union of means and effort! What waste in division of talent and labor and sacrifice and means and missionary endeavor! What discord in families and communities, and neutralization of precious potencies essential to the very life of our Lord's work in the world! What reproach brought upon the cause of righteousness and truth by unseemly disputes and bitternesses! Charles Dickens wrote to a friend: "As to the church, I am sick of it. The spectacle presented by the indecent squabbles of the priests of most denominations and exemplary unfairness and rancor with which they conduct their differences utterly repel me, and the idea of the Protestant Establishment in the face of its own history seeking to trample out discussion and private judgment is an enormity so cool that I wonder the Right Reverends, Very Reverends, and all Reverends who commit it, can look into one another's faces without laughing as the old soothsayers did. How our sublime and so different Christian religion is to be administered in the future I can not pretend to say; but that the church's hand is at its own throat I am fully convinced. Here more Popery, there more Protestantism; as many forms of consignment to eternal damnation as there are articles and all in one forever quarrelling body, with the Master of the New Testament put out of sight and the rage and fury almost always turning on the letter of obscure parts of the Old Testament. These things can not last. The church that is to have its part in the coming time must be a more Christian one with less arbitrary pretensions and a stronger hold upon the mantle of our Saviour as he walked and talked upon this earth." It is Christ's prayer then, apostolic teaching and example, the testimony of the Holy Spirit through the word, the voice of common reason and common sense, the prayer of the holy and pious in every age and clime; the perilous encroachments of unfaith, and the cry of millions for the bread of life, that urge the union of the people of God. Why? that the world may believe that God sent Christ; that the world may be saved! Christianity is nothing unless aggressive and the union of Christians is absolutely essential to the highest aggressiveness of the Christian religion. How then may spiritual, organic, and practical oneness be secured? One word is the key to it. Restoration! Not legislation, not reformation, not confederation, but the restoration of the original apostolic New Testament church with its doctrine, its ordinances, and its fruits. We must step up the stream of eighteen centuries and stand at the fountain head. We must go back to the spirit, the unity, the faith, the practice, the name, the foundation of the early church. By returning to Jerusalem it is possible to take up the gospel just as the apostles left it, to receive the ordinances just as our Lord delivered them, to discover the church just as it existed