

superficial observation and a little experience convince every man, that human creeds have been the fruitful source, or occasion of all the discords, schisms, and parties now existing in christendom.—That they have failed of preserving in any instance the unity of the parties themselves, who have rallied under them?—Take for example two of the most popular creeds of the present day, the Westminster, and that of the Methodists—to say nothing of lesser schisms in the party. In 190 years have 9 or 10 communions originated, among the Presbyterians, some as discordant and aloof from each other, as were the Jews and Samaritans.

Nor have the Methodists done much better for their age—they now form several separate communions under different names. And what shall I say of the twelve or fourteen sects of Baptists, many of whom have as much affection for the Greek or Roman Church as for one another. It were useless to furnish other evidence in proof that human opinions, inferential reasonings, and deductions from the bible, exhibited in the form of creeds, can never unite christians; as all their fruits are alienation, repulsion, bickering, and schism. *No human creed in Protestant christendom can be found, that has not made a division for every generation of its existence.* And I may add—the more thinking, inquisitive, and intelligent the community which owns a creed, the more frequent their debates and schisms.

But the Bible will do no better, if men approach it with a set of opinions, or a human symbol in their minds, For then it is not the Bible, but the opinions in the mind, that form the bond of union. Men, indeed, had better have a *written* than an *unwritten* standard of orthodoxy, if they will not abandon speculation and abstract notions, as any part of christian faith or duty.

But all these modes of faith and worship, are based upon a mistake of the true character of Revelation, which it has long been our effort to correct. With us, Revelation has nothing to do with opinions, or abstract reasonings; for it is founded wholly and entirely upon *facts*. There is not one abstract opinion, not one speculative view, asserted or communicated in Old or New Testament. Moses begins with asserting facts that had transpired in creation and providence; and John ends with asserting prophetic or prospective facts, in the future displays of providence and redemption. Facts, then, are the *alpha* and the *omega* of both Jewish and Christian revelations.

But that the reader may have before his mind in one summary view, the whole scheme of union and co-operation, which the Living Oracles and the present state of the christian religion in the world demand; which has been, at different times and in various manners, illustrated and sustained in the present controversy, against divisions,—we shall here submit it in one period.

*Let THE BIBLE be substituted for all human creeds; FACTS, for definitions; THINGS, for words; FAITH, for speculation; UNITY OF FAITH, for unity of opinion; THE POSITIVE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, for human legislation and tradition; PIETY, for ceremony; MORALITY, for partizan zeal; THE PRACTICE OF RELIGION, for the profession of it;—and the work is done.*

(TO BE CONTINUED.)