

preach to you Christ crucified. Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world! "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends. But God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." O, comply—fall in with the drawings of the Holy Spirit; yield to the testimony; repent and turn to God. To day if you will hear his voice, after so long a time, harden not your hearts. Have you believed and repented? Do you now believe and repent? Can you from the bottom of your heart say, I do, on the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. I have given my heart to God, I would and will serve him to the extent of my knowledge and ability now and forever; and the language of your heart is, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And yet you have not given your body to the Lord by being baptized into His church and kingdom on earth. The answer of inspiration to your question is, Now, why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins calling on the name of the Lord. This was the Spirit's answer by Ananias to the believing penitent, Saul of Tarsus, standing as you now stand—Who can forbid water that these should not be baptized.

In extending to our readers THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON, we see many reasons for praising God for His blessings, both spiritual and temporal, in the year just closed. And—

1st. Many countries are suffering financially; but we are saved from real want, and "the willing and obedient are permitted to eat the fruit of the land."

2nd. Other nations are destroying each other with more than the ferociousness of beasts of prey, but we are enjoying great quietness, and can work and worship, none daring to make us afraid.

3rd. We see in the so-called Christian world a growing anxiety for the union of all who love the Saviour, and hopeful signs that the true ground on which all can unite with honor to the Lord, will be discovered. As a union in heart and affection for each other must largely predominate in reaching that oneness for which Jesus prayed, it is most gratifying to witness the growth of Christian feelings for bodies separated by the doctrines and commandments of men. The sentiment, "less of creed and more of Christ," is spreading more and more every year.

4th. There is also an increasing desire among Christians to send the glad tidings of great joy to all people. The dividing walls are gradually but certainly crumbling before the light and heat of redeeming love. The same gospel that levelled the partition wall between Jew and Gentiles is now levelling the imaginary wall between the unconditional elect and non-elect. Preachers are not now afraid to repeat the angels' message to the shepherds "to all people" nor to tell "that Jesus by the grace of God should taste death for every man," nor that "he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world." For this we are thankful.

5th. In our own ranks is much to encourage us. Both here and in the United States, men are turning to the Lord. Promising young brethren are preparing to enter the field as preachers.

6th. Notwithstanding the severity of the times, and scarcity of money, more has been raised by us for Foreign Missions in the last year, than in any other year. More preaching has been done, and more converts gained than ever before in the same time.

7th. Our paper still lives and prospers; and although imperfect, we trust it is doing true and honest work for the Master. Let all seek

Divine aid, deny self and everything that works against the knowledge of Christ and His cause, and God, even our God, will bless us in the years to come, and His name will have all the praise.

## Original Contributions.

### OPEN LETTER.

NO. III.

Your third question, "What are our greatest needs," and your fourth question, "What are our greatest hindrances," may be expressed in one, as the lack of anything helpful is a hindrance. We may state the question in this form: What are our needs, of which we are deficient that retards greater success. I take for granted that you admit of success, but not the degree of success we should have. You no doubt feel delighted with the success when viewed in the light of our deficiencies. One deficiency is in the lack of unity. It is only when united we can expect prosperity. Divided, we will fail in our attempts to succeed. We have been successful in restoring primitive conversion, and primitive worship, in its simplicity and spirituality. We insist in going back to Jerusalem for our order of worship, and back to Caesarea Philippi for our Saviour. It is a lamentable fact, that the Christ of Bethlehem and of Calvary, has been measurably lost in creeds, dogmas, and churchism. While we have gone back of Romanism and sectarianism, and built on Christ the solid rock, as our sure foundation, we have not been as successful as we ought in the erection of the building. We are a unit as to the foundation, but in the great work of construction there seems to be a confusion of tongues. We say very deliberately and cautiously and yet with emphasis, that this divisive condition of church work, is the block to success. It is just as necessary that we should be united on how to build, as what to build, and on what to build. Noah and his sons were united on the plan, and dimensions and material of the ark, as the Lord commanded; but suppose they had divided on how the work should be done; and because of their differences would not work, what benefit would their union on order, design, and material, have been? You see everything depended on their united labors. Contending for order, plan, and size, would never build an ark. Their salvation depended upon the ark, not on their faith in an ark. The building of the ark depended on their united efforts. You undoubtedly see that our greatest need is unity in action, all at work, and altogether, as Paul presents it, "The whole body (not a part of it), fitly joined together (unity) and compacted (by the cement of love) by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working (not thinking, or believing, or talking) in the measure of every part, maketh increase (success) of the body (church) unto the edifying of itself in love."—Eph. iv. 16. Here is the banner we fly to the breeze. The united action of all the members of the body or church. If any of the members of the body are not filling their functions, not working for the increase of the body, they are a block to the health and success of the body, and must be doctored until brought into their normal condition. If their case is chronic and cannot be cured, they will have to be separated from the body, or be a continual impediment to the strength and growth of the body. Here is the unity that the Apostles emphasize and makes absolutely essential to the prosperity of Zion. Whatever our unity of doctrine may be, it will avail us nothing unless we are

united in earnest labor. Herein we find the religious problem of the age—the return to the primitive Apostolic life of the church.

How closely we watch any intrusion in doctrine, and treat the entrance of any new idea, "As the disciples on the sea did the coming of their Master, declare it a ghost," and at the same time permit the brother to go scot free who knows but little and cares less of Christian activity. Cold Christianity is a mianomer. It is much better to have a mistake in our head, than an ice-berg in our heart. We get so anxious to be orthodox in principle, that we lose sight of the orthodoxy of life, and are apt to become heterodox in its most important sense.

We are more than anxious about this question—because we know from thirty years' experience and observation in the work of the church, that the great need, and the greatest need, is an active united effort on the part of all members of corporative bodies. Their corporative relations and responsibilities make it imperative that all the members should be united and active. It was said that "My people Israel have sinned," when Achan was the one who did the wrong; showing that one member in the body can destroy its prosperity.

You say, "It is impossible to work with any church or people, whose plans and ways of working are contrary to your ideas." This has been said many times, and successfully refuted by the history of every body of people. These many years that we have been engaged in the good work, we have never found the church or people with whom we could fully agree as to the plan or manner of work. We have often wished we could find a company who would agree with us in our ideas of church work. But this will never be found this side of the heavenly life. This is true of all earnest workers. He whose heart or conscience will not admit him to work with a body of earnest, praying working disciples of Christ, has a conscience that "needs watching." Our close observation has led us to fear that those whose wisdom and knowledge are so much above the wisdom of a devoted working church, as to prevent them working with it, that their heads are very much larger than their hearts. Our attitude toward such, however, should be that of patience, kindness, and love, and to try very faithfully to win them to the work of the Lord.

You see, by this time, that our idea concerning our greater prosperity, depends upon greater unity, and greater activity. And we believe, the Disciples of Christ are getting to understand this, and many are laying aside their notions and entering the work with energy. When the time comes that the church will be alive and united in the salvation of the world, esteeming the work of the Lord greater than the opinions we may hold, then will we see the degree of prosperity for which we now so earnestly pray.

There are other needs and hindrances that might be mentioned, that we will admit for the present. You will find the answer to your fifth question i. e., "What will you do with the pious unimmersed?" in December number of the CHRISTIAN, at the end of Bro. W. Emmon's sermon. If you have the "Christian System," vol. 4. turn to page 302, and you will find the same answer given by Bro. A. Campbell. He says that he is of the opinion, that "when a neglect proceeds from a simple mistake or sheer ignorance, and when there is no aversion but a will to do all the Lord commands, the Lord will admit such into His everlasting kingdom." But he says also, that this does not refer to those who understand the nature and authority of God's commands and still refuse them. Bro. Garrison, the editor of the *Christian Evangelist*, says, "We know of no representative man among us who holds a contrary view to that expressed by Bro. Campbell." H. M.