

The cause why the Disciples are so particular in deciding what is matter of opinion and what is matter of faith will now be seen. There can be union upon truth—upon the testimony of God—upon the great basis of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; but upon opinion there can be no oneness. When opinion is allowed to have weight, or when the authority of opinion is confounded with the authority of God's word, union is impossible—just as impossible as for two great mountains to fill the same space and place at the same time: for one man's opinion will be against that of another, and both will judge their opinions are valuable, and if they rely upon them, their reliance will keep them separate and at variance. For this reason, if for no other, no man or number of men should put any dependence on opinions, nor make nor offer them as the groundwork of Christian brotherhood.

There is a misunderstanding, a very serious misunderstanding, on this most interesting topic of Christian union. The idea is entertained that professors are to work themselves into an extra charitable mood, and then by much wise counsel, great forbearance, and a very full degree of the spirit of compromise, they must concoct and perfect a scheme of union, whereby all Christian men will call one another brethren. This is the wildest thought in christendom. No man will ever see such a consummation. It is a mere fancy, a picture to look at, a theory wholly out of the bounds of things practical. Union is of God. The spirit of union is of God. The principles of union are of God. The power, nature, and object of union are all of God. It is divine from first to last, and all between; and man's part is humbly to accept, not devise; to follow the leadings of inspiration, and neither give nor receive human counsel. When the power of opinion is broken, and the power of truth is fully known and appreciated, we will never see a well-meaning but misguided man or body of men attempting to frame something by which the Saviour's elect shall be united.

Can the reader, then, just here, see the position the Disciples maintain? Are we understood? We intend every candid man to perceive:

1st, That we are heartily and determinedly opposed to division, and consequently most desirous of union.

2nd, That we aim not at union of opinion, but union of faith, the first being as we consider impracticable, the second exemplified by the church primitively.

3rd, That no man has a right to question another's opinions—an opinion being a mere bias or fancy, and neither good nor evil in itself considered; but that every professor is obligated to try his faith with the unerring and undeviating standard—God's blessed Word, and to