

beginning with the putting on Christ by baptism—that a continued union with Christ is to be kept up by living according to the spirit of holiness. Such was the doctrine delivered to those in Rome to whom Paul wrote, and such therefore was the doctrine by which they were governed, or that they obeyed.

Do we require such doctrine and such obedience in the year of grace 1852 as the pre-requisite and groundwork of communion? We do. This is the apostolic model. It is therefore the model for us. We love it—we recommend it—we practice it.

But though there is a happy oneness of faith and of teaching, there is not always a union of opinion among our brethren relative to what is religious freedom at the Lord's table; in other words, there are two opinions in reference to what is christian watchfulness on the part of the church when the Lord's table is spread and surrounded.—Now an opinion, it is agreed on all hands, is of no authority in the churches of the saints. We may tell an opinion, but we dare not teach it. We may hold an opinion, but not enforce it upon others.—It is tyranny for any one to force his opinion upon another; it is equally tyranny to compel any one to give up his opinion, unless it can be made manifest that said opinion is used unlawfully and works injury. If any brother's opinion, or the use that is made of it, by himself or by a church, shall give offence to any brother or any church, the opinion so far as it operates practically should be at once given up. This is clearly implied in the admission that an opinion is not and cannot be authoritative. The christian religion and the christian brotherhood are constituted upon this principle.

It is, however not to be forgotten, that on the communion question, the power of opinionism is not on one side only—both parties in the controversy are opinionists! Now an opinion when it passes a certain boundary, and therefore becomes offensive, is to be corrected by the authority of the Lord—driven back and kept in its place by the mind of the Spirit; but surely no intelligent man in the inspired record would assume the prerogative of correcting one opinion by the power of another! We should respond to his zeal in the language of Paul to a Judaizer, "Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" He who would see clearly to remove the dust from his brother's eye, must have a clear eye himself.

There is an impression indeed, in certain quarters, that we are more fond of the opinion on one side than on the other. Before we have finished these essays we shall ascertain how this position agrees with the position we occupy. Meantime we have submitted cardinal principles on which and by which we are determined to work.

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THE IMAGE OF GOD.—Man is God's image, and to curse wickedly the image of God, is to curse God himself. Suppose that a man should say with his mouth, I wish that the King's picture were burned; would not this man's so saying render him as an enemy to the person of the king? Even so it is with them, that, by cursing, wish evil to their neighbors or themselves, they condemn the image of God.