

Truth by every individual, and condemns all creed-making, which is only "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men:" and as to the so-called "Apostles' Creed," *it is a sheer fabrication*—the Apostles never made a creed, if we may credit their own testimony.

Q. Their professed successors must then be grand deceivers to give currency to such a deception. But would you really have *all* creeds abolished as useless?

A. Certainly. I would abolish all creeds and articles of Faith; for they are not only useless, but, being in principle unscriptural, they must be very pernicious. I appeal to your own knowledge of the fact that in all cases of trial in churches having "Articles," "Confessions," or "Disciplines," that these are always appealed to as *the standard of judgment, and not the word of God*. Thus the free exercise of the rights both of judgment and conscience are invaded, and the authority of God is contemned.

Q. I acknowledge it with shame; for I have seen the very best members of religious communities expelled, not for violating the commands of Christ or his Apostles, but for honestly shewing that the standard of the sect was not in accordance with the Word of God. Yet, I must inquire, where is the difference between a man holding certain religious opinions not written, and subscribing to the same after they have been written by another?

A. There is a very important difference. For example, my religious opinions should be no rule to others, nor theirs to me; but a creed is a code of human opinions on God's Word, set up as an authoritative standard of belief to the multitude. The Bible alone should be our standard, and men can understand its communications more easily than any book of Articles.

Q. I perceive the difference clearly; but there is another difficulty. Are we not told that "*The Church*," by its authority, decrees what is, and what is not, sound doctrine, and determines, therefore, what may safely be believed?

A. This is a very common delusion. "A Church," you know, means in the true and broad sense of the term, "a congregation of faithful men," i. e., Christian believers; but, in the sense to which you refer, "*The Church*" means nothing more than a congregation of religious teachers! a sense nowhere found in the inspired record. Indeed, a congregation of Christian Farmers or Mechanics might, with *equal authority*, issue a religious creed, and declare that it proceeded from "*The Church*;" but in both cases it would be a sinful assumption of power. Christ is the alone lawgiver. Besides, Egypt was not more desolated by the ten plagues than has the Christian world been by the floods of error which have emanated ostensibly from "*The Church*," meaning the priests! Look to Rome and her daughters.

Q. I acknowledge the soundness of your reasoning, and shall, in future, disregard all sectarian standards, and *cleave to the Word of God alone*; for, with you, I sincerely believe the testimony of Paul the Apostle, that without any human adjuncts whatever, it "*is able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*."

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