

They have become so completely enveloped in the traditions of men and the mysticisms and contradictions of conflicting creeds that they can not and will not see the truth as it is in Jesus.

Popular Christianity knows no difference between the ordinary and the extraordinary of the plan of salvation. The conversion of a sinner is to be classed with the miracles of Jesus. Every revival is but another Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The poor candidate for pardon and mercy must see Jesus and hear a voice as did Paul or his experience is not sufficient to enable him to enjoy the sweet consolations of the child of God.

The great central truth of Christianity—*Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God*, has comparatively but little significance in the orthodox churches. When we can enthrone Jesus in the minds and hearts of the people, then the question of baptism, communion, and Christian union will be solved. But it will be a long time before this can be done. How can we get the people to understand the simple gospel of Jesus—its facts, its precepts, and its promises? How can we get them to appreciate the beauty and simplicity of a practical Christian life? Tell me this and I will tell you how to remove one of the hinderances to Christian union. Tell me how to induce the Christian to be satisfied with only the names found in the Bible. O that the people could realize the honor and dignity of the names given by divine authority.

"Say not, 'How otherwise shall we be known?'"

Did Paul or Peter such distinctions own?

Say not, Names nothing mean; alas! we see

How oft they move the heart to jealousy, Say not, 'They are harmless,' for too well we know

How under them what fierce contentions grow.

They gather to their standard—not the Lord;

Enforce their own enactments—not the word.

Just think of heaven, where happy oneness reigns,

A gathering place for parties, sects and names!

Ah, no! it would dim the glory of that place,

'Twould throw a cloud o'er every saved one's face,

One name alone the heavenly hosts adore;

Nor is there space or room in heaven for more,

Jesus is there—His name alone is sung,

His blessed name's the theme of every tongue!

Jesus is there—no other name they know;

Why should we hear of other names below?"

3. We have no greater hinderance to Christian union than that growing out of the fact we do not understand one another. Much has been said concerning the fallacious and dangerous doctrine of the Catholic church, but what know the Protestant churches of the real claims of that great hierarchy. Not only so but the Protestant churches do not know the teaching of their nearest neighbors. How many communicants of one religious body could state the distinctive plea of another, or even of their own? Many religious bodies and teachers are misrepresented by those who differ from them, for this reason. Now if the various churches could be induced to meet and prayerfully consider the points of difference between them, and seek a common and Scriptural ground of union then we might hope for good results. But any thing like a general movement in this direction will not soon be effected. Then our ignorance of one another constitutes an insurmountable difficulty to the oneness the Scriptures require.

4. All will agree with me when I say that human creeds stand as adamant walls between the various religious bodies. Creeds are the foundation or basis of parties. As creeds multiply so do parties. The Nicene creed like all others was born in schism, and was nursed and fostered by strife and jealousy. Had they been necessary the Lord would have provided for their existence and use. They are not a miniature of the Bible. They give no light as to its correct teaching. The difference between creeds and the Bible is as great as that between the fallible and the infallible or the finite and the infinite. Human creeds have made heretics not Christians; parties not union; martyrs not saints. They have conduced to wars, not to peace; to hatred, not to love; to death, not to life. If they contain more than the Bible they contain too much; if they contain less than the Bible they contain too little; and if in their teaching they are equal to the Bible then they can be of no service—for the Bible is sufficient. It is gratifying to see many brave men throw off the shackles of confessions and creeds by which they have been held. In

this particular the religious world is moving. The late movements toward the revision of some of the creeds is an index of the restlessness and dissatisfaction on this question. But there is danger that they will only be multiplied.

We no more need creeds than the sunlight needs candles to add to its brilliancy. The sunset scene needs no painter's brush; nature is her own apologist; and they teaching of Jesus its own authority. I have an increasing confidence in the power of the Scriptures; and no respect for authorities however high and venerable, with no regard for the solemn dicta of august ecclesiastic courts and councils, I can in matters pertaining to our eternal interest, the world needs but one teacher, and he is Jesus.

If we have sought any faith which does not concentrate in him, we have gone astray. If we have fortified any position that he did not point out or designate, we shall surely be driven from it. If we have sought to aid the truth by additions, we have hindered it. When the planets need human hands to guide them in their orbits, when the everlasting hills need guy ropes, and the eternal mountains props, then will the teaching of Jesus and his apostles need but-tressing by human creeds.

The word of God is larger than any definition, broader than any formula, and more sublime than any symbol. Jesus left the truth freer that was to make man free.

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CHRISTIAN CO-OPERATION AGAIN.

Bro. Floyd:

I promised two things, viz. "1. I said I would in this paper point out some errors into which our brother 'Christian Missionary' has fallen in writing on Christian Coöperation. 2. I propose to show that Missionary Societies as our brethren have them are divinely authorized expedients.

First, then, I must quote from "Christian Missionary's" article in the HERALD:

If we lose sight of the great fact that Christ is a *personal* rather than a *doctrinal* Savior—that he came to nail to the cross the system of Jewish commandments contained in ordinances, which had failed to give salvation as it was intended, and natural that it should,—that with this system, which was "holy, just and good," and human philosophies which partake of the nature of their originators, namely imper-

fection, he also included every system of human ethics, and every prescribed formulary, saving only the simple appointments by which we receive Christ and continually walk in him, and partake of his spirit, we have lost the only power that can possibly save men.

The above quotation follows an alarm sounded against thinking of "Christianity as a revised edition of Judaism, as being wholly comprehended in a system of commandments and precedents in which everything we should do is laid down in a series of distinct "thou shalt" and everything we should not do is as clearly set forth in a "thou shalt not." Well, if the New Testament does not direct us in what we *should do* and what we *should not do*, with all the force of "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not," then we have no guide and the New Testament in what it does teach simply *gives advice*. He who can read the New Testament and not see the "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not," has not learned the alphabet of Christianity. Of course our brother "Christian Missionary" and our brethren generally, even those not very missionary, must see and admit that the New Testament is our authoritative guide in faith and practice. The commandments and precedents of the N. T. are all we have to direct us, and no man can ever know whether what he does is acceptable to God unless so guided. To be sure we have not the punishment for transgression immediately following, but are because of this to think of N. T. prohibitions to be simply advice. What though the Decalogue as repeated in the N. T. (save the Sabbath day injunction) does not begin with "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not," is it less binding? And beyond the Decalogue where we have "neither murmur ye," "neither tempt God," "be of one mind," "love as brethren," &c. Does any one suppose these should begin with "thou shalt," and "thou shalt not" to make them more authoritative? Read the commission "Thou shalt go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," if you like, for that is what it means and so too in all the work and worship of the Church. The obligation is higher as Christ is superior to Moses, and the force of any N. T. teaching is intensified accordingly. No one ever read a sentence in the N. T. which weakness or disparages the "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not." On the contrary the Holy Spirit as our teacher intensi-