Can We Have All Professing Christians United in One Great Body, With Identity Of Doctrine and Polity?

C. A. Hill

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CAN WE HAVE ALL PROFESSING CHRISTIANS UNITED IN ONE GREAT BODY, WITH IDENTITY OF DOCTRINE AND POLITY?

C. A. HILL.

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CINCINNATI, O.
CAN WE HAVE ALL PROFESSING CHRISTIANS

United in One Great Body with Identity of Doctrine and Polity?

C. A. HILL.

The following paper was read before the Ministerial Union of Canton, O., March 19, 1900.

To my mind, without a doubt, this is the most important question before the religious world to-day. Important because of its magnitude and its far-reaching results. I am glad to know that Christendom is being aroused from center to circumference in this direction, and pray that Zion may soon arise; that she may assert her strength by her unity, and show to the world the beauty of her holiness. Without spending useless time by way of introduction, may we go at once to the essence of the matter before us? God has given to the world, by his Son Jesus Christ, a gospel. This gospel is either a gospel of truth or of falsehood, a gospel of harmony or of dissension, a gospel of unity or of division.

We, as Christians, are either right or we are wrong, in the way in which we carry out this gospel. If it is a gospel of truth, if it is a gospel of harmony, if it is a gos-
pel of unity, then the Christian world must be wrong in its divided condition, for it is not the product that such a gospel of truth, harmony and unity will naturally produce. Dealing with this subject just as it has been assigned, may we divide it into sections and answer each part separately?

I. CAN WE HAVE ALL PROFESSING CHRISTIANS?

(I do not use this in any denominational sense.) This part of the question lies at the very threshold to the solution of the problem before us. Oh, that we might all see the beauty of this Christlikeness. The very spirit that made the Christ God incarnate, and worthy to be his Son, is found expressed in his prayer in the garden when he said, "Not my will, but thine, be done." It was this spirit that carried Christ over the darkest hour of his earthly life, and it is this spirit that will make men true Christians to-day. "Thy will be done;" I would to God that I might be able to write this sentence in letters of gold, and put a divine accent upon the word "thy." "Thy will be done." We are not to wait till after death to realize this blessing, for Christ taught his disciples to pray, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Let us take this as our motto or text while we build for Christian unity.

II. CAN WE HAVE ALL PROFESSING CHRISTIANS UNITED IN ONE GREAT BODY?

I can imagine that a large majority of "professing Christians" will predicate their answer by the use of two words, viz.: "I think." The answer is not a mere product of mind, and can not be answered by what we may
deem most expedient, or what, to the natural vision, will bring about the largest material results. If we are Christians, it will be the will of God and his Christ, and not my will, that must settle the question.

"Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." Do the Scriptures teach unity of Christians in one body?

There is nothing more forcible than the Word to overthrow all argument. David realized the beauty of unity when he said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Ps. cxxxiii. 1).

Ezekiel, speaking of the coming Christ and his kingdom, refers to the gathering of the sheep "in a good fold" and setting up "one shepherd" (Ez. xxxiv. 11-14, 22, 23). He also speaks of binding the sticks together, "making them one stick" (Ez. xxxvii. 15-19).

Isaiah speaks of the gathering or coming together of the animals as a figure of union under Christ (Isa. xi. 1-9).

May we turn now to the New Testament:

John x. 15, 16: "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice: and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

John xi. 51, 52: "And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

"And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."
John xvii. 11-23: "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

"And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

"As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

"And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me,
and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”

Rom. xii. 4, 5: “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”

Rom. xv. 5-7: “Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

“That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.”

I. Cor. viii. 6: “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”

I. Cor. x. 16, 17: “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?

“For we being many are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.”

I. Cor. xii. 11-27: “But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

“For the body is not one member, but many.

“If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?”
“And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

“If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

“But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

“And if they were all one member, where were the body?

“But now are they many members, yet but one body.

“And the eye can not say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

“Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

“And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

“For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

“That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

“And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

Gal. iii. 28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Eph. ii. 13-22: “But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.
"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

"And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Eph. iv. 1-7, 13: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

"With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

"But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."
"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Phil. i. 27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."

Phil. ii. 2: "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

Col. iii. 15-17: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

With so much divine evidence in behalf of Christian union, can any one conscientiously labor and pray for a continuation of divisions and feel he is doing the will of the Father, when Paul says, "That there should be no schisms in the body"? There is, in the above, Scripture to cover any objection raised to such a union, and the Master's will, exercised in us, will remove the objections. We need this union for the strength of the church and the defense of Protestantism. In the year 1892, while preaching in Columbus, O., there was a heated discussion between Catholicism and Protestantism, which involved the clergy of both sides of the question, Rev. Mr. Faw-
cett, of the Baptist Church, leading for the Protestants, and Bishop Watterson for the Catholics. I give to you, in the following, an extract from Bishop Watterson's address, to which it was my pleasure, by request, to reply:

_Bishop Watterson—_ But what is Protestantism? If the Baptist system of Rev. Mr. Fawcett is true Protestantism, what then is Congregationalism, or Methodism, or Lutheranism, in so far as they are severally distinct from the Baptist system, or from one another? If Rev. Mr. Fawcett's Baptist system is only a part of Protestantism, and Methodism, and Lutheranism, and the other isms, in so far as they teach anything distinctive that would entitle them to be called separate isms, are only other parts of Protestantism, and if the combination of all these distinct isms is Protestantism, and if Protestantism is right and true, then why does not Rev. Mr. Fawcett teach the whole thing? Why is he content with only a part of what is right and true? Why does he not teach also what belongs distinctively to Methodism, Lutheranism, Episcopalianism, with all the divisions and subdivisions of these isms, and the hundred other isms that are included under the head of Protestantism? I am afraid he would find himself in a hopeless jargon of contradiction. In other words, if Protestantism is anything positive and definite, and if it is right and true, then what need of denominational distinctions at all? Is truth divisible, so that one portion of it may be rejected and another retained? Now, Mr. Fawcett's system is either only a part of Protestantism or it is the whole of it, if it is Protestantism at all. If his system is the whole of Protestantism, then Methodism, Congregationalism, Lutheranism and Presbyterianism must be wrong,
Can All Professing

inasmuch as they either contradict Protestantism by denying something that Mr. Fawcett teaches, or are contradicted by Protestantism by affirming something as essential which Mr. Fawcett does not teach. In any case, if Mr. Fawcett's system is true and right, then the other systems must be false and wrong, and, to be logical, Mr. Fawcett ought to condemn them. If he condemns them, he is intolerant, but logical. If he does not condemn them, he is tolerant, but illogical.

I attempted an answer with no worth or merit of my own. To attempt it from the standpoint of a divided church was folly. There was but one resource, and that was Christ and his undivided church. My answer, in substance, and in part, was as follows:

Bishop Watterson has struck the keynote in the above. I myself behold the same confusion. God helping me, it shall be the ambition of my life to relieve the Protestant world of this grievous and too true accusation. My efforts shall ever be in behalf of a united church, founded on the Bible and the Bible alone. To be consistent we must reject a human confession of faith or discipline for the same reason we reject the Roman Catholic catechism. I am not here to defend Mr. Fawcett's system, Methodism, Lutheranism, Presbyterianism or Congregationalism, and am most emphatically against Catholicism. God grant that we may all stand for the united church, the one church, the church of our God and his Christ, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.

Let us here note, with great carefulness, that there are three great tendencies of
the human family; viz.: (1) To Catholicism, which means blind and ignorant obedience to the Pope, resulting in absolute ecclesiasticism or oligarchy. (2) To atheism, which disregards God and law, and soon ripens into anarchy. Or (3), to Christianity, which recognizes God, law and order, and which, to be consistent with itself, must be a unit. For, if we are not, we will bite and devour ourselves instead of casting out the "scarlet woman," and smiting with "the sword of the Spirit" the devil and his atheistic demons.

There is no use trying to dodge the question any longer, for our Y. M. C. A.'s, our Y. P. S. C. E.'s, our W. C. T. U.'s, and the temperance question in general, that ought to be ours, and other movements against ungodliness which call for concert of action, stand out, and actually demand union, while we pose in our denominational intrenchments and oppose it. But some will say that we are united in spirit. I do not believe there is science, philosophy or theology enough in the world to harmonize the thought of unity of spirit and division of body in the church of the living God. Unity of spirit will produce unity of body. The Scriptures do not only teach unity of spirit, but are full of "one body." To say that we think unity an impossibility is to say that we think Christ prayed for an impossibility, and that the Holy Spirit, through the apostles, exhorts us to an impossibility. Paul exhorts the early Christians "to be likeminded," "to be of one mind."

If it was possible then, why not now? We are apt to walk more by sight than by faith.
III. CAN WE HAVE ALL PROFESSING CHRISTIANS UNITED IN ONE GREAT BODY, WITH IDENTITY OF DOCTRINE?

Let me ask, How many doctrines did Christ have and teach, and did the Holy Spirit affirm or annul the doctrine of Christ? Paul said, “Obeying from the heart the form [not forms] of doctrine” (Rom. vi. 17). The word “doctrine” is always used in the singular when referring to the teaching of Christ and the apostles. It is most generally used in the plural when speaking of the doctrines of men. It is evident, then, that Christ had but one doctrine. Further, we are taught that the Holy Spirit bore witness; then he had no distinct doctrine of his own. Now, if Christ had but one doctrine, and the Holy Spirit bore witness of that one doctrine, how many doctrines will Christians have? If we are Christians at all, we must have unity of body, with identity of doctrine. Let us clear up, if possible, a few points of our disunion.

1. CREED. The word “creed” means I believe. If there is unity of body and identity of doctrine, there must be unity of belief. Our kind Methodist brethren bring us their Methodist Discipline as a good basis for union. At the same time, our Presbyterian brethren offer their Westminster Confession of Faith for the same purpose. Our Baptist brethren bring forth the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. We have here three very fine documents, and might easily secure many more. Each church expresses its preference for its own, and their reluctance at receiving that of the other. Is it
possible to unite on any one of these, or all of them, or on a new one made of parts of all of them, without great violation of conscience and duty? My friends, we can easily see the utter hopelessness of union upon any human-formed creed. I believe human creeds are largely to blame for the now divided church, and, in my opinion, the creed that must be revised is not worth the revision. A creed that is to become universal must be limited in the number of articles it contains. The less number of articles, the broader and more liberal it becomes. "If the truth make you free, then shall ye be free indeed." Now, what have we to offer? We offer the only article of confession of faith in the New Testament—a divine creed to which we can all subscribe: I believe that "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." "Upon this foundation or rock," said Christ, "I will build my church." "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." My salvation does not depend upon my belief or non-belief in predestination, foreordination or hereditary depravity, but it does depend upon my belief in Christ as the Son of God. Why make as a test of fellowship, and ask people just coming into the body to subscribe to those hard theological nuts that theologians themselves can not crack? You say the proposed creed is so simple, and there is not enough in it. Please study it carefully, and there will be enough in it for time and eternity.

2. Name. So many will say there is nothing in a name. The fallacy of this old, stale argument is so strongly refuted by the
Bible that we need spend no time with it. "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we shall be saved." God has given names to things that belong to the divine plan of salvation, and they mean something. Let us not accuse God with making use of words that do not mean anything, even if we do practice it ourselves. If we were to gather all the names in Christendom that are now applied to religious bodies, which one would be most suited to a united church? I meet a Presbyterian, and say to him, "You are not a Baptist," and he will say, "No, sir," and have no feeling in the matter. I meet a Methodist, and say to him, "You are not a Lutheran," and he will say, "No, sir," and feel that no harm is done.

So we go the rounds; but suppose I meet any one of them and say, "You are not a Christian," and at once you touch a tender spot in his spiritual nature, and he will proceed to prove to you that he is a Christian. There is then a common name that comes voluntarily from every follower of Christ under which we can unite. The early followers of Christ were called his disciples. The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch (Acts xi. 26). This was the name applied to the individual, and nowhere were they known as Disciple Church or Christian Church.

I. Pet. iv. 14, 16: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye; because the spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you. But if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name."
Some one may properly ask here: Then to what denomination do you belong? I would like to answer this question by asking one or two others. What guides a man to be a Christian? I think you will say the Bible. Well, into what denomination would the Bible put me? "Why, none at all." It naturally follows, then, that when we belong to a denomination, we are not where the Bible would place us. The body collectively was called the church of God or the church of Christ. We can easily harmonize these two names to the satisfaction of an earnest seeker after truth, insomuch that God and Christ are one; but who can harmonize Lutheran Church, Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church, United Brethren Church, Baptist Church, Christian Church, Disciple Church, etc.? All honor to those grand men like Luther, Calvin and Wesley, and many others we might name. I thank God for such men, and what they have made possible for us. I would not say to honor them less, but honor Christ the more because of them, and give him the true honor in proportion to what he has done for us, that he has accounted us worthy to be members of his body.

Listen to Martin Luther:

I pray you leave my name alone, and do not call yourselves Lutherans, but Christians. Who is Luther? My doctrine is not mine. I was not crucified for any one. Paul would not that any should call themselves of Paul, nor of Peter, but of Christ. How, then, does it benefit me, a miserable bag of dust and ashes, to give my name to the children of Christ? Cease to cling to these party names and distinctions. Away with them all, and
let us call ourselves Christians, after Him from whom our doctrine comes.

John Wesley:

Would God that all party names and unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world were forgotten, and that we, as humble, loving disciples, might sit down at the Master's feet, read his holy word, imbibe his spirit and transcribe his life into our own.

Adam Clarke, "prince among commentators," says, in his remarks upon Acts xi. 26, and I. Pet. xiv. 16:

A Christian, therefore, is the highest character which any human being can bear on earth, and to receive it from God, as those appear to have done, how glorious the title! How few of those who profess this religion are satisfied with this title. It is a title seldom heard of. When all return to the spirit of the gospel they will probably resume the appellation of Christian.

Great among the Presbyterians was Albert Barnes. Commenting on Acts xi. 26, he has this to say:

The name was evidently given because they were followers of Christ. That it was given in derision is not probable. It was readily assumed by the apostles. It is the most honored name that can be conferred on a mortal. It is not that we belong to this or that denomination that that honor is conferred. It is that they are Christians that this is their peculiar name. This binds them all together, a name which rises above every other name. It is a bond to unite in one family all those who love the Lord Jesus.
Baxter, the Episcopalian, said:

I am a Christian—a mere Christian—of no other religion. My church is the Christian church.

Joseph Parker, the foremost preacher in England to-day, voluminous as a writer, profound as a thinker, utters these significant words:

By Christians I understand Christ followers, Christ lovers, Christ worshipers, Christ ones. Were we what we ought to be in integrity, in simplicity, and in equity of soul, there should be no nobler designation known amongst men, and no other should be needed. Roman Catholics, Protestants, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Presbyterians—what are they, and how have they come to have any existence at all, and especially any honor as names? Did Christ ever use them? The one name that we ought to have is Christian, meaning by that a man who takes Jesus Christ as his Lord, Priest, Pattern, Inspiration.

I. Cor. i. 12, 13: "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

"Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

I. Cor. iii. 4: "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"

Rom. viii. 6, 7: "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."
No human names can ever bring us to unity in Christ, so let us lay them aside for ever.

3. BAPTISM. We are all agreed that the New Testament teaches baptism as a part of Christ’s scheme of redemption. We are not all so well agreed, however, as to its significance. Some teach that it is not really essential unto salvation; that it is only a command, and therefore ought to be obeyed. We must admit that it is a part of the gospel, and that the gospel is God’s power unto salvation. Then, if baptism is non-essential, Christ taught and commanded non-essentials, and a non-essential may be omitted and not destroy the saving power of the gospel. Now let us establish such a precedent, and who shall say which are the essentials and which are the non-essentials?

Paul said: “What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?” (I. Cor. xiv. 36). There is but one rule; viz.: That whatever Christ commands the Christian to do or believe is essential. Peter says, in speaking of baptism, it is a “like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us” (I. Pet. iii. 21). We must take the gospel just as it is without stopping to ask God so many whys. Baptism is not, by any means, the essential unto salvation, only an essential. Now as to mode of baptism. (May we note here, however, that the Bible is not acquainted with the term “mode of baptism”? “Mode” in this connection is strictly a foreign word.) Paul, in giving the Ephesians the seven points of union, speaks of “one bap-
tism" and they were "of one mind." Time and space will forbid that we should spend much time here. May it suffice to say that the best and most eminent scholars of all lands give us as the primary meaning of the word "baptize" (original, *bapto* or *baptizo*), to dip, to plunge, to wash? This list may include such men as Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Schaff, Von Callen, Bower, Kurtz, Mede, Clarke, Locke, Macknight, Cave, Fell, Whitefield, Hammond, Baxter, Tyndall, Sherlock, etc. Next, Encyclopedias—Metropolitan, Edinburgh, American, Britannica, Penny, Chambers, National, Bee's, Ecclesiastica, Schaff & Herzog. Another special work on the subject, "Immersion, the Act of Christian Baptism," by John T. Christian. Last, but not least, the Bible itself.

**BAPTISM**

**By**

**Immersion**

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Take your Bible and read the above references very carefully.

In the above, immersion fulfills the requirements of baptism nine times out of ten, where sprinkling or pouring only fulfills it one time out of ten. In effusion there is
no birth, for there is not anything that can be born of something less than itself. No resurrection, for there is nothing to resurrect from.

There is no washing, no figure, if there is no birth, burial, resurrection or washing, for to be a figure it must be a likeness of something. No going down into, no coming up out of. Now, is there any basis for union? Is there any unity on baptism? Are we agreed as to sprinkling and pouring? A divided church says, No. Then do we accept immersion as fulfilling the Bible requirements and as Scriptural baptism? Yes. We all say, Yes. Then, without any buts, ifs or ands about it, here, in God's own revelation to man, is the true basis for identity of doctrine upon this point. I do not discuss "infant baptism," because the New Testament does not mention it, much less teach it, and we can not take things not taught or authorized in the Book and make them doctrines of the church and preserve unity. I am satisfied with the infant question when I know that Christ said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

4. COMMUNION. Here we will not find so much difficulty; the greatest difference being in the number of times observed. Some once a year, once in six months, once in three months, once a month, and every Lord's Day. We have nothing in the Bible saying how often, in just so many words. We are left, then, to the best references and the practice of the early church. Acts xx. 7: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break
bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow." It does not say on the first day of a week, but upon the first day of the week. There is not a Bible student that would say that the Fourth Commandment, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," meant once a year, once in six months, or three months, or monthly. Every Sabbath is always understood. These two passages are parallel in their reading: "Came together on the first day of the week to break bread." "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." If one means "every," the other means "every" also. Paul, teaching the Hebrews of the new kingdom and new priesthood under Christ, illustrates it by the tabernacle, which he says is a type and shadow, or a figure, of things to come. The table of shewbread was placed in the Holy Place, and furnished with twelve loaves, representing the twelve tribes. The priests replenished and partook of these loaves every Sabbath.

We are priests unto God, says Peter, and we are members of the royal priesthood under Christ. Therefore it is our duty to replenish the table with the one loaf representing the "one body" in Christ, and partake upon the first day of the week. Some will say this is too frequent; it will lose its solemnity. Would we agree that our dear mother's picture must be turned with the face to the wall for fear that too frequent looking upon it would decrease our appreciation or love for her? No; a thousand times no; if there was the due love at first, it would only be intensified. Do not let us turn this holy institution to the wall,
but remember that He in whose memory it stands, said: "As oft as ye do it, do it in memory of me." Paul said to the Corinthians, when speaking of their failure to properly observe this institution: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Let us not, therefore, be found sickly and sleeping, "for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come"—faithful until the end. We have now touched the principal points of difference in way of doctrine, and may we give our attention for just a moment to the last phase of our subject?

IV. IDENTITY OF POLITY.

We have gone beyond the limit of our time already in this paper, and must draw to a close as hastily as possible. The question of church government and identity of the same is no less difficult than identity of doctrine. It needs only careful study and a strict conformity to the teaching of the word of God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II. Tim. iii. 16, 17) The Word is all-sufficient, you say? How do you settle personal troubles in the church? We have the law laid down in Matt. xviii. 15-17; against heresy, Rom. xvi. 17; going to law with each other, I. Cor. vi. 1-4; doing things that will cause offense to others, Matt. xviii. 6, 7; I. Cor. viii. 9-12; law regulating marriages and divorces, Matt. xix.
4-11; Rom. vii. 2, 3; marriage of widows, I. Cor. vii. 39; authority for elders and ordination qualifications, Tit. i. 5; their duty, I. Pet. v. 1-4; duty of the church to elders, I. Pet. v. 5; I. Tim. v. 1-17, 19; election of deacons, Acts vi. 2-6; Paul recognizes both bishops (elders) and deacons, Phil. i. 1; qualifications of bishops and deacons, I. Tim. iii., etc. There is not a relation that we sustain to God or man that is not clearly defined, and all obligations growing out of it set forth.

Now, do not get the idea that this paper attempts to say that we will see, believe and understand all things in the Bible just alike; far from it. For clearness, let us divide the Scripture that applies to Christians, under three heads. First, doctrine or essentials unto salvation, which are the commandments unto Christians that must be obeyed. Second, non-essentials unto salvation, such as the time of Christ's second coming, hereditary depravity, foreordination, predestination, heaven, etc., these will admit of difference of opinion, and you have a right to your opinion, and I have to mine, for our opinions on these things will not alter our destiny if we fail not to do the positive commands. Third, matters of expediency, such as the best means to employ in way of church building, etc., to accomplish the largest results in purifying humanity and presenting them to God without spot or blemish. Then, in doctrine, no opinion of our own, but simply yielding in strict obedience both to the letter and to the spirit of Christ's law. In non-essentials, free ex-
exercise of opinion for yourself, and great charity for the opinion of your brother. In expediency, an exercise of the best common sense and judgment God has endowed us with. Now, brethren, if there is anything in this paper that seems strongly put, it is only because the severity of the case demands it, and, above all, that I believe with all my heart that the Bible teaches it. The only hard things in this paper for a divided church to answer are the direct quotations from God's word condemning divisions and demanding union. If we take exceptions to them, there is but one recourse, and that is to go home, invite God into the secret closet, and there solve the question in the presence of his divine Majesty. But when we do this, let us not forget to open our argument after this manner: "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." God grant that this humble effort may be blessed of him, to provoke much good, and hasten the day that we may be one in Christ, is my prayer. Amen.
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