

There Shall Be Division

THE Christadelphians do not stand off from the general body owning the "Christian" name from any idea that division is better than union. Speaking for ourselves, we mournfully submit to it as a necessity. Union with the great throng would be a present advantage in every sense and way. *But it is not a possibility with any man having discernment of what the Spirit teaches and faithfulness to what it requires.*

There is such a thing as "THE Truth," whether the common run of men know it or not. There is such a thing as "coming out from among" and "having no fellowship with" the indifference and error and evil that prevail, however many may have become insensible to the obligation.

It is the recognition of these that lead to division, and not any insensibility to the advantage of union. The MANY are indifferent: a FEW are faithful. Hence the fermentation. It was Christ's understanding of men, and his foresight of the working of things among them that led him to say—

"From henceforth there shall be division" (Luke 12:52-3)

The result is inevitable in an evil world, so long as there is any faithfulness left.

It is insinuated that withdrawal from errorists is an evil thing. *This is a fashionable sentiment; but it is not in accord with the mind of Christ,* as expressed through the apostles.

Love and union are beautiful. They are the most exquisite manifestations of intelligent life possible upon earth, and the earth will yet see their universal triumph when the purpose of God is finished.

But meanwhile, there are other duties. The loving John, says concerning those who "bring not the doctrine of Christ," that the faithful are to (2 John 10)—

"Receive them not into their house."

And Jesus, in his message through this same John, *commends* one ecclesia for acting on this discrimination, and *condemns* another for *not* acting on it. To Ephesus (Rev. 2:2):

"Thou canst not bear them that are evil, but have tried them that say they are apostles, and hast found them liars."

To Thyatira he says (Rev. 2:20)—

"Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants."

Schism is the result of acting out these principles, and is a GOOD thing if intelligently and faithfully done. It is a painful and apparently "unfriendly" process: but there is no choice with those who would be friendly to GOD first.

The Truth has been an obscure and weak thing from the beginning. From its nature it cannot become popular, because it runs counter to human feeling in so many practical ways not seen at first.

Its true friends know this, and they are not working to obtain public success or even public notice. They are simply carrying out orders. Christ calls for exhibition of the Light, and they exhibit it. Their operations in this respect are necessarily misunderstood by the public which judges from its own motives, and cannot judge in any other way.

The Christadelphians cannot fail, because they are not aiming at what is humanly considered "success." They are simply engaged in doing their duty in the faith of a stupendous, world-stunning success which is impending, and which depends on no human effort.

Christ will shortly show himself on the earth, and put his hand to the work in a way that will startle so-called "Christian" mankind. True Christadelphians plod away with this in view. For this reason, they cannot be quenched by scorn or crushed by failures of any kind.

The very *last* things they desire is the attention and patronage of the "public," which looms so large in all ordinary enterprises. *Nothing is so dangerous to the Truth as "respectability,"* because the Truth is a matter of *God's* importance, while respectability is an affair of *man's* importance. The two cannot work together.

—Bro. Roberts, 1891