

A WORD TO CHRISTIANS.

"That they may all be one." – John 17:21.

In vain ye say, "Let sects and systems fall,
And Jesus' precious name be all in all";
In vain ye say, "By His blest name alone
His members should, while here on earth, be known";
Yet cling to what that gracious Jesus pains –
Sectarian union and sectarian names.

And can it be that "Baptist" sweeter sounds
Than the dear name which each believer owns?
Does "Independent" tell of Jesus' love,
Or efficacious in conversions prove?
Is "Bible Christian" God's appointed term
By which He'd have mankind His own discern?
Or does the spirit in "the Word" insist
Their being known by "Friend" or "Methodist"?
That word is silent – not one single name
Of all the multitudes which now obtain,
Is sanctioned there, but His, whose precious blood.
Has sanctified the family of God.

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're 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! 'twould 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?

Survey the vast profession of the day;
How many men – how few the Lord obey!
Men's systems, rules, and principles abound,
While cleaving to "the Word" how few are found.
"Our cause" now takes the place of Jesus's fold,
"Our church" the place of church of God of old,
"Our pastor" now is bound by space and time,
And paid accordingly – is that divine?
Oft fills his place in priestly robes arrayed,
Spurning alike the vulgar dress and trade,
Before his name the prefix "Reverend" stands,
Which God, in Scripture, for himself demands;
Usurping thus the title due alone
To him who sits on the eternal throne!
(O how unlike the noble few of old,
Whose labors were for souls, and not for gold;
Distinguished by their spirit, not their dress,
Patterns of godlike, holy loveliness!)

For these majestic edifices rise
Of every character, and shape, and size;
Gorgeous in their structure, costly in their plan,
Majestic 'mentoes of the pride of man!

These buildings reared are called "the saints' abode,"
The "sanctuary" and the "house of God";
The "place of worship," and the "temple" too.
Names so applied, the Apostles never knew.
Alas! 'tis earthly worship that they teach,
And hinder souls that would beyond it reach;
Keeping at distance those love bids draw near,
To worship in their priestly character,
Within the temple pitched by heavenly hands,
Where Christ, our Great High Priest, our surety stands.

There is the only proper "saints' abode";
The purchased Church, the only "house of God";
Where Jesus is, our joy it is to know,
Our "place of worship" is, and not below.

No grand conception of the builder's mind –
No taste or elegance, howe'er refined
No lofty eloquence, that charmeth so –
No sounds harmonious that from organs flow –
No "dim religious light" – no high degrees,
Nor gorgeous vestments – can the Father please,
Ah, no! man looketh to the outward part,
But God surveys the secret of the heart;
And that, by man esteemed perfection's height
Is but abomination in His sight.
No man's invention can adorn the cross;

'Tis all abomination in His sight.

Christian, go search the Word of God, and see,
How far the statements here with them agree,
Let not these things unheeded be, I pray,
I speak as to the wise, judge what I say.

R. COSSAR.
