

PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH.

An earnest Christian brother recently called at our office, and after commenting briefly upon the teachings of the TOWER with which he was in sympathy, he remarked that he *belonged* to the Methodist Church, but was constantly trying to show them that sectarianism was unscriptural; that Christ authorized but one church; and that the Apostles taught that there was but one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism; and hence that every sect and creed is influential in dividing and keeping separate the flock of Christ. He had been trying to show them that all who accepted Jesus' sacrifice for their sins and had consecrated themselves to God, should come together for worship and instruction as fellow-members of the ONE BODY of Christ, (their names written in heaven) acknowledging as their Head, Jesus only, and His word as the only authority and only standard for faith and practice.

We heard the brother's very correct views on this subject, and rejoiced that he had seen it so clearly, but readily pointed out to him one reason why all effort had thus far been unavailing. He had not practiced what he had been preaching, his conduct contradicted his words; and the results had justified the adage "Actions speak louder than words." Though seeing clearly that these divisions (1 Cor. 11:19, margin) are wrong, the brother like so many others, had firmly in his mind, that there must be some fetters of human forging, in addition to the Word of God and the spirit of love, to bind the members of Christ as one; and that somehow a pile of bricks and mortar is an essential to "a church;" so that he had, though denouncing the bondage, submitted himself to it. Hence to those with whom he bound himself, his course must have appeared that of a grumbler, merely. Such a position is like to a man attempting to throw away his boots while he stands in them.

What should he have done? – What should all such do? They should begin to practice as well as preach the teachings of Scripture on this subject. So surely as sectism is an injury to THE CHURCH, so

surely as it is built upon false theories and in turn upholds and perpetuates false doctrines, so surely do those who knowing this, give either influence or money in its support, partake of its sins. Such hear and should at once obey the Shepherd's voice, "Come out of her, my people, that ye *partake not* of her sins, and *receive not* of her plagues."

This brother as soon as he came to see the error should have presented the matter before the entire company, and kindly, but plainly, have showed them the error in which all had been, and should then have publicly withdrawn from the sect and requested that his name be "blotted out" of their book; at the same time making clear to them that he was not withdrawing from THE church which is the BODY of Christ, but merely from the BODY of Methodists; that he severed his connection with the head and ruling power of the body of Methodism because he more fully recognized the Headship of Christ and the oneness of His body, and in order that he might be more directly under the control of the *true* Head. He should make clear to them too, that he still loved them, and that so far from withdrawing from the true church in spirit, his coming into fuller relationship to it, led him to see that as a Methodist he had been separating himself from others; that now by [R849 : page 7] coming out of the citadel of Methodism into the broad field of truth and liberty in Christ without bondage or hindrance of men, he was taking a position to which all the consecrated could come from the various sectarian forts; and be thus all one harmonious body to rejoice in and use the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made all his followers free.

Let us remember that grumbling and talking against sectarianism while sticking to it, and avoiding the real issue, is not the honorable straight-forward course in the sight of our fellow men; and yet more important, such a course is not approved of God.

We well know, that many think to revive and remodel the existing sects. Such perhaps forget how unwise it is to thus put their opinions as to expediency against God's wisdom on this subject. As of its

prototype the nominal Jewish church, Jesus said it was useless to patch an old worn garment falling to pieces, with new stuff, so now with the antitype: a totally New order of things is about to be ushered in, and no amount of patching of present sects of the nominal church with the doctrines of the new dispensation would answer God's purpose.

The church now to be organized, which shall during the new dispensation bless the world, is the glorified church of overcomers, and no amount of fixing would fit mere nominal professors, or a human organization, for the work of the new dispensation. The harvest work, is to now select and call out from the nominal mass, the true sheep who are willing to hear the Shepherd's voice, just as in the Jewish "harvest" the Lord and Apostles gathered, not into the nominal system, but out of it, Israelites indeed.

A temporary patch, even if they would allow their systems to be patched, would only be the worse for their systems. They will last longer without the truth than with it. The truth would rend and divide and utterly destroy them. The hour of separation is come. Babylon is falling, and no power can stay her from utter destruction. Let the true sheep heed the voice, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

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