

*Restoration to Divine Ground
or Reunion of Divided Saints:*

*What is Consistent with the Truth
that There is One Body?*

PTP

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Preface to the Fifth Edition

This paper appeared first in 1980 as duplicated notes. About 1992 it was printed as a pamphlet, with some additions. In 1994 it was further augmented. In 2000 some additional quotations were added from W. Kelly, C. H. Mackintosh, and J. N. Darby, with further observations on a number of his statements of truth. For the present (fifth) edition, some more statements from W. Kelly, teaching that “but one communion is recognized on earth,” have been added, along with one from Sir. Edward Denny.

Occasion has been taken to re-typeset this paper and correct some of the typos. Note also that footnotes in braces { } are written by me.

R. A. Huebner

Preface to the Sixth Edition

The following came to hand as a leaflet, allegedly (but incorrectly) by J.N.D. In any event, it is a true statement of principles in accord with the Word of God, and is added here in this sixth edition.

In order to be *truly* gathered {together} to the Name of the Lord Jesus, I personally must maintain both in *doctrine* and practice, the holiness and the purity that becomes God’s House for ever, and I must also be in association with those who seek the same thing

Furthermore, besides this personal cleanliness and purity, there must also be a maintenance of that unity which the Spirit has formed, and which He maintains. The way in which public failure came in at first was by destroying *united testimony* to the Name

You will always find that the path of the faithful remnant connects itself with the character of the failure that has come upon the testimony.

The thought of the Lord Jesus was that there should be on earth a *united company* everywhere maintaining the reality of what God had set up.

This is what we see in the history of the Church at the first. There was but one object moving all the Lord’s people, and this was to testify to the Name of the Lord Jesus. Now this has been entirely broken up. That which was set up in unity is broken up into a thousand fragments, each having *some peculiar testimony* characterizing it, instead of *only one* as at the beginning

The outward testimony has failed, but those who seek to act for God are none the less bound to act in the spirit and integrity of that which the Holy Ghost thus at first set up.

Not that we are to ignore the failure, or attempt anything like restoration on a small scale.

Such a proceeding would show an utter want of sense of the ruin which has come in, and of what is now due to God.

*Restoration to
Divine Ground
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Introduction

R. K. Campbell, an able and prominent teacher of the Word, whom I had known personally years ago, reprinted a paper about the year 1990 called *Reunited Brethren*. It contains a very serious falsehood, namely:

There is presently, by the healing mercies of God in the reunions of 1926, 1940, 1953 and 1974, a reunited company of assemblies holding to the original principles of truth recovered in the so-called "Brethren Movement" of the 1830's.

The truth is that the "reunited company of assemblies" of which he speaks has been formed on the basis of the repudiation of certain recovered principles of truth -- contrary to his claim. Moreover, referring to some who actually do hold the very principles which he, in reality, repudiated, he uses certain language to describe such persons. That language puts them in a bad light and might prejudice those who do not know the facts, prejudicing them against persons of such an alleged character. Before coming to the overwhelming proof of the untruth of his claim, we shall now briefly test his claim by comparing a few statements of J. N. Darby's and his.

The Contrast

J. N. DARBY

The principle or ground of gathering is that of all saints being one in Christ, and as such forming the one church of God on earth. Christians had lost this principle, and it has been recovered; hence much, and rightly, put forward. ¹

This passage [Acts 2] shows the futility of the objection -- an objection refuted besides by a thousand experiments -- that the gathering together in one is an impossibility. It may be so *materially*, and it was no doubt the case here. When they broke bread from house to house, they were not three thousand at once together. Yet that does not hinder, in the mind of God, their being gathered together **in one place in moral and real unity**. ²

Clearly person ought not to separate from the Table while they own it to be the table of the Lord. The very statement proves itself, for so far as the act goes, I am separating myself from the unity of the body of Christ and from the Lord's table. ³

And I think that if anyone, through the flesh, separated from two or three walking godly before God in the unity of the whole body of Christ, it would not merely be an act of schism, but he would necessarily deprive himself of the blessing of God's presence. ⁴

I would never leave an assembly as such, unless I could say when I had left, that it was not God's assembly at all. ⁵

For my part I would never separate from anything, of which I could have an idea that it was the church after having left it. ⁶

I met today in a French tract which had no reference to these matters, a principle I have always accepted, that I would never separate where I could recognize the body as on the principle of the church of God after I had left it. ⁷

Later we shall have other statements by JND that bear on this issue whose thrust is the same as these. I merely wish to draw the contrast between the statements of JND and R. K. Campbell in order that the reader may be aware of a profound difference.

1. *Collected Writings* 33:35.

2. *Collected Writings* 3:367n (1849); boldfaced emphasis is mine.

3. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:398 (1865).

4. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:87.

5. *Notes and Jottings*, p. 451.

6. *Collected Writings* 4:206.

7. *Letters* 3:306.

R. K. CAMPBELL

In his pamphlet titled *Reunited Brethren*, he wrote:

The Lord has no pleasure in the perpetuation of unscriptural divisions among the Lord's people in an unjudged, legal, proud contention for positional selfrighteousness. Separation from fundamental evil is a different matter.

Later, we will examine this statement in some detail, only observing here his method. Note:

1. JND separated from clerisy in Plymouth in 1845 and the fundamentally evil doctrine of B. W. Newton came to light in 1847.
2. JND's teaching concerning the meaning of the truth of the one body is that there can only be one expression of that one body. Because R. K. Campbell can only justify reunion of separated brethren on the basis that they (divided groups) were nonetheless the (an?) expression of the one body, how can it be doubted that the teaching of JND, quoted above, is what he means by "positional selfrighteousness"?
3. The plain implication of his language is to stigmatize those who hold this teaching with the description "unjudged, legal, proud contention . . ." Thus, he, in effect, so characterizes J. N. Darby and W. Kelly -- as well as other brethren quoted in the body of this paper.

It is clear that he is writing from a certain point of view, and his goal is to teach that various groups of divided "brethren" can nonetheless all be gathered [together?] to the Lord's name; i.e., when division occurred, the saints in the divided groups remained gathered [together?] -- Matt. 18:20; [**in one place in moral and real unity**," as JND said?] and that they can reunite on that basis, namely, say, the saints in four divided groups in a city can all be gathered {together?} unto Christ's name. That should strike you at once as an absurd notion.

We saw from JND, above in the very first quotation, that:

Christians had lost this principle, and it has been recovered; hence much and rightly put forward.

I call your attention to the fact that the saints in the reunion company have lost this principle again (actually, explicitly *deny it*) and do not practice the truth of the one body in the same way as JND and other brethren of the 1800's. The basis on which the unions were carried out demonstrates this. It is not carrying out the truth of the one body; rather, it flies in the face of this truth.

Moreover, although the facts are easily demonstrated, it is not really a question of facts. It is a matter of a doctrinal shift with a corresponding shift in practice -- while a pretension is put forward to be "holding to the original principles of truth recovered in the so-called 'Brethren Movement' of the

1830's" while denouncing others who in reality do hold those principles.

The 1926 merger of the Kelly group and the Lowe/Continental group set the pattern for large-scale, brethrenistic ecumenicism and was consummated on the basis that the saints in both divided companies were gathered [together?] to Christ's name in those years of division; and, in a letter signed by 57 brothers, one of the bases of union was stated as this:

We have been together, not seeking to apportion the blame for that division [i.e., the 1881 Kelly division] . . .

To that we may compare this:

We do not intend to conduct a trial of the past, we do not want to prove who was right and who was wrong. All we want to say is: Let us come together. Let us make an end of our divisions -- Pope John XXIII.

Concerning the 1926 merger of the Kelly company (formed in 1881) and the Lowe/Continental company (formed in 1909), N. Noel wrote:

Certainly, Mr. J. N. Darby, if he had been present would have been thankful and delighted as any at the Reunion ... ⁸

The statement that J. N. Darby would have been delighted as any at the reunion is wishful thinking at best. We have the teachings JND held and acted on in his books and letters. J. N. Darby's teachings contradict N. Noel.

I hope to show in this paper that during the 1800s the teachings held by brethren were consistent with this truth: there can be but one expression of the one body. Thus, when division occurs from those gathered together to the name of Christ, those in division have left the Lord's table and are no longer gathered together to Christ's name. Not mergers, but restoration to divine ground is the only right course for those in division.

Why would you complain about political "liberals" rewriting history to suit themselves if you are one who believes the above falsehoods of R. K. Campbell, N. Noel, and others regarding these reunions, claiming as RKC does that this is the practice of the truth of the one body as "early brethren" practiced it. It is a "liberal" rewriting of that history, as amply demonstrated in this paper. You do not want to say that you have changed the principles and therefore you pervert history?

8. *The History of the Brethren* 2:767.

A Little Background

DIVISIONS MULTIPLIED

During the first half of the 19th century, a remarkable working of the Spirit of God resulted in many Christians being gathered together to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ on the ground, or basis, that there is one body (Eph. 4:4). Our subject is the bearing of the Scripture on the history of those saints subsequent to the Bethesda (Open-brethren) division (1848); and I trust the Lord will be pleased to use His truth to exercise more of His dear saints concerning the corporate path He has marked out for His own.

That there have been divisions among those who rejected the loose and evil principle of the so-called Open Brethren, namely that fellowship with leavened persons does not leaven a Christian, is well known to practically anyone who has had contact with those professing to be gathered together to the Lord's name. Beginning in 1881, when Mr. Kelly and others with him found themselves out of fellowship with the Park Street (London) meeting, a series of very sad divisions followed in rapid sequence until there were many divided companies, each claiming to be scripturally gathered [together?], yet not in fellowship with one another. Here is a list of the major cleavages and the appellations commonly given to them:

1881	Kelly	Park Street (London)
1884	Grant	Natural History Hall (Montreal)
1885	Stuart	London
1890	Raven	Bexhill
1909	Lowe/Continental	Tunbridge Wells

While it is not my purpose here to consider the specific issues in these shameful divisions, note that the Stuart and Raven divisions entailed fundamentally evil doctrine. In every case listed, the truth of the one body, as expressed in Ephesians and in 1 Corinthians, was at stake and under attack by the Enemy. As to causes, 1 Kings 12:24 is relevant.⁹

THE REUNION 'REMEDY'

Rightly feeling in some measure the dishonor to the Lord Jesus Christ caused by these divisions, some brethren sought an adjustment through the idea of union of divided companies of the Lord's people. The way in which this was carried out was on the basis of mutual recognition that the saints in the several divided groups, though divided from one another and not breaking bread in fellowship

9. See A. H. Rule's "Divisions Among The People of God and Their Cause," *Selected Ministry of A. H. Rule*, 2:174.

with one another, were all nonetheless gathered [together?] to the Lord's name during those years of separation.

The first major union took place in 1926 and involved the Kelly brethren and the Lowe/Continental brethren who rejected Tunbridge Wells (1909).

Another union was effected in 1940 on the same basis. This involved the Kelly-Lowe/Continental company (KLCs), formed in 1926, and also many of the saints in England who had previously accepted the 1909 decision of the saints gathered together to the name of the Lord Jesus in Tunbridge Wells, England.¹⁰

After a period of negotiation, the numbers of the union company were further augmented on the same basis in 1953. Grant-Stuart brethren, who had previously linked themselves together, joined with the Kelly, Lowe/Continental, Ex-Tunbridge Wells company. Then in 1974, the previously formed Booth-Glanton group merged with this group on the basis that all were gathered [together?] in the intervening years. The Glanton group was formed in 1908 over an ecclesiastical division in 1908 within the Raven group formed in 1890.

Those who stood apart from this union idea, and have insisted that restoration to divine ground is an individual matter (cp. 2 Chron. 30; 1 Cor. 11:19) have been accused of ecclesiastical pride and of resisting the "grace and love of God to His failing people." While the Lord is the One, the only One, whose prerogative it is to judge motives, we believe the following pages will adequately demonstrate that the basis upon which the reunions have been effected is not only unscriptural, but is also at variance with those principles which moved saints, gathered together to the name of the Lord Jesus, in the nineteenth century.

10. Concerning this, R. K. Campbell wrote:

This cancelled [sic] the division that took place in England around 1909-1910.

However, we must sorrowfully record that this reunion was not generally accepted by those in North America of the "T. W." fellowship. They remain a separated company presently. We may designate them as the "Natural History Hall" (N.H.H.) group that excommunicated F. W. Grant in 1884 at Montreal, Canada (*Reunited Brethren*, revised ed. 1990).

Instead of moving his designation from T.W., 1909, to N.H.H., 1884, why did he skip Bexhill, 1890 (which rejected F. E. Raven and Greenwich, England, assembly for sheltering FER)? Did he wish to avoid fixing his readers' eyes on that issue? It is an extremely relevant fact that the Glantons were in fellowship with FER and Greenwich between 1890-1908; and in 1974 the K-LC - G-S (Grant-Stuart) reunion group merged with the Glantons on the basis that they were always gathered [together?] to the Lord's name while in division, including 1890-1908. He has thus avoided the subject of the leavened fellowship of the Glantons with F. E. Raven and Greenwich.

Observe that in both these persons (C. E. Stuart and F. E. Raven) an issue of fundamental evil was raised.

These unions have involved changes in belief, concerning truths connected with the one body, in order to consummate those unions on the basis of mutual recognition of divided groups (brethrenistic ecumenicism). Some of these doctrinal changes involve the following:

1. The doctrine of the Lord's table. For example, when J. N. Darby was asked:

Why cannot you say the Lord's table is to be found in denominations? . . . The Lord's table seems to me to be an external privilege; and as such connected with the profession of Christianity.

He answered:

It is not on a word I rest; but the Lord's table is not the expression of the external thing. The one loaf is the expression of the one body: baptism is the rite connected with the external thing. The table of the Lord therefore expresses unity, association with Christ; and this is the whole ground of the apostle's argument in 1 Cor. 10. Now they are avowedly in division: Baptist tables where others cannot go . . . If they are the Lord's table, why should not I go to them? it would be pure schism. ¹¹

The change in doctrine about the Lord's table involved two steps (without implying that all in the union company have arrived at step two):

- (a) The divided groups of "brethren" are all gathered [together?] to the Lord's name (at the Lord's table) with perhaps the exception of the Raven-Taylorites (and Open Brethren?); or,
- (b) All Christians are at the Lord's table though not all are gathered to the Lord's name. ¹²

2. The reunions are an implicit denial of what was formerly taught about 1 Cor. 11:19. In scripture there is no other word found for the companies of divided saints than heresies, i.e., sects. Commenting on schism in 1 Cor. 11:18 ("divisions" in JND's translation) and heresy in 1 Cor. 11:19 ("sects" in JND's translation), W. Kelly wrote:

We have here important help toward deciding the difference between these terms as well as the precise nature of each. Schism is a division within the assembly, while they all still abide in the same association as before, even if severed in thought or feeling through fleshly partiality or aversion. Heresy, in its ordinary scriptural application as here (not its ecclesiastical usage), means a party among the saints, separating from the rest in consequence of a still stronger following of their own will. A schism within if unjudged tends to a sect or party without, when on the one hand the approved become manifest, who reject these narrow and selfish ways, and on the other the party-man is

11. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:410, September, 1877.

12. See, for example P. J. Loizeaux's, *The Lord's Table: Who Has It?*

self-condemned, as preferring his own particular views to the fellowship of all saints in the truth. (Compare Titus 3:10, 11.)¹³

In effect, these unions state that there was no Stuart sect, no Grant sect, no Raven sect (from 1890-1908), no Lowe/Continental sect, no Booth sect, in clear defiance of 1 Cor. 11:18,19, where we learn that an open break is a heresy.

3. The reunion company formed in 1926 (the original K-LCs), having united in 1953 with a previous merger of Grant-Stuarts, no longer regards C. E. Stuart's teaching concerning propitiation made in heaven as fundamentally evil. This will be discussed later.

4. The Glantons emerged from the Raven group (1890 origin) in 1908, then joined in 1921-1923 with the Grants and formed the Booth-Glantons in 1928, and subsequently joined the union company (in 1974) on the ground that all were gathered [together?] all along. The implication here is that the Ravenites were on divine ground at least from 1890 to 1908 in spite of the leavened association with F. E. Raven. (See my *F. E. Raven's Evil Doctrines on the Person of Christ and Their Present Bearing*, and *The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead*). The meaning of their having united with the Glantons on the ground of mutual recognition is that the Glantons were gathered [together?] to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ all those 18 years that the Glantons were in fellowship with Greenwich and F. E. Raven (died 1905) and his fundamentally evil teachings.

5. Those who continue with the doctrine taught during the 1800s and who continue to regard the doctrine of C. E. Stuart and F. E. Raven as fundamentally evil are characterized as pharisaical, proud, making high claims about "exclusive possession of the Lord's table," justifying themselves, Laodicean, seeking to trace continuity with JND in order to be the right party, etc. (cp. 2 Chron. 30:10).

* * * * *

What was it that gave rise to this? What was it that caused our brethren in the union company to change doctrine? Is it the desire to unite without owning the sin of sect and/or the evil with which they are in fellowship? Yes, it was the avoidance of owning the sin in its root. It was the avoidance of restoration to divine ground by claiming divine ground was never forsaken. It was the avoidance of 2 Chron. 30:11.

Points 3 and 4 show that the union company is a sect of evil associations. "A little leaven leavens the whole lump" (Gal. 5:9). We shall consider points 3 and 4 again later on.

13. *Notes on 1 Corinthians*, p. 178.

The Spirit Gathers Us Together to Christ

It is important to understand that the Spirit, using the Word of God, causes people to be born again. It is also the Spirit, using the Word, Who causes saints to be gathered together unto Christ's name. The church is not a voluntary association where people gather themselves. Gathering is a divine operation.

We must now very briefly glance at our third point, namely, what is the power by which the assembly is gathered. Here again man and his doings are set aside. It is not man's will choosing, nor man's reason discovering; nor man's judgment dictating; nor man's conscience demanding; it is the Holy Ghost gathering souls to Jesus. As Jesus is the only center, so the Holy Ghost is the only gathering power. The one is as independent of man as the other. It is "where two or three are *gathered*." It does not say "where two or three are met." Persons may meet together round any center, on any ground, by any influence, and merely form a society, an association, a community. But the Holy Ghost gathers saved souls only to Christ . . .

This is a very simple truth. A soul led by the Holy Ghost will gather only to the name of the Lord; and if we gather to aught else, be it a point of truth, or some ordinance or another, we are not in that matter led by the Holy Ghost. It is not a question of life or salvation. Thousands are saved by Christ that do not own Him as their center. They are gathered to some form of church government, some favorite doctrine, some special ordinance, some gifted man. The Holy Ghost will never gather to any one of these. He gathers only to a risen Christ. This is true of the whole Church of God upon earth; and each local assembly, wherever convened, is the expression of the whole.¹⁴

. . . to own in them as gathered in Christ's name and by His Spirit, the assembly of God which can bind and loose . . .¹⁵

. . . and thus it is with every assembly gathered upon true ground, "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of God"; it is, under the guardian hand, and care of the Holy Ghost, the indwelling Spirit, "the habitation of God by the Spirit."¹⁶

For real gathering the Holy Ghost must gather . . .¹⁷

Gathered by the Spirit around the person of the Lord at His table.¹⁸

The *power* by which we are gathered is divine, for it is the Holy Ghost.¹⁹

14. C. H. M., *Misc. Writings*, vol. 3, "The Assembly of God," pp. 34, 35.

15. *The Present Testimony*; the reference has escaped me.

16. *The Present Testimony* 2:154,155 (1850).

17. *Helps By The Way*, New Series 2:208 (1880).

18. Ed. Dennett, *Twelve Letters to Young Believers*, p. 64.

19. C. H. M., *Notes On Deuteronomy* 2:189.

For practical fellowship then, while the Spirit gathers by love He preserves from evil by holiness; yet He gives us such a hold on the good that it is uppermost in our minds and hearts, and evil, as by very necessity of our communion with God, is left. The Spirit who gathers in grace yet maintains in light. ²⁰

If the Holy Ghost gathers, the Lord is there. ²¹

Reader, the Spirit does not gather you there and me here in separation from one another. The idea that saints who have divided can be gathered [together?] to the Lord's name leads to just such a false notion. It is error, to be refused, whatever the consequences. The Spirit gathers not in divisions. At the time of the 1890 division, did the Spirit gather [together?] souls to Christ in the Raven company? What? You have fallen so far in doctrine as to believe that the Ravenites were at the Lord's table and gathered [together?] unto CHRIST'S name? Ask the Lord for eyesalve, then. Here are a few samples of how W. Kelly, in his *F. E. R. Heterodox*, characterized the wicked doctrines of F. E. Raven:

fundamental error (p. 69, 91, 99, 103).

from Satan (p. 112).

evil spirit at work (p. 85). smoke from the pit (p. 85).

idea inbreathed by Satan (p. 91).

blasphemy (p. 99).

devilish (p. 28).

light of death (p. 43).

mission ... from an opposing and evil spirit (p. 43).

When the assembly at Bexhill refused Mr. Raven and Greenwich (1890) for supporting him, Greenwich and all who did not bow to the action taken in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ at Bexhill were no longer gathered together to the Name of Christ at the divine center.

In 1908 those known as Glantons formed a company out of the Ravenites (which were formed in 1890) due to an ecclesiastical matter in the town of Glanton. In 1974 this company ²² united with the Kelly-Lowe/Continental -

20. *Bible Witness and Review* 3:394 (1881).

21. J. B. Stoney, *Lessons of the Sanctuary*, p. 32, (1889).

22. Glanton-Booth (Booths were an offshoot of Grants) by a previous merger. Where is the confession that the Glantons were ever off divine ground? And if they never were, then were F. E. Raven and his followers on divine ground, at least from 1890-1908. There is a pretension abroad

(continued...)

Grant-Stuart company on the ground that all were gathered [together?] to Christ while separated. This shocking trampling upon precious, divine truth concerning the one body avoids admitting departure from divine ground and really undermines other divine principles as well, such as:

The point of departure is the point of recovery.

The passage of time does not change the character of a moral action.

A moral stream cannot rise above its source.

Association with leaven leavens.

Are we able to understand how the disobedient recognize one another and continue to augment their numbers, preferring numbers and the society of brethren to divine principles and divine ground, covering all with statements about love and grace -- while mocking (see point 5 above) those who desire by God's grace to continue in the recovered truth of the 1800s? ²³

Restoration to Divine Ground as Illustrated in 2 Chronicles 30-31

(Extract from W. Kelly)

But Hezekiah was not content with this (chap. 30).

He sent to all Israel and Judah and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh that they should come to the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem to keep the passover unto Jehovah God of Israel.

This seemed, no doubt, a very bold thing, and I have not a doubt that they considered that the king was behaving in a very presumptuous manner. What business had he to send to all Israel? He was only the king of Judah! Why should he not be content with his own people? He was proselyting. They did not like it. They thought it was exceedingly improper to be taking away the Israelites to Jerusalem. But Hezekiah was thinking of God. Hezekiah was filled with a sense of what was due to the claims of Jehovah. Jehovah had set His house in one place for all Israel.

22. (...continued)

that the evil doctrines were developed in the Raven group after 1908, by J. Taylor, Sr. This is easily disproved, and has been done in *The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead*, available from the publisher.

23. During the 1990s, division among the KLCs has proceeded due to many shifting to doctrines of unholiness and looseness that permit a wider fellowship, based on neutrality and indifference to what is due Christ.

Now there is nothing that gives a person such boldness as this, and nothing, also, that sets love to work so earnestly as this. If we are merely contending for doctrines of our own, it does seem rather strong to expect other people to receive them. If it is merely my own doctrine, I had better make myself happy with my own affairs. But if it is God's grace, if it is God's worship, if it is God's way, has it not a claim upon all that are God's? The moment you see that, you can go forward; and you can appeal to the conscience of all that belong to God, that they should be faithful to God's own will and Word. And what I want the children of God to see now clearly, and all the children of God as far as He is pleased to give it efficacy, is that they are set not merely upon something better than what other people have, but upon what is God's will, because that must be the best of all; and inasmuch as they have got the Book of God, they can see and are responsible to find this out for themselves. Anything that is herein has a claim upon the child of God -- and more particularly as regards the worship of God. I grant you that in human things what is of man has a claim; but not so in divine things. "Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

I think it was in this spirit, therefore, not trying to be a Caesar over Israel, or even recalling Israelites to their allegiance to himself, which perhaps he might have done, that Hezekiah so acted. He was a man of faith, and he knew well that it was of God, the rending of the ten tribes from the house of David; and therefore he did not ask the tribes for himself, but he did ask them for God. He sent out "to all Israel and Judah" (chap. 30). And so should we do now. We ought not to desire the world. Let men, if they will, seek the world and the pretended worship of the world. Let them see "the masses," as they say. Let them have the masses if they will, and if the masses are weak enough to follow them. But the business of faith is to call upon all who have faith in the name of the Lord, and to get them to follow His Word. So did Hezekiah now, according to what God gave him. "And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation." What I call your attention particularly to is this: nobody thought of all this for all these years nobody thought of it but Hezekiah. The more you draw near to God, the more you love the people of God. It was because God was so great in Hezekiah's eyes that the people of God were so dear to Hezekiah; and so he claimed them for God, and called them to come out from their abominations.

They established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel from Beer-Sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto Jehovah God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written!

How quickly people departed from what was written!

So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, "Ye children of Israel" -- "turn again unto Jehovah God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and He will return to the remnant of you that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria. And be not ye like your fathers and like your brethren which trespassed against Jehovah God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation as ye see. Now, be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto Jehovah, and enter into His sanctuary, which He hath sanctified for ever."

God's principles do not change. It is all a mistake that because the apostles are gone, the apostles' truth is gone. Not so; it abides, and forever. It is always binding on the people of God. So was it with the sanctuary in Jerusalem.

So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them.

As it was then, so it is now. The more true, the more it be according to God, so the more is the contempt of men who have chosen to blend the world with Christ.

Nevertheless, divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem.

In the most unlikely and distant quarters, and where no one could possibly look for them, there are those that have humbled themselves and have come.

Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king, and of the princes, by the word of Jehovah.

And there they assembled.

And they arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away and cast them into the brook Kidron. Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month, and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of Jehovah, and they stood in their place

-- because this was in consequence of some not being ready. The priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently. The second month was the gracious provision that God made in the case of uncleanness in the wilderness, as we may see in Num. 9:10, 11.²⁴

(Extract from C. H. Mackintosh)

And now, in reference to the actings of the good king Hezekiah, let us see how his faith was regarded; let us mark how he was treated when he sought,

24. W. Kelly, *Lessons {sic} on Chronicles*, pp. 100-102.

according to his measure, to carry out practically the truth of God. For be it well remembered, Hezekiah did not rest satisfied with offering the sacrifice for "all Israel." He not merely established the ground on which God's people might be gathered, but he sought to gather them thereon.

And observe how he did this.

So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover *unto the Lord God of Israel* at Jerusalem: *for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written . . .*

This, if rightly viewed, was a most touching and powerful appeal. Hezekiah takes the highest ground, and would have others to do the same. He was himself consciously on God's ground, and he would have others to occupy it with him. His eye rested on the God of Abraham -- on the land of Israel -- on Jerusalem -- and on the whole nation of God's people. It might, and doubtless did, in the judgment of many, savor of presumption in Hezekiah to put forth such very lofty language, to speak as if he and those with him were alone right, and all their brethren wrong. But that would entirely depend upon the spirit in which the letter was received and read. To pride and selfsufficiency such an appeal was absolutely intolerable; but where there was true contrition and humility it would be received with a hearty approval. Thus, in fact, it proved, as we read in the scripture before us. "So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: *but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.* Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun *humbled themselves*, and came to Jerusalem."

This brethren, is just as it will ever be. Faith and its actings will be laughed at by those who are on false ground, those who are walking in the sparks of their own kindling. But the broken and contrite heart gets the blessing which ever flows from taking God at His word, and acting on His eternal truth. Those who humbly bowed to Hezekiah's appeal gathered themselves together on God's ground, and owned God's center. They did not say, "It is vain to take such lofty ground in the face of the nation's actual condition. It is the height of folly and presumption for Hezekiah to attempt to carry out such principles amid the hopeless ruin of the dispensation." No; they "humbled themselves," and came to Jerusalem. In true humility of mind they gathered themselves together to carry out God's object -- namely, to keep the passover. ²⁵

25. C. H. M., *Unity: What Is It? and Am I Confessing It?*, pp. 15-17.

*Before These Divisions Occurred, Brethren
Taught that You Must Test Profession
of the Truth of the One Body*

(Extract from J. L.)

Let us now look at the way in which this truth of one body is declared -- the way in which it is shown out. In 1 Cor. 10:17 we find these words: "We, being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread (or loaf)." Here we see that in the one loaf on the Lord's table we have that which symbolizes the unity of the one body: many particles bound together; many parts, one whole. The responsibility of the believer is always according to the character of the relationship in which he is, and God always expects us to act according to what He has made us. Having made us His children by faith in Christ Jesus, our responsibility is to be "imitators of God as dear children." But, besides this, from that at which we have just been looking we see that God has by His Spirit made us members of that body of which Christ is the Head, a body formed and maintained here on earth as a present thing by the Holy Ghost. What, then, is the responsibility of the believer in *this* relationship? We find it laid down in Eph. 4:3: "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The way in which this is practically carried out is by walking in the fellowship of that Spirit -- the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of truth. To walk in His fellowship, therefore, the saint must walk in holiness -- that is, separation from evil, and in truth -- that is, according to the revealed will of God.

We see, then, that God has a ground of gathering for His people in these last days, and that is the church of God, the body of Christ. The One to whom they are gathered is Christ, the one alone center, by the one Spirit. To endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit" is the responsibility of the believer, and the question for each is: Am I answering to God's revealed truth in this respect? Am I occupying the place our Lord has made for me outside the camp -- the ground which God has provided? Am I endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?

The mere profession of occupying such a ground is not sufficient. All such profession must be tested, as it is possible to occupy a ground assuming to be God's, without the origin of that ground being divine. It is possible to adopt the theory without the practice, and such has happened. There are two indispensable requisites to be fulfilled ere any ground can be acknowledged as being God's, and therefore as having a claim on the saints of God. Those requisites are: (1) That the origin of the ground be divine. (2) That the practice characterizing that ground be consistent with the character of Him whose ground it assumes to be.

Now, as to the fact God has but one ground: "There is one body and one Spirit." The center to which God gathers on that ground is, one Lord: "There is one Lord." The power by which God gathers is one: one Spirit.

When, therefore, the ground is really divine in its origin -- is really God's -- saints will be gathered on *one* ground, to *one* Lord, by *one* Spirit. When so gathered they will own, and be in communion with, all those previously gathered after this manner on this ground. To take a place apart from any so gathered, who were walking according to the truth, would be to be guilty of the sin of independency, to assume a ground which is unknown in Scripture, and which is a dishonor to the Holy Ghost. It may be that where this occupying of an independent ground has taken place, there may be a great many apparently right things done by those occupying it, but the doing of these will never constitute the *ground* right; and the first really right action of every saint who is truehearted to his Lord will be to depart from such a ground.

As to the second requisite. For a ground to be God's, the practice allowed there must correspond not only morally but doctrinally with the character of Him whose ground it is -- the *Holy* God, who gathers by His Holy Spirit to the name of His *Holy* Son, the Lord Jesus Christ -- "He that is *holy*, he that is *true*." That is, a ground to be God's must be characterized by *holiness and truth*.

When, therefore, the origin of a ground assuming to be God's is not divine, or when its characteristic features do not correspond with the character of Him whose ground it assumes to be, such a ground has no claim whatever to be recognized as God's ground, even though each individual soul on it were a true believer.

In a day when, alas, such grounds are to be found, having their origin on the one hand in independency and that human arrangement which is a dishonor to the Holy Ghost, or on the other, in a neutrality which manifests indifference to the glory of Christ it surely becomes every saint of God to search the word in dependence on God, that he may have His mind as to his place and pathway. What is the responsibility of the saint when things are so? We have already seen it. To maintain at all cost the unity of the Spirit towards those who occupy such a ground. How is this unity of the Spirit to be maintained towards such? *By not walking*, or having communion, with them; by separation *from evil to Christ*.

May we ever remember that the occupation of God's ground for His people in these last days is not optional with us. The Lord has at the cost of Himself made His people's place; "the corn of wheat" has fallen into the ground and died, and now brings forth much fruit. The believer, therefore, is responsible to his Lord to occupy the place that Lord has made for him. He owes it to Christ to do so. By neglecting or refusing to do so he fails in loyalty and

faithfulness to his Lord, and cannot be held guiltless.

If the religious world around have assumed the place of the camp, the believer's place is outside: to "go forth" is his responsibility, a responsibility he cannot evade without the most solemn consequences.

If Christians, professing to see the evil of the camp, have gone forth professing to occupy a divine ground, and yet are not on that which God has Himself established, and by His Spirit maintains -- a ground not characterized by holiness and truth, where there is either indifference to the glory of Christ or dishonor to the Holy Ghost -- the place of those true to Christ, of those who fulfil their responsibility -- "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" -- is outside, apart from such.

We have to remember that if we would be in the current of God's thoughts we must have before us God's Christ above God's people; God's ground, not man's organizations; the unity of God's Spirit, not the unity of Christians; Christ's glory, not Christian likings.

The Lord keep us true and faithful to Himself, through His grace ministered, His strength perfected, in weakness. ²⁶

Some Additional Comments Made before the 1881 Division, Concerning Ecclesiastical Position

And who that understand the value of having clean and sure ground for our feet, amidst all confusion and that our faith may stand not in the wisdom of men but in the power of God, who can estimate this blessing enough? ²⁷

But do not let your own distinctive position or ground be lost sight of or covered over; to quote a favorite text, 'Let them return to thee, but go not thou to them.' ²⁸

There are several points connected with our position, as gathered together in {unto} the name of Jesus . . . ²⁹

The position is of God, and must be abided by. Our weakness in it is most

26. J. L., "Outside The Camp," *Food for the Flock* 4:202-207 (1877).

27. *The Present Testimony* 3:450 (1851).

28. *Ministry of G. V. Wigram* 2:85.

29. W. Trotter, *Five Letters on Worship and Ministry in the Spirit*, p. 1.

palpable to others; let us not hide the condition from ourselves.³⁰

And, secondly, I should fear there was a reluctance to take honestly the reproach of the position, the true separated position of saints, and {the wish} to be able to say to others, I do not belong to them, I only go as a believer. I only go as a believer, but then I accept the position.³¹

It is a poor thing indeed to occupy a pure position with less moral power than those who are on lower ground.³²

I think of brethren, not of myself, that they may be kept in unity on true divine ground as the testimony of God, as I believe they are.³³

*When Divisions Came In, Brethren
Became More Pointed and Specific
That There Can be Only
One Expression of the One Body*

WILLIAM KELLY

There are many statements in *The Bible Treasury*, edited by W. Kelly, that show that he taught that there was but one communion owned of God. Let us look at some relevant quotations. Here is what he published in 1905, the year before his death:

The Christian student, nay the highest teacher, is not called to any such investigation as judging the scriptures, but to judge himself and others, and even what assumes to be the church, by the scriptures. Indeed it became a necessary question to judge *which* is the church, from the time that it openly split into bodies holding no intercommunion, aggravated since the Reformation by the gradual swarm of rival societies claiming to be churches. Thus, only one can be according to scriptural truth; and if this one had just grounds, it would surely take the place, not of boast, but of humiliation and grief that things had come to such a pass, where once was blessed unity.³⁴

The following also appeared in 1905:

Matt. 18:15-20 supposes but one communion, no matter in how many places even in the same city they may meet. The church or assembly here and

30. *The Present Testimony* 4:158 (1853).

31. *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 31:367.

32. J. G. Bellett (died 1864) cited in W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 239 (1901).

33. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:455.

34. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:221, 222

everywhere else in scripture implies inter-communion, and never allows of a fellowship independent and differing one from another . . .

But it is a delusion to fancy that if souls break away from divine unity for divers doctrines and governments of man's device, they are notwithstanding gathered to the Lord's name. Sect or heresy is insubjection to the Lord, whatever the plea to vindicate such a departure.³⁵

Here we have W. Kelly's testimony to what he held in 1905, the year before His death. A *construction* (inconsistent with his published statements) has been placed upon a letter found after his death, supposedly in his hand-writing, that he suggested reunion. W. Kelly did not recognize those not in fellowship with him as being gathered together to the Lord's name.

C. H. Brown wrote:

It is a matter of common knowledge that Mr. Kelly himself up to his decease in 1906 was most emphatic in his denunciation of Park St. As late as Mar. 29, 1905, he wrote, "Are they (Park St.) not in an unsound ecclesiastical position? . . . I should never break bread save with such of his (a Park St. brother) associates as feel the sin and shame of what he defends and excuses."³⁶

Here is another item from 1902:

Secondly, you know that brethren as such went back to the primitive standing of God's church, gathered only unto the name of the Lord Jesus. To this we have adhered at cost of suffering in 1880-1 and since, as your father well knew and refused with us to endorse the new departure of the Park St. party, which afterwards divided into Ravenites and Anti-Ravenites, to say nothing of the Loose or Open Brethren who long before went off from us. I mention this to satisfy you that the resumption of meeting at P -- is *not* adding a third or second meeting, but simply enabling those, now debarred by circumstances, to remember the Lord in true scriptural simplicity. They, and they alone, would meet as all did, not only from the beginning of Brethren but from the day of Pentecost, however feeble a representative as the Lord provided for in Matt. 18:20; and, till they meet on this divine principle, there is no *true* representative in C --. Think of the solemnity of this, and of your being faithful or not, my dear young friend, I beseech you. Be sure that I will pray earnestly for you. yours in Him, W. K.³⁷

Regarding Matt. 18:20, in 1902 he wrote:

Q. Matt. 18:20. It has been recently stated that men like Mr. J. N. Darby sought to help out their interpretation [of this scripture] "by a quite

35. "Unto My Name, Matt. 18:20," *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:296 (1905).

36. W. Kelly, *Why Many Saints were Outside the Park St. of 1881*, London, C. A. Hammond, pp. 8, 10, quoted by C. H. Brown, *Ask for the Old Paths*, p. 2.

37. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 4:176 (1902).

unwarrantable change in the translation of the word εἰς ἔμὸν ὄνομα which they rendered *unto* my name, and took to import a gathering to Christ's Name as a rallying point." Is there any doubt of the right version? or any warrant for so evil an imputation?

A. None whatever for either: no true scholar could have weighed the usage and given such an opinion. The evidence is decisively for the change. The aim for opposing it is to set aside the ecclesiastical character of the context, on which the Lord has impressed it so indelibly, that almost all the jarring parties of Christendom recognize that character, though they naturally overlook a word which none of them heeds, and which does mean a living and exclusive center. ³⁸

And who "recently stated" that? It was W. B. Neatby, a very hostile critic, who also said:

Their claim to be exclusively the recipients of the promised blessing of Matthew 18:20, will now be readily understood. ³⁹

The following is extracted from a paper entitled *Tunbridge Wells: Its Question Considered*.

Now let us quote from W. Kelly's *Bible Treasury*:

Now if brethren deny that there exists this unity for the saints to keep, we do not wonder that to them one thing is pretty much as good as another. As to unity, they have themselves nothing that is divine to contend for, and do not see the use of contending, and would have us give up the truth we have learned, and for peace sake to resolve ourselves into a mere sect, like denominations, and go on comfortably as they do. But no! it was the true mother of the child who exclaimed with horror at the decree of Solomon to divide it. The other had nothing to lose by it and could afford to consent; but it only betrayed the true state of the case -- she had nothing to lose. The true one had a living mother's interest in a living child, whose life was most precious to her: she could not and would not consent to such a compromise. **We shall never really help our brethren by lowering our ground, or relaxing our hold on the truth of God as to the character and testimony of the church. 'Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.'** Jer. 15:19. If this seems to be taking very high ground, be it so: we dare not contend for lower. God makes no mistakes, and the unity must be real. Can it, however, be real in His eyes, when the known and avowed elements of schism are NOT RENOUNCED for the truth's sake, but only kept out of sight for the peace of the occasion; to be deliberately and systematically acted upon and cherished as before? ⁴⁰

38. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 4:94 (1902).

39. *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 207 (1901).

40. J. R. Gill, *Tunbridge Wells: Its Question Considered*, Oak Park, Bible Truth Publishers, p. 22, (continued...)

We observe, then, that W. Kelly held fast the truth, as JND expressed it, of “**being gathered together in one place in moral and real unity,**” after the Kelly (1881), Grant (1884), Stuart (1885) and Raven (1890) divisions, though he was not in that one place. Alas, in merger of the Kelly company and the Lowe/Continental company in 1926, those who had been in the Kelly company publicly repudiated the teaching of William Kelly on there being but one expression of the one body.

There are indications, which need not detain us here, that W. Kelly did desire a resumption of fellowship with separated brethren. Note well, that we have here the Scripture basis upon which that could occur, not reunion on mutual recognition (R. K. Campbell’s, etc., principle), but rather their restoration to divine ground, ground that WK believed he occupied.

Before quoting W. Kelly’s strictures on C. E. Stuart’s evil teaching that propitiation was made in heaven, the following three quotations from W. Kelly are added for this edition:

There was but one communion on earth according to the Lord’s will and the apostles’ teaching.⁴¹

I affirm that the Lord intended one communion all over the world, that He sanctions this and nothing else, and that, consequently, the Church of God universally has been unfaithful to her trust and failed in her responsibility. For the Scriptural unity of the Church was not merely the coexistence of many independent bodies, as in the Churches of Rome, Greece, England, etc., even if they were ever so friendly, which they are not and cannot be, and if there were no dissenting communities rising up by their side among them. It was one body, animated and energized by the one Spirit of God -- one body, not in theory only, but in practice here below. There were churches of Galatia and of Achaia, there were saints at Rome, there was the church in Jerusalem, in Antioch, in Ephesus; yet was there but one holy catholic church in reality on earth, so that if I were a member of one, I was a member of all, and if a minister at all, I was a minister everywhere. Whereas, in our day, if I belong to the Greek Church, I am therefore not a member of the Church of England, and if I were an English priest or bishop, I should be ipso facto not even a member and much less a clergyman of the Church of Rome.⁴²

Geographically there may be ever so many churches, but there is only one church of God: but one communion is recognized on earth. No doubt many persons are exceedingly sore as to the point; it is usual when people feel their weakness. What they need to see is that it is no question of opinion or will, but of submission to

40. (...continued)

n.d.

41. *Unity of the Church in Inspired History.*

42. *The Church of the Scriptures.*

God and His word.⁴³

Now we should observe that W. Kelly repeatedly denounced C. E. Stuart's doctrine of propitiation being made in heaven using such characterizations as:

The fundamental error which Mr. S. has embraced (*The Bible Treasury*, 16:190) . . . his evil view (*ibid.*, p. 191).

Even B. W. N. {Newton} and Bethesda {beginning of Open Brethren} would be ashamed to put such an affront on Christ's atoning death (*ibid.*) . . . readers who are not leavened will see . . . (*ibid.*, p. 207). Mr. S.'s heterodoxy (*ibid.*).

In *The Strange Doctrine on Propitiation*, W. Kelly pointed out that several in fellowship with himself were put away (excommunicated) when they were discovered to hold C. E. Stuart's doctrine of propitiation made in heaven. He wrote:

No person known to hold it has been, or would be, tolerated in fellowship.

At the 1953 Patterson NJ reunion negotiations, which I attended, between Grant-Stuarts and KLCs (Kelly-Lowe/Continental) the Grant-Stuarts asserted that C. E. Stuart's doctrine of propitiation made in heaven was "serious error to be rejected but not fundamental" evil (stated by F. W. C. Wurst, of Roselle NJ) and this carried the day against the objection of three K-L/Cs who said it was fundamental evil (They adjusted their consciences!) J. A. Harrow, of New Zealand, was in fellowship with the Grant/Stuarts and he held the doctrine!

In *The Bible Treasury* 18:60 (1890) article, "The Denial of Propitiating God By Sacrifice," the C. E. Stuart adherent, Walter Scott, was criticized by W. Kelly thus:

But I affirm that the author had abandoned the truth of God on propitiation in a way which the simplest believer in the most unenlightened sect, if orthodox, would denounce as false and evil . . . It is not merely (as in 1886 {C. E. Stuart's doctrine on propitiation being made in heaven}) a fable supplanting the truth; it is since then an open contradiction of a most essential element of propitiation as presumably the last error {Walter Scott's} flowed from the first {C. E. S.'s}. For if propitiation be only in heaven after death, there can be in it no abandonment of God, no suffering of Christ. Both errors {W. S.'s and C. E. S.'s} make shipwreck of the faith; but the former is the parent of the latter, and necessarily involves it.

On p. 83 W. Kelly condemned "fellowship" with those in such error.

It is evident that the leaders in the reunion company have been redefining the *fundamentally evil character* of the doctrine into *mistakes*. The truth is, the ground they are on is indifference to the fundamentally evil doctrines of C. E. Stuart and F. E. Raven, proved in the case of Glantons by uniting with them on

43. *The Bible Treasury* 16:81, 82 (1886).

the basis of mutual recognition, as if the Glantons were gathered [together?] to Christ's name while in fellowship with FER and Greenwich from 1890-1908. No doubt this pretends to be love. But, **“Let love be unfeigned; abhorring evil; cleaving to good . . .”** (Rom. 12:9). And, it is thought to be gracious to allow one in fellowship to hold evil doctrine as long as he doesn't teach it.

But I have a few things against thee: that thou hast there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam . . . So thou also hast those who hold the doctrine of Nicolaitanes in like manner. Repent therefore . . .” (Rev. 2:14,15).

God's Word judges them for tolerating such in their assembly.

W. Kelly wrote:

To meet on divine ground, of course separate from every unscriptural form, as far as we know it, is the aim of “Brethren,” and the occasion of the *Christian Observer's* charge of schism, which to us seems no better than the blindness of prejudice, as it flows from sheer ignorance.⁴⁴

It is true that when the church deserted the ground on which God had called her out in separation from the world to the name of the Lord Jesus, when she gave up the guidance of the Holy Ghost according to the word of God, and the world subsequently came in like a flood, the Church did, as a fact, become “invisible”; but this was her shame and sin. It is not, nor ever was, the *design* of God. And the believer is ever responsible to return to the divine ground on which the Church was meant, and is always bound, to stand. “Where *two or three* are gathered together *in my name*, there am I in the midst of them.” It is a question of the will and glory of God, and hence to us a question of faith. This does not make the “two or three” to be the Church of God; (which would ignore its present ruin-state;) but it puts them on Church-ground; and they are that part of the Church which is visible.⁴⁵

Originally all the church owned itself and acted as one. Those who so own and act now are seeking to walk in the unity of the body. For they take their stand for united action on the great truth that “there is one body and one Spirit,” seeing also that the Lord has provided a resource even for the present state of His saints scattered by inadequate or false, by loose or narrow, grounds of union. They accept the unity produced by the Spirit who baptizes all Christians into one body; and if they cannot convince all others that this is the divine ground of church unity, they can at least act on it by grace themselves. Hence they seek diligently in the measure of their faith to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, while they would also maintain scriptural discipline among those who gather thus to the Lord's name.⁴⁶

44. From, “The Plymouth Brethren,” A Reply to the “Christian Observer”, Art. 2, December, 1866.

45. *The Bible Treasury* 1:214 (1857).

46. *The Bible Treasury* 9:223 (1872).

W. Kelly regarded all who did not go with him in the 1881 division as no longer on divine ground:

The gathering at Lee, in making this a test of communion, departed from the true ground of the assembly of God.⁴⁷

He knew that there can only be one expression of the one body!

SIR EDWARD DENNEY

This has been added for the present edition:

It is a great thing that we plead for, even THE ONENESS OF THE BODY, THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT, both of which are so perfect, that if one of us wilfully and independently separates from a company gathered together in {unto} Christ's name, he separates from the whole --from every true meeting of God's people on earth. This is the great, the indispensable principle on which we are called on to act -- the due observance of which is defined by the apostle as KEEPING THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE.⁴⁸

THOMAS NEATBY

Thomas Neatby was a medical doctor and was married to Andrew Miller's eldest daughter. He was joint editor with Mr. Burbidge of *Christian Testimony*. In the division of 1881 he went with Mr. Kelly. In 1885 he suffered a stroke and in 1886 began to plead for a repudiation of "exclusive discipline." In 1887 he severed his connection with the Kelly party and found himself among the denominations (wherever he could preach) but chiefly among Open-Brethren. These facts are found in *Thomas Neatby: A Memorial*, a book which contains a paper from his writings, "Gathering in the Name of the Lord Jesus," wherein he says (p. 73):

So it was when in 1884, I wrote a paper in which I claimed for those with whom I met for worship that they were exclusively "*gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus.*" What Corinthian carnality!

His conclusion ("carnality") is generally shared by those who turn their back on the truth, or oppose it. Once, he had held the truth that there is but one expression of the one body, but after 1881 he was in the wrong place and subsequently adjusted his views.

One further testimony from him, issued for the purpose of denouncing the truth (p. 76):

Do not the leaders of each party claim it for themselves and refuse it to others?

47. Quoting Dr. Kidd, in Blackheath, re Ramsgate, *A Letter For the Assembly*, 9 Bennett Park, Blackheath, S.E., 28th November, 1881. While I disagree with WK about the assembly at Lee, this is quoted for the notice of his thought about "divine ground."

48. Edward Denny, *A Serious Affectionate Appeal to Those Who Are Eternally One with Us in Christ Jesus* {ca 1884}.

We do not doubt carnality may attend such a “claim.” Carnality may even characterize a Christian who claims that Christ is the exclusive way to the Father and the exclusive possession of those who trust in the finished work of the cross! Moreover, carnality may characterize one who says that those in “denominations” are not gathered {together?} to Christ’s name. Why, a Christian in a denomination may think that a Christian who says that those in denominations are not gathered to Christ’s name is thereby showing carnality. Open Brethren may think that those who say that only “exclusive groups” are gathered {together?} to Christ’s name are showing “carnality.” Is all this therefore false claims? I suggest that such talk about carnality (of which, after all, they may themselves be guilty) is merely cheap polemics, and dust for the eyes, and may tell more about the state of those who engage in such charges than about the objects of their mockery.

F. W. GRANT

On the ground of the church of God, then, we cannot be local bodies, whether confederated or independent, nor refuse to own in the fullest and most practical way the two or three on the same ground anywhere, nor [refuse] to accept their binding and loosing as what has Christ’s sanction. Infallibility, whether on our part or theirs, is not pretended to . . . ⁴⁹

Thus we see that he held this truth before the Grant division. While his action at Montreal, 1885, was wrong, he held this truth also at that time. Indeed, in denying that N. H. H. (Natural History Hall, where the saints at Montreal met) any longer had the Lord’s table, his assertion was based on this truth (but wrongly applied). This is seen in the following extract concerning a meeting of those at Craig Street, who went with F. W. Grant, and is confirmed by Samuel Ridout below.

About forty were present, all were pressed to speak openly their mind, and there was united judgment that Natural History Hall had ceased to be the table of the Lord. ⁵⁰

F. W. GRANT’S HOME MEETING OF PLAINFIELD, N.J.

The Ground of the Montreal Division Reconsidered, p. 8, has the following:

. . . the following statements (are) extracted from *Papers Concerning the N. H. H. Division* (Loizeaux Brothers -- who became the Grant party’s publishing house), p. 17:

We come then to the solemn conclusion that the ground you (the many at N. H. H.) have taken . . . is schismatic; and obliges us (the

49. F. W. Grant, “The Ground of the Church of God, And What It Involves,” *Bible Treasury* 12:281 (1879).

50. From *A Letter Relating to the Division at Montreal* by F. W. Grant, p. 5.

many at Plainfield) to regard you as having left the ground of the One Body, on which we are gathered.

The above paper goes on to say of the Montreal assembly:

They had now established a table, really upon new ground, sectarian in character.

Thus it is clear that the Plainfield NJ Grant meeting [F. W. Grant's home meeting] also did not hold that both they and the Montreal assembly were on divine ground. This determined the character and ground of the Grant company; namely, one in open opposition to the Montreal assembly. In reality it was Plainfield that "had now established a table, really upon new ground, sectarian in character." Now, **a moral stream never rises above its source**; hence, the Grant company could not divest itself, as a company, of this position taken then. *Restoration* to divine ground was the true answer, *not the reunion principle*. W. Kelly said somewhere that the word "denomination was gotten up to hide the sin and shame of sect." And what is this reunion principle?

SAMUEL RIDOUT (a follower of F. W. Grant)

N. Noel wrote:

In a letter to Mr. I. H. Vorhoeve, the late Mr. Samuel Ridout of Plainfield, NJ (a Grant sympathizer), on Jan. 8, 1925, says: "We believe that in 1884 many of us, before the division, had the common thought that WE had the Table exclusively" . . . ⁵¹

The letter of Mr. Ridout supported by *seventeen* names; and was forwarded by the late Mr. Hughes Fawcett. It was followed by another personal letter by S. Ridout, dated May 10, 1925, remarking especially as to what constitutes, or characterizes, *the Lord's table*, and that no one company ⁵² can claim the exclusive possession of it. ⁵³

That is how people mock the exclusive truth-claim of Christianity itself. Really, it is an arrogant abandonment of the truth. At any rate, S. Ridout thus gave witness to "the common thought" and the change in doctrine. How is it that R. K. Campbell and others have the effrontery to say they are acting on the original principles?

The reunion of the Grant-Stuarts with the Kelly-Lowe/Continental (KLCs) in 1953 proceeded on the basis that N. H. H. (the Montreal assembly in 1884) continued to "be the table of the Lord" and that the setting up of the Grant meeting in the same city at Craig Street, done by the dissidents from N. H. H., was a hasty act -- but for all that, was *also* the "table of the Lord."

51. *The History of the Brethren* 1:342.

52. {Why did he not say "no one denomination"??}

53. *The History of the Brethren* 1:343.

Consider the spiritual absurdity of acting on the basis that N. H. H. no longer had the Lord's table and then years later seeking to be reunited on the basis that *all* were at the Lord's table all along. Verily, they have given up the truth that: **the point of departure is the point of recovery** and that an open split is a heresy; i.e., sect (1 Cor. 11:18,19); **and that the passage of time does not change the character of a moral action**; as also the truth that **a moral stream cannot rise above its source**. When those in the Grant company later admitted that the Lord's table was at N. H. H., Montreal, their only right course was to seek restoration and reception consequent upon repentance for having left the Lord's table. Thus would they have been **"gathered in one place in moral and true unity"** (JND) and "holding to the original principles of truth recovered . . ." while acknowledging that the point of departure was the point of restoration and that the passage of time did not change the moral character of what was done in 1884. But these and other truths are trampled on while contradictorily either claiming on one hand "new light" or on the other pretending to be "holding to the original principles of truth recovered."

GRANT PUBLICATIONS

J. R. Gill wrote:

It is a significant fact that the followers of Mr. Grant appear to have openly given up this truth as to the character of the Lord's table. I trust I may be pardoned for saying they first lost the reality, and then even the theory of it. I quote from a recent copy of one of their publications (*The Gleaner*, of February 1914): "*But perhaps the biggest item on the credit side of our ledger, if one may be permitted to compare, where all is so precious and vital, is the truth that no company of Christians, not even ourselves, can claim a monopoly on the Lord's table or of gathering in the name of the Lord.*"⁵⁴

It was certainly "on the credit side of our ledger," not God's ledger. The division resulted in the Grant party eventually giving up the truth that only saints in one company can be gathered to the Lord's name. That is on the credit side indeed! But the remark demonstrated that it was once regarded otherwise. "Monopoly" is just a scare word for the benefit of the easily led and for the use of derision by the more guilty (compare with 2 Chron. 30:10). Yet, it shows that it was once held that only saints in one company could "have" the Lord's table and be gathered together to His name. *Help and Food*, a Grant publication, once said:

To put away from their company would include, first of all, exclusion from the Lord's table . . .⁵⁵

Helps by the Way was edited by F. W. Grant and Dr. Christopher Wolston (bro.

54. *The Lapse of Time: Has It Changed The Situation*, p. 8.

55. *Help and Food* 15 (1897).

of Dr. W. T. P. Wolston) before the Grant division:

To separate ourselves from the Lord's table, is to put ourselves where discipline is no longer practicable . . . ⁵⁶

E. M. READ (A Grant adherent).

In Dec. 1938, he wrote, relative to the motion for union on the part of some:

To my beloved Brethren of the Kelly-Continental Fellowship . . . And by the way, brethren, it is hoped that you still do not hold to this idea of possessing the Lord's Table to the exclusion of other circles . . .

We note from this:

1. he knew how to describe the company addressed;
2. he gave a testimony to what those brethren once held; and,
3. he gave expression to a sneer with the word "possessing" in this context, which is a common scare technique or mockery as in the case of those who laughed in response to Hezekiah's letter.

Since he knew they were the Kelly-[Lowe]/Continental Fellowship, he should have known that they had already publicly given up the truth that there can only be one expression of the one body; that only the saints in one company can "have" the Lord's table and/or be gathered to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. They publicly repudiated it in the 1926 union when the Kelly and the Lowe/Continental parties joined together on the ground that the saints in each company were gathered (surely not "together") to the Lord's name while in division.

W. J. LOWE

W. J. Lowe once held the truth of the matter. In a paper printed by G. Morrish, which contained a letter by W. J. Lowe and other information related to the 1885 Stuart division, entitled, *Assembly Action a Test to Others*, he wrote:

As another said at the time, we had to consider "not merely whether Reading ⁵⁷ has sacrificed the glory of Christ, and holiness and righteousness, for creature reputation, and thus given up the ground of the assembly of God, and become a false witness for Christ, but whether we are going to give up divine ground also by connecting the name of the blessed Lord Jesus with all the evil committed and unjudged at Reading. (Signed, Nov., 1886).

So W. J. Lowe believed in "divine ground" at one time and rejected C. E. Stuart's home assembly as not being on divine ground. To join with Reading was to give up divine ground. The union company has, in effect, joined with Reading,

56. New Series 2:231 (1880).

57. {Reading, England, was the meeting where C. E. Stuart attended.}

C. E. Stuart's home assembly, on the basis that they remained on divine ground, and declared themselves indifferent to the fundamentally evil character of the doctrine taught by C. E. Stuart, that Christ took the blood to heaven and made propitiation in heaven.

In a letter dated April 21, 1909, W. J. Lowe defended A. H. Burton (with whom he had agitated against the assembly at Tunbridge Wells) against accusations of being 'loose,' he wrote:

But in heart, he is right, and not loose . . . I heard him say (not to me), "If the brethren were to receive the Kelly people in a block today, he [sic] should leave fellowship tomorrow."

The T. W. assembly of 1909 never changed, revised, or reversed (or, as has been falsely alleged, "corrected") any of the relevant decisions.⁵⁸ Then in 1940, some who went with Tunbridge Wells in the division of 1909, joined the KLCs on the basis that both companies were gathered [together?] to the Lord's name in spite of the 1909 division. Hear what W. J. Lowe wrote about the Tunbridge Wells assembly:

The last act of the Tunbridge Wells brothers whitewashing you {i.e., W. M. Sibthorpe, a leading brother there} in this matter, only makes them responsible for the evil, everywhere condemned in Scripture, so that you have become a leavened lump.⁵⁹

Thus, in 1940, some in fellowship with this allegedly leavened lump joined in with the KLCs as not having been leavened, but always gathered to the Lord's name. Thus, actions once based on accepting the truth of "divine ground" were repudiated.

Moreover, some 18 months after the TW division, in a meeting of brethren in London, attended by the trouble-maker, C. Strange, who admitted he was guilty of the things charged against him by the TW assembly, Mr. Lowe pronounced that he could have no fellowship with C. Strange, or the meeting he had set up in the town of TW since the division! Did W. J. Lowe and those with him seek restoration with the assembly at TW? No. TW, 1909, is blackened to this day.

C. D. MAYNARD

There is one loaf, one Table of the Lord, as there is but one Head. This all the sects, by their very existence, deny. Mr. K.'s [W. Kelly's] course does the same . . . If we have been keeping the unity of the Spirit in refusing W. K. and his party, then they should own their schism [heresy] and be restored; and if

58. A proper history of the "Tunbridge Wells division" has never been published, but ample materials are available to demonstrate the hostile character of N. Noel's account.

59. N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 2:642.

they have been keeping this holy unity, then we should do the same . . .

To amalgamate, is to own both right, i.e. to own division right. There is no difference in principle between owning two opposed Tables, and owning all the sects of Christendom. ⁶⁰

The reader should note that this was written five years before the Lowe/Continental brethren refused the assembly action of the saints gathered together to the Lord's name at Tunbridge Wells (1909). At that time there was agitation against the truth, and Dr. Maynard wrote this paper. I am sorry to say that he threw in his lot with the Lowe brethren in 1909, against TW, which adhered to the truth presented in this paper. I doubt that he foresaw that in 1926 the Lowe group would unite with the Kelly group on the very basis he opposed in the above paper.

At any rate, the false notion that C. D. Maynard was rightly resisting in 1904 was one of the keys, if not the key, to the T. W. division. W. J. Lowe should have kept before himself what he wrote in 1886 in *Assembly Action a Test to Others* instead of agitating, along with A. H. Burton, against the assembly at Tunbridge Wells, and characterizing W. M. Sibthorpe (a leading brother at TW) as a wicked man.

F. G. PATTERSON

If a fresh action of the Spirit of God causes a Nehemiah-like company to follow from Babylon, they are glad to welcome them to the divine ground they occupy themselves. If the Nehemiah-like company comes, they find *before them* a remnant who had previously through grace occupied the divine position. They must gladly and cheerfully fall in with what God had wrought -- there was no neutral ground -- no second place. They dare not set up another, it would be but schism. It was the same Spirit who had wrought, and who, if followed, could not but guide them to the same divine position to which He had guided others. How completely this sets aside the will of man; and independency of the movements of the present day which stop short of that to which God has called His people together to "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"; for "there is one body and one Spirit," and only one! ⁶¹

J. R. Gill cited this from F. G. Patterson:

Mr. F. G. Patterson, one of our most able teachers back in the "seventies" of the last century, wrote:

What Scripture teaches is the competency and duty of each assembly to carry out its own discipline, under the Lord, who has promised His presence and guidance in the matter. 'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them' I am sure that

60. C. D. Maynard, *How Mr. Kelly Came to be Outside* (1904).

61. *Words of Truth* 4:31 (about 1870).

when two or three, meeting in godliness and truth, come to a decision before the Lord in cases of discipline, that it is owned of the Lord, and the person who is the subject of it will never get comfort till he bows to it. Those who are together in the practice of this truth are 'endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' The Holy Ghost constitutes the unity of the body. They are seeking to walk in the fellowship of the Holy Ghost -- a divine Person who will not bend His ways to us -- we must bend our ways, in the truth, to Him . . . None can have the practice of this truth unless in the unity of the Spirit, and with those who have been there before them; it is impossible to have it avowedly apart from such. The common practice of the day is to accept divine principles and terms apart from their practice. Scripture is too strong for this. ⁶²

Here are several more comments from F. G. Patterson:

Tables of varied sects and parties in the professing church could not be owned as the 'Table of the Lord.' ⁶³

Still if Nehemiah and his company come later, it will not do to make a fresh city and temple and call it Jerusalem, because in the abstract all were Israelites. They must follow where others had been led of God, and thank God that His grace had wrought in souls before they appeared on the scene. ⁶⁴

J. B. STONEY

Now it is a fact, that we hear of Christians meeting for breaking bread when it suits any given number to do so, without any reference to others in the same place; so that it is not uncommon to find two or more of those meetings in a very small place, each in independence of the other, as if there were no common bond or baptism between them. What is this but imitation? ⁶⁵

Likely the above referred primarily to the "Open Brethren." However, the idea that the saints in fellowship with a hundred local gatherings called "Kelly brethren" may be gathered together to the Lord's name while they are divided from the saints in, say, a hundred "Lowe" gatherings who are also supposed to be gathered together unto the Lord's name, amounts to the same thing. One town may, and has, had a number of just such divided companies of saints; and now they pretend that they were all gathered (but surely not *together!*) to the Lord's name while divided!

62. J. R. Gill, *Tunbridge Wells: Its Question Considered*, Oak Park: Bible Truth Publishers, p. 21, n.d.

63. F. G. Patterson, writing in *Helps by the Way*, New Series 2:13 (1880). This magazine was edited by Christopher Wolston (brother of W. T. P. Wolston) and F. W. Grant.

64. J. R. Gill, *Tunbridge Wells: Its Question Considered*, Oak Park: Bible Truth Publishers, p. 21, n.d.

65. 63. J. B. Stoney, *A Voice to the Faithful* 2:249 (1868).

Here is a quotation made thirty-one years later by the same writer, after the 1881, 1884 and 1885 divisions.

I was in a place lately where there were five meetings, and all assumed to be on the ground of this verse {Matt. 18:20} yet they were each opposed to the other; there was no INTERCOMMUNION. Well, there must be something radically defective in the meaning given to this passage to admit of such a state of things, and all I have to say is, we must learn what the right meaning is.

. . . the presence of the Lord of glory, and that He cannot be with two companies opposed to each other.⁶⁶

A. H. RULE

Let us, then suppose a heresy springing up at Corinth, connected with the teaching of some leader. This teaching may not be what Peter calls “damnable” heresy, it may not be “fundamental error,” but it results in gathering adherents to its author. A schism is formed, division in its incipiency exists in the assembly. This is distinctly a work of the flesh, and to be condemned as such. Those who have the glory of Christ at heart, and the good of the assembly, resist it. They expostulate, warn, admonish, and this repeatedly, but without avail. The heresy is persisted in and goes on still gathering adherents. At last the conscience of the assembly acts in rejecting the heretic. He goes out, and is followed by his adherents and sympathizers. These meet together and form a new meeting; and now there are two distinct and separate meetings, one consisting of those who have refused the heresy, and the other consisting of those who are united together *by* this heresy. They both *profess* to be gathered to the name of Christ, both hold, in *general*, the same doctrines. There is no *fundamental* error, their assembly exercises are very much the same, but this new school of opinion has made a breach, and those who adhere to it have left the assembly at Corinth and formed a meeting of their own, in self-will and in disobedience to the Word of God. *It is a voluntary assembly formed by man’s will.* Now, I ask any sober-minded Christian who is taught of God, if both these companies are alike gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus, alike gathered by the Holy Spirit, and Christ in the midst of both alike when they are gathered together? I do not ask what the *pretensions* are of the schismatic party, but whether they are *in truth* gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus. Is it that Name -- is it the power of the Spirit -- that acts on their hearts to bring them together *in separation from their brethren*? And does the Lord sanction their meeting by His presence in their midst?

I am not raising the question *which* of the different companies of brethren are “approved,” and divinely gathered, or whether any one of them is; but I am only seeking to show, from the principles of God’s Word, that they cannot all be approved, or gathered on divine principles. I can scarcely conceive how any intelligent Christian can think so. Is it “on Christian principles” to meet together

66. J. B. Stoney, *Lessons of the Sanctuary*, pp. 2, 10 (1889).

in schism, and claim that the Spirit of God gathers there to the name of the Lord Jesus, when, in fact, it is some other name, or some other thing, that has separated them from their brethren? Is it not trifling with the truth of God to attach the name of the Lord Jesus to all these schismatic companies? And have not the advocates of this theory *completely lost their ecclesiastical bearings*, unable to discern the things that differ, or to see who are approved and who are not? They do not see where God is in all this matter, see nothing very bad in any company, and so accept all alike as gathered to the Lord's name and owned of Him. The sense of the evils which have caused the mischief has been lost in their souls, "prejudice and party feeling" is all that is seen in the way, and these, though deplored, can be borne with. This is the broad and easy path commended to us all by this new movement. Most heartily would we sympathize with every godly desire and effort, according to God, to remove the barriers which hinder keeping the unity of the Spirit. But if the real causes which have led to division are to be ignored, and if it is to become only a question of prejudice and party feeling, it would not be a work of God. *Union* might be secured, but it would not be *the unity of the Spirit*. It might seem to be a great work, and there might be for the moment, at least, great rejoicing over the union of all these companies, but in the sight of God it would be a leavened mass, thinking more of their own importance in this world than of separation from evil, and thinking more of *brethren* than of the honor and glory of the Lord's holy name. ⁶⁷

On the same principle, a man put away for sin at Corinth was put away everywhere. An act of discipline carried out at Corinth "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" was valid in Ephesus and everywhere, for the simple reason that the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ at Corinth could not be set aside by the same authority at Ephesus or anywhere else. This is a simple principle connected with the truth that the assembly of God is one, however many local representations of it there may be in different places. There is one body, one Spirit, one Head and Lord, whose authority was the same in every local assembly. All this excludes independency, and shows that if there are a number of different companies of brethren in a place, meeting, walking and acting independently of each other, some of these at least, have departed in their position and walk from the simple truth that the assembly of God is one: they are not keeping the unity of the Spirit. These principles are simple enough, and we only need to be self-judged in the presence of the Lord to discern them. ⁶⁸

CHARLES STANLEY

No doubt two parties, the approved and the disapproved, may both be at Shiloh; that is, both take the ground of their meeting, to be gathered to the Lord. How am I to know which is right? Here are four things to guide me. ⁶⁹

67. *Selected Ministry of A. H. Rule* 2: 194, 195 (1895).

68. *Selected Ministry of A. H. Rule* 2:204 (1895). See also p. 138.

69. Charles Stanley, *From Egypt to Shiloh*, p. 20.

E. DENNETT

If these questions could be answered in the affirmative, then you might perhaps CONCLUDE, that you had found the Lord's table; but if not, however fair and inviting it might seem at first, you would have to reject it equally with those in the denominational systems around.⁷⁰

H. C. ANSTEY

"For we being many, are one bread and *one body*, for we are all partakers of that *one bread*." The Lord also has connected *His* name with the table around which the disciples were gathered (1 Cor. 10:21). They came together as the one body on earth, showing their identification with their Head on high, and all that was becoming the assembly so gathered being maintained, the Lord Himself is present at the table, according to Matt. 18:20. Thus we have a threefold cord: the manifestation of the one body on earth at the table, the Lord's name attached by Himself to it, and Himself present at it, according to Matt. 18:20.

Our attention must be here occupied a few moments in order to look at the abuse of scripture by some. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). We have been told that this passage of scripture authorizes Christians to gather in any place, independent of the truth of the one body; and that there may be therefore in any town a *number* of tables, all of which are *the Lord's tables*, though the saints at them are not in fellowship with one another as to matters of doctrine or practice; and that though this may be so, one as much as another may claim to be *the Lord's table*. Now mark where this (admitted) lands us. It sanctions all the evil and division that exists at the present moment in the professing church; it declares that the Lord sanctions by *His presence* all kinds of unfaithfulness, both in doctrine and in practice, notwithstanding that His word condemns both; it is an effort whose object is to bring down our God to the level of the pollutions of (so-called) *religious man*.⁷¹

MISC.

The Lord's table is the place where the unity of the Lord's body⁷² is shown. In setting up sectarian tables Christians have given up the Lord's table -- the only practical way of showing the unity of the Lord's body ... But then it must be really the Lord's table, and not so merely in name.⁷³

C. H. MACKINTOSH

It may be well to add a word here for the guidance of any simple-hearted Christian who may find himself placed in circumstances in which he is called

70. E. Dennett, *Twelve Letters to Young Believers*, p. 30, (1877).

71. *Where is the Lord's Table? and What Becomes those Gathered at It?*, Morrish: London, pp. 80, 81 (1875).

72. {"Body of Christ" is the scriptural expression, not "the Lord's body."}

73. *The Practical Unity of the Church of God*, p. 11 (about 1841).

upon to decide between the claims of different tables which might seem to be spread upon the same principle ... Suppose, then, I find myself in a place where two or more tables have been spread; what am I to do? I believe I am to enquire into the *origin* of these various tables, to see how it became needful to have more than one table. ⁷⁴

If the table be spread upon any narrower principle than that which would embrace the whole body of Christ, it is become a sectarian table, and has lost its claim upon the hearts of the faithful. ⁷⁵

We can see in the next extract that ridicule such as goes on now by those engaged in the reunion notion was experienced by saints in the 1800s, only then it was either denominationalists or Open Brethren that so spoke.

“Are you the people, then?” some one may say. Well, the question is not, Are we the people? but are we on divine ground? If we are not, the sooner we abandon our position the better. That there is a divine ground, notwithstanding all the darkness and confusion, will hardly be denied. God has not left His people under the necessity of abiding in connection with error and evil. And how are we to know whether we are on divine ground or not? Simply by the divine word. Let us honestly and seriously test everything with which we stand connected by the standard of scripture, and if it cannot abide the trial, let us abandon it at once. Yes, at once. ⁷⁶

Let us be real with God, not self-deceived.

The thing is to be in that position; not merely to say we are in it, to boast of being in it, but really to be in it. We may well apply here the pointed question of the blessed apostle, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say” he is on divine ground, if he be not really there? Assuredly it profits nothing. ⁷⁷

And not only so, but we may rest assured that the blessed apostle would insist upon having the Lord’s table spread upon the divine ground of the one body; and he could only consent to eat the Lord’s Supper according to its divine order as laid down in the New Testament. ⁷⁸

The fact is, Bethesda ought never to have been acknowledged as an assembly gathered on divine ground; and this was proved by the fact that, when called to act on the truth of the unity of the body, it completely broke down. ⁷⁹

And do not imagine, dearest A., that I want to puff up “The Brethren.” Nothing is further from my thoughts. I believe the ground they occupy is divine, else I

74. *Thoughts of the Lord’s Supper*, p. 16.

75. *Thoughts of the Lord’s Supper*, p. 14.

76. *The Assembly of God*.

77. *Jericho and Achor -- Privilege and Responsibility, Joshua 6 -- Joshua 7*.

78. *Notes on Deuteronomy*.

79. *Fifteenth Letter to a Friend*.

should not be on it. But as to our conduct on the ground, we can only put our faces in the dust. The position is divine; but as to our condition, we have ever to humble ourselves before our God.⁸⁰

Some of Those in the Reunion Company Claim “New Light” on These Things

NEW LIGHT

Claiming new light is not the same thing as the allegation of R. K. Campbell about practicing the original principles. As an example, notice the following statement from one in the union company.

The statement about the light we now have should be understood in this context: JND was mightily led of the Lord to recover the truth long lost in the darkness of Christendom. But we can not say the Spirit ceased to give further light when JND was taken home. In JND’s writings, and probably others, too, you find discipline is referred to as “putting someone away from the Lord’s Table.” Reception was often “to the Lord’s Table.” The terms “Lord’s Table” and “Lord’s Supper” were, in the light then possessed, used interchangeably.⁸¹ But while Brethren might talk about putting one away from the Lord’s Table, Scripture never does . . . Thus it is that we have further light on some things now than brethren did 100 years ago.

So God has allegedly given new light to those in division who needed this new light in order to consummate unions on the ground of mutual recognition; and thus to avoid restoration to those from whom they divided; thus to avoid true humbling (2 Chron. 30:10,11); thus they try to avoid the sin and shame of sect (1 Cor. 11:18,19, JND trans.). They have light, too, that C. E. Stuart’s teaching on propitiation was not fundamental evil after all; light that F. E. Raven was misunderstood; light that the Glantons always were gathered [together?] to the Lord’s name. May we rather by enabling grace maintain the light given before divisions and evil behavior made an occasion for “new light” to be humanly generated, *or* else the fraudulent claim to be practicing the original principles, in order to avoid restoration.

NEW LIGHT ON “RUIN”

Someone wrote to me, telling me that I was seeking:

. . . continuity in the sense of being able to trace ourselves back to JND as the

80. *Fifteenth Letter to a Friend.*

81. {I don’t agree that these two terms were used interchangeably, without going into proof. However, they were linked together; and 1 Cor. 10:18 shows this is true.}

right party.’⁸² To do so would deny the ruin; to do so would be to say that while many have failed, at least one company of brethren has never left. For a company to say that they alone remain at the Lord’s Table while all others have left is to indeed betray a Laodicean heart that is more set on self-justification than the Person of Christ.

It is important to observe that some supporters of reunions on the basis of mutual recognition have introduced a new doctrine of “ruin” without directly saying that they have done this. We believe there are divine principles which cannot be ruined; and in the ruin of the church on earth viewed in responsible testimony God has graciously preserved a path. Observe that the ruin began in the first century, even before all of the apostles had passed from this scene. Indeed, 2 Timothy was written particularly in view of the ruin then already present. Though the ruin continues until the Rapture, nonetheless during the 1800s there were saints again gathered together to Christ’s name. That is, saints were gathered together to Christ’s name, though it was a time of ruin and the above quoted writers, in effect, were teaching the doctrine about which I have elsewhere written.⁸³ Call it what you will, the evidence is herein presented to *your conscience* that they taught it, and **taught it while teaching that the church was in ruins**. Some “Reunited Brethren” have attempted to use the fact of the ruin to try to get rid of the doctrine of the one expression of the one body in order to consummate their reunions, thus avoiding restoration. They have perverted the truth of the ruin of the church on earth viewed in responsible testimony to further their end, and now heap ridicule on those who affirm the same truth as was held and taught by those gathered together to the Lord’s name in the 19th century.⁸⁴ In the above quotation, the writer has used the word “ruin” in a totally new way: he means “*the ruin of the brethren.*” This is not the doctrine of Scripture concerning the ruin of the church on earth seen in responsible testimony, but something gotten up, using the old word, with which to excuse what they are doing, while clothing it with a humble sound, as error often does. Its real purpose is to hide the sin and shame of sect (heresy) and cover up the indifference to the character of fundamental evil. So because “the

82. {Was Hezekiah seeking to trace himself back to David? Was it not true that the 10 tribes *had* left the divine center at Jerusalem with “exclusive possession” of the altar of burnt offering? Was a valid passover celebrated outside Jerusalem? Did Hezekiah’s claims betray that Hezekiah had a Laodicean heart set rather on self-justification than the honor of Jehovah? Our Lord once said, “Judge righteous judgment.” But the false claims and the “new light” perverts judgment.}

83. See, *Practicing the Truth that “There is One Body” in View of Division*, Present Truth Publishers.

84. This as we saw in the quotation above from CHM quoting those who then said, “Are you the people, then?” and in Hezekiah’s day (2 Chron. 30). How shameful it is to be repeating the sin of the Northern tribes in division from the altar at Jerusalem.

brethren” have acted in this manner, those who refuse to accept these evil ways must be denounced as “pharisaical,” “Laodicean,” “making high claims,” etc. No doubt this is just as “pharisaical” as Hezekiah was when his letter asserted, in effect, that there was one divine center, one altar, and those who had departed should return (2 Chron. 30). It was of no avail to plead with Hezekiah that division had occurred and all was in ruins.

Observe, then, that “*the ruin of the brethren*” means, by definition, that none can actually have continued on with the “position” that our brethren spoke of during the 1800s. When did it happen? -- in 1881? (Why not in 1848?). This notion about “the ruin of the brethren” does indeed “betray a heart that is more set on self-justification than the Person of Christ.” Just think of the indifference to the character of the fundamentally evil doctrines involved in the development of the “Reunited Brethren.”

JND’s practice was consistent with apostolic teaching; and ruin in Christendom (of which we are all a part) does not alter divine principles. We are under obligation to practice the truth of the one body as he did. All else is attack on the truth that there is one body. Pleas made to set this aside, on the basis that we are in times of “*the ruin of the brethren*” are merely efforts to hide the sin and shame of sect -- besides thinking of “brethren” in an unscriptural way. Think of the brazen impudence of calling **Laodicean** those who adhere to what the above quoted writers taught on these issues. What think you of a company taking the position that the followers of F. E. Raven were gathered together to Christ’s name from 1890-1908; publicly committing themselves to this by uniting with the Glantons who for 18 years were part of the Raven company? When our Lord comes it will be well to be found going on with two or three adhering to principles which cannot be ruined, than to be found with many who compromise God’s truth to hide the sin and shame of sect and hide their fellowship in association with indifference to the character of fundamental evil.

NEW LIGHT ON EATING AT THE SAME TABLE THOUGH IN DIVISION

While I was with the KLCs - G-Ss, a laborer explained to me how the saints in several divided companies could be gathered [together?] to the Lord’s name. They are like sons who eat at the father’s table, one at four o’clock and one at five o’clock, another at six o’clock. Just think of all the different dinner hours at the father’s table. Just think of how this makes the Lord condone this by asserting His presence (Matt. 18:20) at this display of division. Perhaps many denominations are eating at different hours also! Just think of the Lord and His table in this regard. Well, this “light” was not quite as new as the light that says all Christians are at the Lord’s table!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “HAVE” THE LORD’S TABLE?

Before the large-scale need arose to circumvent the humbling required to seek restoration; before there was a need to shift doctrine to accommodate unions of groups that had divided rather than seek restoration; before these divisions brought the “new light” necessary to justify reunions and mock those who adhere to the teaching of the one body and its expression in practice when it was recovered in the 1800s; before these things, brethren seemed to be of one mind regarding the Lord’s table, divine ground, expressing the truth of the one body, etc. The articles and comments cited above show this to be so.

We should pause, and look at the expression “have the Lord’s table.” a false “advantage” has been taken concerning the word “have.” *Webster’s New International Dictionary*, sec. ed., unabridged, (1934) says:

8. To perform; to experience; to engage or participate in; -- in the widest sense; as she had an odd experience; let me have a look at it; I will have nothing to do with it.

9. To give expression to, or to use or exercise (as feeling; opinion, quality, or like); as, he had the kindness to assent; have a care of the parcel.

Syn. -- HAVE, HOLD, OWN, POSSESS, HAVE is the general term; HOLD is stronger; and often implies retention or occupancy; to OWN is to have or hold as property; possess implies ownership with full right, title or control . . .

We may note from this that the thought that there can only be saints in one company gathered together to the Lord’s name went hand in hand with the truth that only one company of saints can “have the Lord’s table.” (One may have in his care what belongs to Another).

The Bearing of Reunion Principles

As we near the close of this paper, we will consider again the remarks of J. N. Darby with which this paper began and add much to them.

J. N. DARBY

There is one assembly on Earth.

The principle or ground of gathering is that of all saints being one in Christ, and as such forming the one church of God on earth. Christians had lost this principle, and it has been recovered; hence much, and rightly, put forward.⁸⁵

There Is an Analogy Between the Divine Center at Jerusalem in the Earthly Order and the Assembly in the Present Spiritual Order.

85. *Collected Writings* 33:35.

Now as to one or two objections you make. First, you refer to Israel. There was abuse, you say, but they were not to leave it. In the first place, we are not Jews but Christians. Judaism was an elect nation; there could be no such thing as leaving it: Christianity is not, but a gathering of saints. God has not recorded His name in the English nation; but wherever two or three are gathered together in His name, there is Jesus in the midst of them. What the temple was to a Jew, the gathering of the saints is to me. My complaint of the Establishment (Church of England) is that it is not, and never was, a gathering of saints. If a man ceased to be a Jew, he ceased to be of God's people altogether. That nation and its ordinances were wholly, solely, and exclusively God's people, sanctuary, and place: to leave them was to apostatize from God. They were gathered, not in spiritual worship, but to carnal ordinances, imposed not by conversion of heart but by Jewish parentage. The church of God is analogous in one place.⁸⁶

Only One Assembly in a City. The fact that there is only one assembly in a city is clearly demonstrated by the assembly at Jerusalem.

“All that believed were together,* and had all things common,” and “the number of them was” already “three thousand.” “And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.”

*This passage shows the futility of the objection -- an objection refuted besides by a thousand experiments -- that the gathering together in one is an impossibility. It may be so *materially*, and it was no doubt the case here. When they broke bread from house to house, they were not three thousand at once together. Yet that does not hinder, in the mind of God, their being gathered together **in one place in moral and real unity**. There is no question of disposition here, but of facts which demonstrated the power of the Holy Ghost.⁸⁷

No matter in how many meeting rooms the saints in Jerusalem met, Scripture says “the assembly” (not assemblies) or “the assembly at Jerusalem” when speaking of the saints there. You will see this important fact in Acts 2:47; 5:11; 8:1; 8:3; 11:22; 12:5; 14:27; 15:4; 15:22. There were no independent assemblies in Jerusalem no matter how many meeting places there were. Why not learn from this instead of fighting against it? A number of independent assemblies in a town or city are just a number of sects. Of course, there *may* be in just such a city a non-independent assembly that is not a sect.

J. N. Darby recognized only one assembly in a city, because Scripture does. In the following extracts he uses “one place” for ‘one locality.’

The result of the examination of scripture is, that there was one assembly of God in each town where there were Christians; that these {Christians} were

86. *Collected Writings* 14:197

87. *Collected Writings* 3:367. Boldface emphasis is added.

members of the body of Christ -- the only membership known in scripture; and gifts were exercised in the whole church, or one assembly of God in the whole world, as members and servants of Christ, by the operation of the Spirit, according to rules given in scripture. ⁸⁸

When two or three are gathered in {together unto} His name, there is He in the midst of them {Matt. 18:20}. Thus, while fully admitting that all the saints in a locality constitute properly the one assembly in a place, if they will not unite, the responsibility and the presence of the Lord are found with those who do, and their acts, if really done as met in His name, have His authority; that is, another such assembly must own the assembly and their acts, or disown their connection with the Lord. ⁸⁹

All scripture clearly shows there was one assembly in a place, which was God's assembly. ⁹⁰

The one assembly of the place, looked at as unseparated from the whole company of saints, acts as the body of Christ. ⁹¹

The word recognizes all the Christians of one place as forming the church of that place. ⁹²

Membership of a church I do not find in scripture, nor a number of separate assemblies in one place (though as to mere locality they may be several, and meet in private houses, as at Jerusalem, but still be one assembly) . . . ⁹³

In London, the saints practiced this truth:

88. *Collected Writings* 20:321.

89. *Collected Writings* 20:254.

90. *Collected Writings* 20:320.

91. *Collected Writings* 14:31.

92. *Collected Writings* 4:225.

93. *Letters* 2:208. I quote the following from W. Kelly's paper, *On the "Church" in a Place, City, or Town*, not as in sympathy with his purpose in the paper, but as agreeing with what we have been considering:

That there may have been several companies in that great city {Rome} even then is in no way improbable: vv. 14 and 15 {Rom. 16} seem to indicate groups; and there are, besides, many names recorded in this chapter, unconnected either with these verses or with 5, where we hear expressly of the assembly at the house of Prisc(ill)a and Aquila. Yet the analogy of Jerusalem, to speak of no other, would not only warrant but require the conclusion, that, whatever the number of companies meeting in Rome, all the saints in it formed the assembly there. Of course it was "the assembly" in this house, and "the assembly" in that; but the saints as a whole constituted "the assembly in Jerusalem," Ephesus, Rome, etc., as the case might be. All stood on one divine ground; and it abides for us. Had there been "churches" in Jerusalem without common action, it would have been not "the" but "an" assembly here and another there, not unity but independency; the most opposed of all principles to that of God's church.

In London we are all in one place, however large. ⁹⁴

He did not mean in one meeting room. At one point in time, there were 26 meeting rooms in London. The saints in London were “all in one place, however large {London is}.” But after division occurred in 1881, there were saints meeting in separation from one another in London. They were not all **“gathered together in one place in moral and real unity.”** They were not all any longer in the practice of what we learned from the truth of the one assembly in Jerusalem. Some were no longer gathered together to the name of Christ (Matt. 18:20).

How can the divided saints reunite many years later on the basis that they were all gathered [together ?] to the Lord’s name while in such division? Well, persons can say and believe whatever they want to, but to the Lord we will give account of ourselves.

**Two, or more, loaves broken in division
did not confess they were one loaf.**

A Case of Divided Saints in a city or Town. Think of the assembly in Jerusalem, noted above, and a city where there is a group of, say, ‘Grant brethren’ meeting, and in the same town a group of ‘Kelly brethren,’ and also a group of ‘Stuart brethren’ all *in division* -- not as the saints in Jerusalem were, **“gathered together in one place in moral and real unity,”** though myriads had confessed Christ. How dare you claim that they were all “gathered together” (Matt. 18:20) in that town, to Christ’s name? You do not see what the true character of this? Moreover, “exclusive brethren” profess that the local assembly is the expression of the whole body. Just think of three *divided* local expressions of the whole!

What to do about it? -- reunite to hide the sin and shame of sect (but not deceiving God, though you do deceive yourself)? or seek restoration? “Sin and shame of sect”? you say. Let us listen once again to this by W. Kelly:

We have here (in 1 Cor. 11:18, 19) important help toward deciding the difference between these terms as well as the precise nature of each, *Schism* is a division within the assembly, while they all still abide in the same association as before, even if severed in thought or feeling through fleshly partiality or aversion. *Heresy*, in its ordinary scriptural application as here (not its ecclesiastical usage), means a party among the saints, separating from the rest in consequence of a still stronger following of their own will. A schism within leads to a sect or party without, when on the one hand the approved become manifest, who reject these narrow and selfish ways, and on the other the

94. *Letters* 3:432.

party-man is self-condemned, as preferring his own particular views to the fellowship of all saints in the truth. (Compare Titus 3:10, 11.)⁹⁵

The Greek word for heresy is sometimes translated “sect.” This is the Scripture word for the divisions within Christendom. Why would you flatter yourself that “brethren” are exempt?

Separating is a Declaration of Rejection as an Assembly.

Clearly persons ought not to separate from the Table while they own it to be the table of the Lord. The very statement proves itself, for so far as the act goes, I am separating myself from the unity of the body of Christ and from the Lord’s table.⁹⁶

And I think that if anyone, through the flesh, separated from two or three walking godlily before God in the unity of the whole body of Christ, it would not merely be an act of schism, but he would necessarily deprive himself of the blessing of God’s presence.⁹⁷

I would never leave an assembly as such, unless I could say when I had left, that it was not God’s assembly at all.⁹⁸

For my part I would never separate from anything, of which I could have an idea that it was the church after having left it.⁹⁹

I met today in a French tract which had no reference to these matters, a principle I have always accepted, that I would never separate where I could recognize the body as on the principle of the church of God after I had left it . . .¹⁰⁰

I could not go to any loose table as the Lord’s. People do and call it the Lord’s, of course; but I do not call it so, or I should be there.¹⁰¹

Referring to his separation from those in fellowship with B. W. Newton in 1845 because of clerisy (not because of fundamental evil; *that* evil came to light in 1847), J. N. Darby wrote:

I have not broken bread, nor should do it, till the last extremity: and if I did, it would be in the fullest, openest testimony, that I did not own the others then to be the table of the Lord at all.¹⁰²

I do not speak of a second table as regards Ebrington Street, more than I should

95. *Notes on 1 Corinthians*, p. 178.

96. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:398 (1865).

97. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:87.

98. *Notes and Jottings*, p. 451.

99. *Collected Writings* 4:206.

100. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:306.

101. *Collected Writings* 26:253.

102. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:88.

say a fifth or sixth, if I began to break bread where there were four or five other dissenting bodies already established in the place. ¹⁰³

. . . it was a question of having *any*, not a *second* . . . ¹⁰⁴

It is clear that JND held a different doctrine concerning the Lord's table than those in the Reunion company. Doctrine affects practice. It was necessary to abandon the teachings that we are reviewing in order to carry out the mergers of saints that had divided. The mergers tend to hide the sin, not cancel it.

There Remains the Divine Ground of Gathering in the Ruin of the Church.

The testimony of brethren is more definitely a testimony as to the state of the church around. God had, I believe, prepared it for this: but what a responsibility for us, and how much we need to be unworldly, and personally faithful! I am just publishing a tract that the real point is, not that the church got corrupted, but that the original principle of what is now called the church was a departure from the scriptural and divine ground. ¹⁰⁵

I think of the brethren, not of myself, that they may be kept in unity on true divine ground as the testimony of God, as I believe they are. ¹⁰⁶

This gives us divine principles. But we must take into account the ruin of the church on earth viewed in responsible testimony. Therefore:

We cannot meet as being the one assembly, because a great number of Christians are outside of us, but we meet on the principle of that unity. ¹⁰⁷

Conclusion. What has been said about *one place* in the above quotations involves a spiritual truth applicable to all who are gathered together unto Christ's name, in accordance with the truth that "there is one body." Those who are locally in one place in spiritual unity are an expression of the whole body. The basis for the "reunions" repudiates, in practice, many of the principles we have reviewed in this paper.

R. K. CAMPBELL

In his pamphlet titled *Reunited Brethren*, he wrote:

The Lord has no pleasure in the perpetuation of unscriptural divisions among the Lord's people in an unjudged, legal, proud contention for positional selfrighteousness. ¹⁰⁸ Separation from fundamental evil is a different matter. ¹⁰⁹

103. *Collected Writings* 20:76.

104. *Collected Writings* 20:43.

105. *Letters* 2:244.

106. *Letters* 1:454.

107. *Collected Writings* 33:34.

108. {The denunciations, name calling and arguments against the doctrine of one expression of the
(continued...)}

He also wrote:

There is presently, by the healing mercies of God in the reunions of 1926, 1940, 1953 and 1974, a reunited company of assemblies holding to the original principles of truth recovered in the so-called "Brethren Movement" of the 1830's.

Note:

1. JND separated from *clerisy* in Plymouth in 1845. B. W. Newton's fundamentally evil doctrine of Christ's circumstantial distance from God came to light in 1847. ¹¹⁰
2. JND's teaching concerning the meaning of the truth of the one body is that there could only be one expression of that one body. This teaching, according to R. K. Campbell, is "positional self-righteousness."
3. Either JND did not understand and practice the truth of the one body, its expression, and the Lord's table, and was in a false position, or else it is R. K. Campbell who was in a false position. Both cannot be right because their teachings are mutually exclusive.

108. (...continued)

one body are an attempt to justify union on the basis of mutual recognition rather than humbly seeking restoration to the divine center. How good and how humble an appearance these arguments have for those loose in truth. Who that reads about controversies -- for example, the trouble among Evangelicals regarding inerrancy of Scripture, or annihilationism, -- does not know that fine-sounding reasonings and arguments are put forth in defense of error and for the belittling of those who hold fast the recovered truth. Believers in the inerrancy of the Scriptures as God gave them have been called "opportunists" and are guilty of impairing Scripture. Inerrancy is like "pope-ism," they say. The inerrancy view is "scholastic rationalism" while the alleged true view is "functional inspiration." }

109. The toleration of C. E. Stuart's fundamentally evil doctrine that took place in the 1953 "reunion" of the KLCs and the Grant-Stuarts is an example of the value of R. K. Campbell's statement about "Separation from evil is a different matter." It shows that their basis of meeting is really indifference to certain fundamental evils. The K in KLC represents the Kellys. Regarding CES' doctrine of Christ taking the blood to heaven and making propitiation there, W. Kelly is on record as regarding those in fellowship with that evil teaching as leavened. He wrote:

. . . readers who are not leavened will see . . .

Also review again W. Kelly's description of F. E. Raven's doctrines on p. 10 ("mission . . . from an opposing and evil spirit" etc.) and consider the notion that the Glantons were gathered {together?} to the name of the Lord Jesus while in fellowship with Greenwich, England, and F. E. Raven, during 1890-1908.

These examples show that either R. K. Campbell's statement about separation from evil is a hypocritical smoke-screen, or, he really could not (or would not) discern fundamental evil in spite of its having been pointed out in the cases of CES and FER.

110. See my *Precious Truths Revived* ..., vol. 2.

4. The plain implication of R. K. Campbell's language is to stigmatize those who hold this teaching with the description "unjudged, legal, proud contention . . ." He gives the impression that to him, this truth could not be held in any other way. And thus the brethren during the 1800s who, with JND, understood and practiced these things in such a manner as condemn his position, were guilty of this attitude.

The second quotation, above, contains a (deceptive) untruth, namely this:

{that the reunion company is} "holding to the original principles of truth recovered."

Above, we saw from JND in the very first quotation that:

Christians had lost this principle, and it has been recovered; hence, much and rightly, put forward.

So some hold to "new light"; but not such as R. K. Campbell, who darkens the old light and says he is walking in it!

I call your attention to the fact that the reunion company does not practice the truth of the one body in the same way as JND and other brethren of the 1800s. The basis on which the unions were carried out demonstrates this. Now, we know that practice is formed by doctrine -- and, the doctrine does differ.

J. N. DARBY HELD THE ORIGINAL PRINCIPLES OF TRUTH RECOVERED

In view of the teachings we have considered regarding the one body, one expression of one body, the Lord's table, being gathered together by the Spirit, being in one place in moral and true unity, think of **the ecclesiastical falsehood and pretension** of the claim to be "holding to the original principles of truth recovered" while at the same time mocking and denouncing those who actually do, in fact, hold those truths (set forth in the body of this paper). I have reserved an additional statement by J. N. Darby to place it here in view of this falsehood about "holding to the original principles of truth recovered," which once again shows that JND understood the truth of the one body differently than do those in the reunion group, who believe that various groups *divided* from each other all express the truth that there is one body.

I understood the breach arose between you and Rotherham {i.e., between the Exclusive meetings at Sheffield and Rotherham} by reason of your reception of {Mr.} Goodall. With the main facts of his case I am acquainted, for I took part in what passed, and now allow me to put the case as it stands as to him. I put it merely as a principle. He (or any one else) is rejected in London. The assembly in London have weighed, and I with them, the case, and counted him as either excommunicated or in schism. I put the two cases, for I only speak of the principle. I take part in this act, and hold him to be outside the Church of God on earth, being outside (in either case) what represent it in London: I am bound by Scripture to count them {sic} so. I come to Sheffield; there he breaks

bread, and is -- in what? Not in the church of God on earth, for he is out of it in London, and there are not two churches on earth, cannot be, so as to be in one and out of another. How can I refuse to eat with him in London and [yet] break bread with him in Sheffield? have one conscience for London, and another conscience for Sheffield? It is confusion and disorder. I do not apprehend I am mistaken in saying you received Goodall without having the reasons or motives of the Priory or other brethren in London. If you have had their reasons, the case is only stronger, because you have deliberately condemned the gathering in London and rejected its communion; for he who is outside in London is inside with you.¹¹¹

The person who understands JND's point, and understands the basis of union of the reunion company, and its implications, will recognize that JND not only refused their view but that he expressly taught against it. The new practice is really the old darkness of independency, but *on a very grand scale*, along with indifference to the true character of certain fundamentally evil doctrines.

This statement by JND was attacked by Open Brethren and various writers from denominations for its exclusive claim, much like R. K. Campbell ridicules those who continue to adhere to such teachings as taught among those gathered to the Lord's name during the 1800s, and continued to be held by those in the division groups for some time afterward, until it suited *union on the basis of mutual recognition* to jettison it.

I put it to the reader's conscience: who is it that is "holding to the original principles of truth recovered"? Reader, perhaps you will communicate to me a Scripture reason why I should abandon the truth of these things taught during the 1800s and explain why, when brethren *divide* and *dishonor the Lord* who gave recovered truth, that after some time God grants them "new light" diametrically opposed to what was held and acted on before. Why was the old light false and the practice of it false? Moreover, I point out that the *facts* are easily demonstrated. It is a matter of a *doctrinal shift* with a corresponding *shift in practice* -- while a pretension is put forward to be "holding the original principles of truth recovered in the so-called 'Brethren Movement' of the 1830s," while at the same time denouncing those who hold those truths.

111. Cited in W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, London: Hodder and Stroughten, 1901, pp. 225, 226. This is a highly anti-Darby book.

Conclusion

In the OT, the presence of Jehovah, denoted by the shekinah of glory, was present on the other side of the veil, before which veil were the 12 loaves on “the pure table” (Lev. 24:6; 2 Chron. 13:11). There was one divine center for Israel at Jerusalem. Today there can be but one divine center where Christ is in the midst (Matt. 18:20). This is a *spiritual place*; and though not one geographical location, it is none-the-less one place spiritually. *There* is located His table with the one loaf ¹¹² and the one cup; though the table is not physical. Just as the 12 loaves on the table expressed the national unity of Israel composed of 12 tribes (even after division occurred) so the one loaf on the Lord’s table expresses the spiritual unity of the members of Christ’s body (even after division and ruin occurred). The respective unity in each case is expressed in one place only; geographic for Israel, spiritual for the body of Christ.

Briefly stated, some of the consequences of the error we have been considering are:

1. That if the Lord is in the midst of two divided meetings of Christians, and they mutually agree that each other is in the good of Matt. 18:20, then according to Matt. 18:20 they “are gathered {together?}.” But this is a mockery of words because it is manifest that they are not together and therefore they are not gathered together. Matt. 18:20 applies to all meeting on the same ground everywhere, the ground of the one body, of which there can be but one expression. And if all meeting on the true ground were in one locality they would all be physically together also (size permitting). But this is manifestly not so with separated/divided saints. It is independency on a grand scale, manifested in brethrenistic ecumenicism.
2. That if Christ is in the midst of separated meetings of saints, and since the Spirit gathers, the Spirit is directing one to this meeting in separation from another who is directed to that meeting. This makes the Spirit the instrument of division.
3. That there may be, say, eight divided expressions of the *one* body; i.e., the body can have two or twenty, or more, expressions, if this teaching is true. Brethren can go off in division and start breaking bread and still have the Lord’s presence and table, and be gathered [together?]. What a mockery of words. This is independency on a grand scale.

112. See 1 Cor. 10:16: Paul was not breaking bread at Corinth, but he said, “The bread which we break . . .” He was not at Corinth when he wrote those words. All saints gathered together to Christ’s name break the same loaf, spiritually considered, being “**gathered together in moral and real unity.**”

4. That two, or twenty, or more, loaves broken in separation confess the truth that we are one loaf.
5. That since 1 Cor. 11:19 speaks of open breaches, or separations as *αἰρεσεις* (heresy or sect) then those in sects can be gathered [together?] to the Lord's name.
6. As we have seen concerning specific cases, unions involve indifference to the character of fundamental evil and evil association. By "indifference" I mean not acknowledging the true character of these things and denying that a Christian must separate from them. The union company is defiled by evil associations.

How sad it is to see that there are those today who answer to the mockers in Hezekiah's day who mocked at the divine thought of the one place (2 Chron. 30:10). In effect, the mockers noted in 2 Chron. 30:10 denied that Scripture taught such a thing. In effect, they pronounced those who had previously acted on this divine teaching as being in error on the matter. Was it that they had 'new light' on the matter? Was it that they had two other places: Dan and Bethel? Departure from the truth of the one body has resulted in many today doing an analogous thing. And then it is covered with a false generosity in divine matters and words about "love" and "humility" while characterizing those who have adhered to the truth as being legal, proud, etc. Amazing! The support of God is even claimed for this course by such expressions as "the grace and love of God to His failing people," thus making God the sanctioner and sanctifier of these unholy unions consummated on the basis of repudiation of scriptural teachings once held and practiced, and involving indifference to the character of the fundamentally evil doctrine of C. E. Stuart on prostitution, and indifference to the evil association of the Glantons who went with F. E. Raven. These matters must be judged by Scripture, not by amalgamation-tears of brethrenistic ecumenicism and other considerations. It is right to shed tears over the divisions. But brethrenistic ecumenicism is not the answer. Charismatics can make out a case also on the basis of *experiences*, etc., but *Scripture* condemns charismaticism also. The Spirit of God leads us into, and by, obedience to God's Word.

So, we should note that there is no Scripture basis for mergers of divided companies of Christians. Producing Scriptures about love and unity and "that they all may be one" is no justification for an ecumenical movement, whether among "denominations" or "groups of brethren." Such Scriptures must be acted on consistently with the truth that there is one body and one Lord's table and one center. God's way is restoration to divine ground and a key to this is: "yield yourselves to Jehovah your God, and come to his sanctuary" and "certain of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun *humbled* themselves and came to

Jerusalem” (2 Chron. 30:8,11). This was just the opposite of those who mocked in that day. It was the mockers who refused to go to Jerusalem that were, in reality, Laodicean and proud. Where do you and I stand?

Beware of being in a position because of relatives, or because of social interests, or habit, things and considerations put ahead of what is due Him who redeemed us by His blood, and before whose judgment-seat we shall soon give an account.

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A book, *F. E. Raven's Evil Doctrines and Their Present Bearing*, and also another book, which includes a thorough history of the Raven division, is found in *The Eternal Relationships in the Godhead*. A refutation of F. E. Raven's teachings on the person of Christ, and a refutation of F. W. Grant's system of doctrine, is found in *Collected Writings of A. C. Ord*. Also, *From New Birth to New Creation* includes dealing with the system of F. W. Grant.

Besides these, *Practicing the Truth that "There is One Body" View of Division*, as well as, *The Christian, The Assembly and heaven: What is the Responsibility? and What is the Ground of Gathering? An Introduction to These Subjects*, is available from Present Truth Publishers.