

LETTERS TO BISHOP

by Jw Mcgarvey

McGarvey's series of letters critiquing an evangelical union movement, arguing against the use of non-biblical creeds and human-made constitutions. He advocates for Christian unity based solely on Scripture rather than ecclesiastical organizations.

4 Chapters

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McG-1-LETTER I.

LETTER I.

Dear Sir:--Though we are strangers to each other in the flesh, I feel inclined to regard you with great respect, from seeing your name at the head of a movement in favor of the union of Christians. I learn from one of the Cincinnati daily papers that you presided over a meeting of nearly all the clergy of that city, which was called "for the promotion of the union of churches." An Association was there formed, to be styled the "Christian Union Association of Cincinnati;" the avowed object of which is "to make more manifest the already existing spiritual unity, to remove the sin and manifold evils incident to divisions, and to promote a closer and more effective co-operation in evangelizing the world." Of this Association you are the honored President, while its subordinate officers and Board of Directors embrace sixteen of the Cincinnati clergy, representing twelve distinct denominations. It is a matter for sincere congratulation that, contrary to the sentiment which so generally prevails among the clergy of the Episcopal Church, you have had the magnanimity to take a prominent part in a movement such as this. The good wishes of all who love the Lord Jesus will be with you, and they will pray the Lord to grant you success even above your anticipation.

I am myself a member of an Association of Christians, drawn together from all the different denominations, whose object is almost identical with yours. It may, indeed, be expressed in your own words: "To remove the sin and manifold evils incident to divisions, and to promote a closer and more effective co-operation in evangelizing the world." We have already succeeded in bringing into this co-operation several hundred thousand persons, chiefly in the Mississippi Valley, and we find that the effects of the union are exceedingly gratifying. We find our individual happiness greatly promoted, and our efforts at evangelizing the world rendered successful above all precedent since the days of the apostles. We have had an experience of nearly half a century in the good work which you and your associates are just inaugurating, and you will not therefore consider it presumption that we consider ourselves capable of making you some valuable suggestions. We are then more bold to do this, from ardent love which we cherish for the cause of union, and from the large amount of reading, reflection, and counsel which we have devoted to the subject. In the preamble to the constitution of your Association you make one assumption, which is also a fundamental one in our own movement. It is the assumption that "sin and manifold evils are incident to divisions." Unless this were true, your Association would be aimless and useless. We are happy to welcome you as joint witnesses with us to the reality of this sin and these evils. Your testimony affords us the greater comfort from the fact, that we have been very generally contradicted by your brethren in the ministry, when we have borne the same testimony. They have denied that the existing divisions are sinful, and have persuaded the people, that, in place of the "manifold evils" to which you testify, there are manifold blessings arising from the present diversity of religious parties. We praise you for rising above the prevailing sentiment, and taking a position on this question beside the Apostle Paul. When the single church at Corinth was disturbed by factions, which had not yet gone so far as to form separate organizations, he rebuked them in

these words: "Since envy and strife and divisions are among you, are you not carnal, and do you not walk as men?" How much severer would have been his rebuke if they had separated into half a dozen distinct organizations, erected many different houses of worship, and adopted by-laws to perpetuate their division? But such is the sin of modern times; except that it spreads from city to city, and nation to nation, and multiplies its evils as it spreads abroad. I pray you, Bishop, and all your associates, as you love the Lord, never cease to cry out against this terrible sin.

Another important point in which your movement coincides with our own is this: while you admit the existence of "spiritual unity" among the twelve denominations which you represent, you do not consider this sufficient; but you locate the sin, and the manifold evils of which you speak, in divisions which exist notwithstanding this spiritual unity. You declare, in words already quoted, that the object of your organization is "to make more manifest the existing spiritual unity, to remove the sin and manifold evils of divisions, and to promote a closer and more effective co-operation in evangelizing the world." The sin of which you speak certainly cannot be in the "existing spiritual unity;" it must then be in divisions which exist in despite of this unity. In this assumption, also, you are in advance of the great mass of your ministerial brethren; for we can testify, by a long and varied experience with them, that they almost uniformly declare the "spiritual unity" to be all that the Word of God requires. It is to be hoped that the influence of your Association will spread among them, far and wide, a better understanding of this subject. The second article of your constitution requires you to hold "public meetings," and "ministerial meeting," on the subject, "to provide for the distribution of tracts and books, and to take such other measures as shall increase and make more manifest our brotherly love, and lead to the more perfect unity of the church and the conversion of the world." The Lord grant you abundant success in this work, and enable you soon to convince all of your brethren that it is a great sin to oppose it. With this much in the general aspect of your proceedings to give us pleasure, we regret to observe one thing to give us pain. It is stated by the newspaper reporter, that while the speakers at the meeting, including yourself, T. J. Melish, of the Baptist Church, Dr. Reid, of the Methodist Church, and Dr. Thompson, of the Presbyterian Church, "agreed fully as to the importance of union," you "differed considerably as to the practicability of it." This is unfortunate. If men undertake an enterprise, doubting its practicability, they can work for it with only half a heart. And why should union be thought impracticable by men who admit the sin of divisions, who are already spiritually united, and who are, in your own words, "all renewed by the same Holy Spirit?" The only obstacle to the union of the Corinthians was their carnality. Paul could not speak to them "as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal." But you are not carnal, if so be that the Holy Spirit has renewed you all, and there is already "spiritual unity" among you. Surely there is no room for any among you to doubt the practicability of union, unless he doubts the spirituality of "evangelical Christians," and thinks they are carnal. If this is the ground of doubt, I would suggest to you the propriety of inquiring into the fact of the case; for if they are carnal, and not spiritual, there is a mistake about the supposed "spiritual unity" which you assume to exist, and you will never succeed in your enterprise until this carnality is removed. I confess to you, Bishop, that I have some doubt on this point myself. As sure as your Association fails of its object, it will be on account of carnality of its members, or of the churches which they represent; and if they prove to be thus carnal, people will not easily believe that there exists among them much of even that spiritual unity of which they boast. But I will take the liberty to address you again on this interesting theme, and will detain you no longer at present. I will cause a copy of the paper containing this letter to be mailed to you, and to each of the officers

of your Association, as a proof of my desire to co-operate with you in a good work.

Yours for the union of Christians,

J. W. MCGARVEY.

McG-2-LETTER II.

LETTER II.

Dear Sir:--In commenting on the union movement, of which you are the acknowledged leader, I do not wish to appear hypercritical; but I conceive that the most minute circumstances affecting the character of such a movement must be all matter of importance. As I intimated in my former letter, I am eager, as all my brethren are, to take an active part in promoting the union of Christians, and if I were living in Cincinnati I would most certainly attend the meetings of your Association. But you use some strange language in the preamble to your constitution, and in the article prescribing the terms of membership, which leaves me in doubt whether I would be permitted to take part in your counsels. The preamble describes the persons effecting the organization as "We, Evangelical Christians of Cincinnati and vicinity;" and the constitution declares that "all Evangelical Christians subscribing this preamble and constitution, and contributing annually to the funds of this Association, shall constitute its membership." Now, the term evangelical means according to the gospel. If this is the sense in which you use it, I cannot see why you use it at all in the connection you do; for certainly every one who is a Christian at all is a Christian according to the gospel. Have you any unevangelical Christians in Cincinnati? Men who are Christians, but not according to the gospel. What is it that constitutes a Christian but belief in and obedience to the gospel? Why not, then, just simply say, "We, Christians of Cincinnati and vicinity;" and that "all Christians subscribing, etc., shall be members of this Association?" Is it not enough for a man to be a Christian, or must lie be something more than a Christian, in order to associate with you? Surely, Bishop, you have either multiplied words without counsel here, or you are giving to the term evangelical some sinister meaning which will let in some Christians and exclude others. If you are really in earnest about the union of Christians, for the Lord's sake, and for the sake of consistency, open your doors wide enough to let all Christians co-operate with you. If you start out on a sectarian platform, your entire work, be it ever so successful, will be but another phase of sectarianism.

There is another point in which your movement appears to me radically defective, and somewhat inconsistent. Your associates acknowledge that division is sinful, yet, instead of removing the sin from among themselves by actually uniting with one another, they form an Association which seems rather designed to influence others than yourselves. If all the thieves in Cincinnati were to hold a convention, and after resolving that it is a sin to retain stolen goods, should proceed to organize a society to promote the return of stolen goods by thieves in general, yet disperse without restoring what they themselves had stolen, the honest portion of the community would not much admire either their consistency or their sincerity. I am afraid that their admiration will not be much more excited in favor of the reverend members of your Association, unless you speedily change your policy. When you unitedly declare that the division existing among you is a sin, and attended by "manifold evils" besides, the plain people of your city expect you to manifest some repentance, and to bring forth fruit meet for repentance by immediate reformation. It will not do to hold meetings, and publish books and tracts to induce Christians in general to unite, unless you set the

example by uniting among yourselves. An actual union among you would effect more for the cause of union abroad than everything you can do and say while you practice contrary to what you teach. This mistake in the character of your movement has led to several others. Starting out to unite in one common brotherhood, the adherents of all the creeds and books of discipline, now divided into the parties of Christendom, you have begun by manufacturing another creed, framing another constitution, and organizing under it another party. It is true your creed is a short one, containing only five articles, but it differs from the Word of God, it differs from all other creeds, and it is as human as any other. Your constitution is also brief, containing but seven articles; but one of these provides for amendments at any annual meeting, so that there is no limit to its growth. Your Association, formed under this creed and constitution, is as yet a small party, and perhaps may as yet have caused no strife; but if there are members in your churches who oppose this entire movement, then there are two parties at once formed in every church, and this Association stands out as another sect among the sects.

Creed-making is necessarily disparaging to the Word of God, and nearly all creeds, including your new one, make known this disparagement in express terms. Your very first article speaks as follows: "We do cordially believe the Holy Scriptures to be given by inspiration of God, possessed of supreme authority, and the only infallible and sufficient rule of faith and practice." This I cordially believe, too, because the Scriptures declare it in almost these very words; but you do damage to this truth by making another rule of faith and practice for your Association, while each of you adheres to the separate rules of faith and practice adopted by your twelve distinct denominations. Here you have among you at least thirteen rules, all differing from one another, and differing no less from the Scriptures. Why have a fallible rule of your own making, when God has given you one that is infallible? Why have an insufficient rule, when you acknowledge that the Scriptures are sufficient? With your lips you honor the Word of God, but by your works you do it the grossest dishonor. You will never get Christians to unite, until you inspire them with strong enough faith in the Word of God to make them willing to unite on that alone.

I imagine that the cause of your falling into these mistakes is not a want of sincerity in your avowed purpose, but a want of familiarity with Scripture teaching upon this subject. I make this remark not to disparage your attainments in the Word of God; for it is but natural that men who have been hitherto under the necessity of apologizing to the Catholic and the skeptical world for existing divisions, and sometimes, perhaps, defending them as innocent, should not be very familiar with those passages, which condemn them, and which point out a better way. Did it ever occur to you, dear sir, that the New Testament itself contains a platform for Christian union, formally made out to our hand, complete and perfect? I suppose not; as you certainly would I have searched for it, instead of undertaking to construct one yourself. It will give me pleasure to direct your attention to this platform in another letter, and to point out to you its perfect adaptation to the object which your Association professes to have in view. And lest you should think me presumptuous in such an undertaking, permit me to remind you again that the association for the union of Christians to which I belong has been in existence much longer than yours, and that its members have devoted especial attention to the investigation of this subject.

Yours, for the sake of union,

J. W. MCGARVEY.

McG-3-LETTER III.

LETTER III.

Dear Sir:--In my last I suggested the fact that the New Testament furnishes a complete scheme for the union of Christians and to this scheme I wish to call your attention in the present letter. But before I do so, permit me to remark that the proceedings of your associates, in the organization of their Society, indicate a very indefinite idea both of the relation which the denominations represented sustain to each other now, and of that which they lack in order to the right relation. You affirm the existence of "spiritual unity," without defining in what that unity consists. You also admit, notwithstanding this spiritual unity, a sinful state of division, without indicating the points of difference in which lies the sin. You seem like a collection of consulting physicians, who know nothing of the patient except that he is sick, and who proceed to prescribe for him without stopping to ascertain the character of his disease. Such practice would save the physician some trouble, but would not be very wholesome for the patient.

Now, it seems to me that a physician, in order to practice successfully, should first be acquainted with all the symptoms which indicate a state of health, and then, before he begins to prescribe, should examine the patient, to see in what respects his symptoms differ from these. So with the man who undertakes to heal the divided state of the churches. Let him first inquire in what points a healthy and scriptural state of things requires churches to be united; and then ascertain in what points the churches in question are actually divided. When this preliminary work is thoroughly done, the object to be attained is distinctly in view, and the means of attaining it may be more readily discovered.

You have unwittingly performed a part of this preliminary work in the preamble to your constitution. You say, "We believe the Holy Scriptures to be given by inspiration of God," "We believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;" "We do all trust for redemption in the same Savior, and are all renewed by the same Holy Spirit;" "We believe in the eternal salvation of all the faithful in Christ Jesus;" and "We do all lead substantially the same life of obedience, faith, and prayer." Now, here is a declaration of your union in at least four essential particulars. You are united, first, in the one God and Father of all; second, in the one Lord; third, in the one Spirit; fourth, in the one hope. If you are truly and scripturally united in these four points of unity, you have already fulfilled numerically more than half the requirements of the Scriptures in respect to union. You feel and acknowledge, however, that there is something yet remaining, the want of which is sinful, though you seem to have no definite idea as to what it is. Will you receive it when I now repeat to you the Apostle Paul's testimony upon these undiscovered points? He exhorts the brethren to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and then proceeds to point out seven particulars in which this unity must be preserved. He says: "There is one body and one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Ephesians 4:2-6.) Here is the scheme of Christian unity to which I have referred above, as being furnished in the New Testament. If in these seven points

all the churches of Christ, so called, were united, their union would be in every respect what the Word of God demands. The "sin and manifold evils of division" to which your Association testifies, would be removed, and the prayer of the Savior for his disciples would be answered. On the other hand, if, in any one of the seven, Christians remain divided, there remain with this division all the evils of strife and schism.

If it be granted that in the four points named above your twelve denominations are united, it must be admitted that in the other three of the perfect seven they are divided. They have neither one faith nor one baptism, nor one body. Do not these three things constitute precisely the points of division which you deplore? Does not this apostolic schedule give you a better diagnosis of the disease than you had before your minds when drawing up your articles of association? Or is it rather true that you knew these things, but ventured not to speak of them lest some old irritation might spring up to mar the harmony of your meeting? Sir, these three things cannot be ignored. You may endeavor to pass them by, and persuade yourself that you have effected a union without them, but they will continue to stare you in the face, whichever way you turn, and with a finger of scorn, like specters of the imagination, will mock your hollow pretense of Christian union. Such a union can only be a truce between contending parties, a mere lull in the unexhausted storm. These three mountains of difficulty must be dug down, these rough places made smooth, before the strife and envy of Protestantism will know an end. We desire to march bravely up to the issue and declare candidly how this can and must be done. But before we do so we had better turn back a moment, and see whether this is all that needs to be done.

Thus far we have not called in question the assumption that the so-called "Evangelical Christians" are really united in four of the seven elements of union. Neither do we intend to deny that in three of these they are united in a degree quite satisfactory. The one hope is so dear to every human heart, and comes with so happy an adaptation to every sorrowing and sin-stricken soul on earth, that even disciples who are divided in everything else feel constrained by the very yearnings of their nature to stand united in this. The same cannot be said of any other one among the golden seven. Even in reference to the one God, while there is union among all Protestants, there is a deep gulf of division between them and all Catholics. That there is one God, implies there is to be only one, that only one object of worship is to be recognized. But Catholicism has introduced a multiplicity of beings to whom prayers are offered, and who share the worship due to God alone. Not till all this idolatry is abandoned, till every saint is dethroned from the place of prayer, and every idolatrous image is stripped from the walls of churches, can the Catholic and Protestant communities be united in the "one God and Father of all." But in this respect, and, I may add, in respect to the one Spirit, there is no discord among the parties who have gone into the "Cincinnati Union Association." Can the same be said in reference to the one Lord? I need scarcely remind one of your position and attainments, that the term Lord, here applied to Jesus, designates him in his law making capacity. He is head and Lord over his church, and rules in it as an absolute monarch. He has delegated to no one, except his twelve ambassadors to the world, the right to prescribe laws in his kingdom, and even to them he gave this authority only as they should speak by direct inspiration from him. This authority, therefore, is supreme, absolute, and exclusive; so that it amounts to no less a crime than rebellion and usurpation for any man or any angel to make a law of faith or practice for any portion of his kingdom. To be united in the one Lord, then, is to unitedly submit to his authority and his alone; to observe the laws of faith and conduct prescribed

by him, and to reject all others though they should be enacted by an angel from heaven. (Colossians 1:8.) In this, my dear sir, your associates are far from being united. Which one of them is not governed in part by laws of human origin, which cannot be found in the statute book of our one Lord and Master? By every such law you are individually alienated from one another, and in mass alienated from the one Lord. It is true, and I give you full credit for it, you honor him in many things, you depend upon his blood for pardon, and doubtless you love him much; but notwithstanding all this, and more which might be said in your favor, there stands the naked and undisguised fact, that you allow other laws than his to govern you, other law-makers than Jesus to rule over you. In the name of the Lord, and by the authority of his holy apostle, I demand your attention to this fearful fact, and call upon you to abandon, for the sake of Christ, and for the sake of union, your man-made rules of faith and practice. What will you lose by doing so? You yourself and your whole Association have declared, before heaven and earth, that the statutes of the King, the Holy Scriptures, are the only infallible and sufficient rule; then, if you lose all others, you lose only what is fallible and insufficient, while the sufficient and infallible all remains. In so far as you hold to the infallible law of the one Lord, you are now united, you are divided only by the difference existing between your insufficient and fallible rules of faith and practice; if, then, you throw away those, you throw away nothing but the sinful division which you lament, and you find yourself at once, as if by the touch of a magician's wand, united in the one Lord. I only ask this in conclusion, can you, dare you, make the sacrifice here demanded? I leave this question with you till I write again.

Yours for the service of one Lord,

J. W. MCGARVEY.

McG-4-LETTER IV.

LETTER IV.

Dear Sir:--In my third letter, I commenced pointing out the particulars in which the churches represented in your "Union Association" are now divided. When all these particulars are placed before you in clear light, you will see the precise work which lies before your Association, and may prosecute it intelligibly. I hope that you now see your want of union in the "one Lord." When your different books of discipline, all enacted by some other authority than that of Jesus, are all laid aside, and your parties unite in accepting the word of the Lord as your only rule of discipline, you will be in this respect united.

Next in the natural order comes the "one faith." It is in reference to this that you appear to the world most divided. And certainly, if we look at your various creeds as the test, this appearance is not unreal. You have not two creeds among your twelve denominations that are just alike. If, then, these creeds are the measures or the faith among you, you have no less than twelve faiths instead of one. Here, then, is a great work of healing and uniting to be effected by your Association. The points of difference between your several creeds are mostly very minute, and to a looker on they appear so insignificant that they are now popularly illustrated by the difference between tweedle dum and tweedle dee. For division over such things the whole of you have been ridiculed by wits and scoffed at by Catholics and skeptics, until it is time that you were heartily ashamed of it, even if you were free, as you are not, from a sense of sin in the matter. And even the graver points of difference have reference not to what the Scriptures say, but to your inferences and deductions therefrom. You admit, too, that the most important of them is non-essential to Christian fellowship and to final salvation. Why, then, do you disgrace yourselves before the whole world, and bring down the condemnation of heaven upon your heads, by rending into fragments the body of Christ for the sake of such things? The way to union on this point is too plain for the wayfaring man to err therein. You are divided only on the things in which your creeds differ; you are united in agreeing that everything plainly declared in the Word of God is true. You agree, too, that it is necessary, and at the same time all-sufficient, for a man to believe the latter, while it is not at all necessary for him to believe the former. Cast away, then, the creeds which divide you, and unite on the Scriptures alone, which you all profess even now to believe with all your heart. If you are not willing to do this, then dismiss all pretense of desiring and acknowledge before the world that you love party more than you love God; for I assure you that the world will give you no credit for sincerity while you acknowledge yourselves sinners on account of division, and yet refuse to throw away non-essentials for the sake of union. But all the points of union thus far discussed would be insufficient. Though you were united in the one God, the one Lord, the one Spirit, the one hope, and the one faith; you remain divided in reference to baptism, the disease is still unhealed and the contention must still go on. Paul therefore positively requires union on the one baptism. You are notoriously divided here, for you have among you not less than three baptisms, You have the sprinkling of infants, who neither believe nor repent, nor are capable of obedience. You then have the sprinkling of adults, who believe and repent, and who obey in that rite a human tradition. And

in the third place, you have the immersion of penitent believers, who obey a divine commandment. It is impossible that these three should constitute one baptism; for they differ in every single thing that is necessary to the idea of that rite. They differ in the act performed by the administrator, in the preparation of the candidate, in the motive of both candidate and administrator, and in the authority which is respected. If baptism is an act of obedience to God, then the infant is not baptized, because it does not and cannot obey. If the one baptism requires moral preparation in the candidate, then the infant is not baptized, for it experiences no moral change. If a proper motive or object in the candidate is necessary, then the baptisms are not one, because in one case there is no motive whatever. If the authority respected is an element of the rite, the three are not one, for in one case no authority is known, in another the authority of man is all that is known, and in the third the authority of God alone is respected.

You see, Bishop, that you must unite on one baptism; and now, which one of the three will you take? If simple unity in one baptism were all that is required, then I would say that the majority ought to rule. The Baptists, then, would have to succumb; and as they agree with you that baptism is a non-essential, they ought not to think this a hardship. It is certainly a most shameful thing in them to split off from the great mass of their Protestant brethren merely for the sake of a non-essential. Come, my Baptist brethren, show the world that you are sincere in calling baptism a non-essential by abandoning your distinctive immersion, and uniting in one baptism with your brethren. It is a favorite principle with you that the majority should rule; so act upon it, and show yourselves consistent.

Supposing now, that the Baptists shall adopt this sensible advice, you have still, dear Bishop, to decide between your other two baptisms. Which of these will you take? If consistent, you will take the infant sprinkling, because if you had your own way every child born into this world would be sprinkled in its infancy; and as there would be none left to be baptized later in life, adult baptism would never more be known on earth. You would then be united in one baptism; but what a baptism it would be! A baptism not appointed by the one Lord, nor known at all in your only rule of faith in which you had previously united. In adopting it, therefore, you would have once more rejected the one Lord for some human lawgiver, and the one faith for the traditions of men. Thus, you see, how a mistake on one of the seven points of unity must involve the whole scheme in confusion, as the removal of one stone from an arch precipitates the whole structure in ruins. Will you now receive the thought which this train of reflection shows to be necessary? It is a thought essential to the force of what Paul says upon each of the seven points of unity. It is this, that the one God, the one Lord, the one baptism, etc., shall be the God, the Lord, and the baptism referred to by Paul, and acknowledged by all the apostles. To be united in one God would not be Christian union if that, one God was Jupiter; neither could we secure Paul's unity by having as one Lord that man on the Tiber called "Lord God the Pope;" or that woman at the Court of St. James called the "Head of the Church of England." So, no baptism is the one essential to Christian union except that one practiced by the apostles; and you know, Bishop, and so do all your associates, that it was a baptism of which penitent believers were the subjects, obedience to God the motive, burial in water and rising again the action, and remission of sins the consequent. On this baptism you must unite, or adopt one horn of a fearful dilemma,--either continue to perpetuate the sin of division, or reject the authority of your only Lord by uniting on a human tradition which makes void the commandment of God. But even were you united in the six points now presented, yet

separated as you now are into twelve different organizations, you will still present to the world a divided state of the church. No less essential to complete unity than any other is Paul's seventh item, the one body. By this is not meant one grand, consolidated organization, like the Roman hierarchy, English or Methodist Episcopacy, the Presbyterian body, or any other in which superior courts are instituted to rule over individual congregations. Paul means the one body existing in his day, wherein it is notorious that there was no consolidated organization, not even so much as to embrace two congregations. Their unity consisted in the fact that each had the same internal organization with all the others. I need not inform you that this organization embraced no other officers than bishops and deacons; the bishops being very different in authority and extent of jurisdiction from yourself. They also raised up from among themselves, and sent out to the world faithful men to preach the gospel to the world, and instruct the saints in all the will of God. Whenever the individual congregations included among the twelve denominations represented in your body, after adopting all the other items of unity, come to adopt this organization, renouncing all others, they will be united in the one body, and will stand forth before the world untainted by the sin of division.

I will not startle and alarm you by tracing out the immense revolution necessary in all your denominations in order to effect this scriptural scheme of union. It were better for you to keep your eye fixed on the scheme itself as exhibited in the Word of God, and enforced by many precepts which you can find there, until you become completely enamored of it, before you hover round to see the havoc it would make in your time-honored institutions of human device. It will require even then more faith in Christ, and zeal for his truth, than most men possess, to enable you to make the sacrifice. But, to strengthen you for the work, let me again remind you of your own admission that "sin and manifold evils" attend your present state of division. And let me still further encourage you by the assurance that the union association to which I belong has succeeded in fully uniting multitudes of men and women from all parties on these seven pillars upholding the grand temple of God. They have come together in every way that men can come, by ones, by tens, by scores, by whole congregations, and, in one instance, by whole denominations; and leaving their human laws, their human creeds, their human baptisms, their human organizations, all behind them, they have presented a new thing tinder this modern sun, though one which the ancient sun delighted to shine upon, a united and happy church, with no God but the Father of all, no Lord but Jesus, no Spirit but the Spirit of God, no hope but the Christian's hope, no faith but the Word of God, no baptism but the one apostolic immersion, no authoritative organization but the one body of Jesus Christ. If this is the end to which your movement leads, may God grant you grace and wisdom to bring it to a successful issue; and let all the people say, Amen!

Yours for a united church,

J. W. MCGARVEY.

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