

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness.—Isa. 35-8

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Working for Unity.

By Peter Wiseman

"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3).

"Earnestly striving to maintain in the uniting bond of peace, the unity given by the Spirit." (Weymouth).

This is an endeavour to which all Christian people should belong. In fact, all true Christian people are members by virtue of their standing in Christ. They endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

WHY UNITY?

Some may ask, why endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit? In other words, why work for unity?

Because the Church of God is one—one body with Christ the Head. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of these; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism (division) in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."—Paul to the Corinthians. To the

Romans, he said, "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

In these words of Paul we have a wonderful description of the unit of organism with its application to the Church of Christ. It is scarcely any wonder, then, that Paul places divisions in the realm of carnality (I. Cor. 3: 1-4). Carnality divides, perfect love unites. If we do not work for unity in the body of Christ, we favour division; and how cruel to be guilty of rending the body of which our precious Saviour is Head, and for whom He died. "There is one body—the universal church, all believers throughout the world — one spirit, one Lord, one God and Father—the ever blessed Trinity. One hope of Heaven." (Wesley).

HOW MAY WE WORK FOR UNITY?

We are thus back to the context, and there we find suggestions as to how we may endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit; suggestions for meditations and observance.

"WALK WORTHY"

"Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Negatively, "walk not as other Gentiles walk." (v 18), not in vanity (vs 17-19), (I. Cor. 3:3), not in "craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully" (2 Cor. 4:2); but walk

"WITH ALL LOWLINESS AND MEEKNESS"

"With all lowliness of mind and unselfishness, and with patience, bearing with one another lovingly." "Observe," says Moule, "the moral lesson here. The first and most characteristic effect of the heights and depths of Divine privilege and spiritual experience just unfolded is to be the sincerest and most unselfish humility." "In honour preferring one another." "Humility," says D. L. Moody, "is the fairest and loveliest flower that grew in paradise, and the first that died—has rarely flourished since on mortal soil. It is so frail and delicate a thing that it is gone if it but looks upon itself and they that venture to believe in theirs prove by that single thought that they have it not." "Be clothed with humility" (Peter). "Put on humbleness of mind" (Paul).

"WITH LONGSUFFERING"

This expression is also found in that won-

derful list which comprises the fruit of the Spirit. That is to say, Those who have the Spirit of God will have that excellent grace, "long suffering," with the other graces of the fruit of the Spirit. Paul in his defence of the Christian ministry assured the Corinthians that he and his brethren had it: "By long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned." In his epistle to the Colossians, Paul prayed that this church might be "strengthened with all might according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness" (Col. 1:11). Wonderful! "All patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" In chapter 3:12 he exhorts them to put on "a heart of compassion, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering."

"FORBEARING ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE"

Forbearance is a necessity in order for unity. Not long ago we heard a minister of another denomination say, "My wife and I do not always agree. In matters on which we do not agree, we agree to disagree agreeably." Hear the great apostle in his letter to the Colossians, "Forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgive you, so also do ye. "Some person has remarked that we always need two bears—bear and forbear.

GUARD THE THOUGHTS

A great man once said, "Guard well thy thoughts, for thoughts are heard in heaven." "Give me," said another, "a great thought to feed upon."

Divisions commence with the wrong thought. Carnality thinketh evil; love thinketh no evil. "There is among you," said Paul when reproving the Corinthians for their carnal state, "envying, and strife, and division,"—thought, word and deed. First, thought; then the expression in words; and, then, the result, division. Let us "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5). First, let us see to it that we have perfect love, for love thinketh no evil. Secondly, let us keep under the blood; guard what we have. "If sin is cast out" said Mr. Wesley, "see that it does not enter again."

"WALK IN LOVE"

Is not love the secret after all? We believe so. Divine love is an absolute necessity in

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