

**Demonstration of Errors in the New Teaching
as affording opportunity for presenting the Truth.**

**10. THE DENIAL OF THE SPIRIT'S
PRESENCE WITH THE SAINTS AS DISTINCT
FROM HIS BEING // INDIVIDUAL BELIEVERS.**

It is remarkable how persistently the enemy has sought to bring in this particular error, for it has cropped up at least three times to our knowledge. On the first occasion he was effectually defeated. The heterodoxy was at once nipped in the bud, thoroughly exposed, and the truth maintained, because there was then, thank God, spiritual power and ability to detect, resist, and refuse it as of the evil one. But he tried it again, and, sad to say, succeeded at last in gaining his object. The very thing that had been refuted and corrected twice before, re-appeared a *third* time ten years ago at Brighthouse, when, alas! instead of being immediately rejected as false doctrine as previously, it was actually received as "new and blessed truth," and has now permeated and leavened the singular system of which it is an essential and distinctive characteristic. This is how it was re-introduced at a Reading:

It is true the Holy Ghost is in the individuals who form the assembly.

Is that the only way in which He is in the assembly?

I used to think there were two ways. I was corrected by John xiv: "He dwelleth with you and shall be in you." it is to *remain* in you, &c.

I thought you used to press it from Acts ii?

Yes. I am like Peter, I was in error, I now desire to help others.

Is not the Holy Ghost in the house of God as well as in the individuals? Where? (Brighthouse Notes (1894) p. 50).

On looking at the original to which my attention was called by one of J.N.D.'s letters, I saw John xiv. 17, in a new way. (p. 51).

It was indeed a grief and disappointment to find one whom you so highly esteemed being used to subvert a precious truth he had up till then so firmly held and so lucidly taught. I have even now notes I took of a lecture of his long ago grandly proving it from Scripture in a way that was positively unanswerable. That he should be the re-introducer of an error that, it was hoped, had got a quietus, from which there was no awakening, is simply unaccountable. It is such a complete turning of his back upon himself as to be inexplicable. Yet the change is perfectly clear from the foregoing statements, and that the presence of the Holy Ghost *with* or among us collectively (as distinguished from His being *in* us individually) is from the time of that Reading wholly denied, and that He is present in no other way than *in* believers distinctly affirmed. He had the frankness to acknowledge the *giving up*, which the developed system has not the honesty to own, and preferred certain reasons for his doing so, viz. :—(1), the "original" and (2) "one of J.N.D.'s letters." Let any one acquainted with the language in which the Gospel of John was written say whether the Greek of chap. xiv. 17. is "remain *in* you" as alleged. It is "*re-mains WITH* and shall *be IN* you," that is, *two* quite distinct things. Yet it is asserted, "I used to think there were two ways, I was corrected by John xiv." In face of the *fact*, what can such a statement

mean? So far from the original supporting any notion of the kind or reducing the ways in which the Spirit is present to "in" only, that it verily teaches *three* ways, which are explicitly indicated by three different Greek prepositions, viz., *meta*, *para*, and *en*. The first is in verse 16, the second two in verse 17, while *para* is also in verse 25 as expressing the way in which Christ was *with* His disciples when here. The verb *meno* is variously translated "continue," "remain," "abide" and "dwell," but that "remaining" or "dwelling" is according to which of the prepositions is used. The word translated "abide" in ver. 16 is the same as that translated "dwells" in ver. 17, but the "with" in the former verse is a different "with" in the original from the "with" in the latter. Christ was not "with" in the sense of verse 16, which means "remain with" for ever, in contrast with *going away*, just what he was about to do, nor could He be "in" them then, but He was "with" them in the *para*-sense of verse 17, and says so emphatically in verse 25. Now the Spirit is present in that sense as really as He is present in the *meta*-sense and in the *en*-sense, and it is just this which the New Teaching denies. When one truth after another is given up and something quite different embraced instead, this is invariably prefaced by the phrase, "I used to think," while in the very next breath you have the contradictory assertion that nothing is given up. The inconsequence of the reasoning is incredible! "I used to think so and so, I do not think so now, yet I have not changed or given up anything." What could more indubitably show how thoroughly those, who can say such things without being conscious of their manifest absurdity, are under the subtle influence of some strange power? Now without uttering one disrespectful word, it is nevertheless painful to reflect how entirely mistaken the imagined correction by the "original" was, and how readily it might have been prevented by the exercise of a little care, for most certainly the Greek of John xiv. 17, affords no ground for the alleged construction.

Then the misreading of J.N.D.'s letter is still less explainable because it was written for the express purpose of correcting that very error which had re-shown itself just thirteen years before Brighthouse. It was the second time he had to refute it, but the strangest thing of all is that the letter containing his refutation should be so misused as to be made the reason for bringing it in again. It will be found in Letters of J.N.D., vol. iii. p. 239. In the first part while showing the verb in both verses to be the same, he draws special attention to a meaning of "abide" generally overlooked, and a "with" (*meta*) which was not true of Christ, when here, namely (in combination) "abiding with" perpetually in contrast with leaving or going away as He was, but which would be true of the Spirit when He came. Still this was not meant to deny that Christ was "with" His disciples in the *para*-sense of verse 25 (as will be seen from his first refutation of the error in question), for how could He go away from them unless He had been with them? Nor was it intended to weaken the presence of the Spirit in the two other senses, for to enforce these was the burden of the letter, as the following quotation will prove. It says:—

"Further the Holy Ghost being individually in our bodies, as temples, *is not all*. He forms the body, or rather formed it on the day of

Pentecost—not by spiritual progress, but by coming personally down and baptising into one body. *Nor is that all.* The Holy Ghost is not in *an* assembly as God's house or dwelling, but in *the* assembly. In 1 Cor. iii., they are collectively God's temple. So in Eph. ii., "Ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." That is not individual, and if the Holy Ghost dwells in the habitation, is He to do nothing or direct *everything*? The assembly is as much the house or temple of God as it is the body, only all the members of this last are personally dwelt in by the Spirit and members of Christ. As to two Spirits, it has no ground at all. It would be much more applicable to dwelling in individuals, but this is carefully guarded against in 1 Cor. xii."

This is enough to show that the letter teaches the opposite of the Holy Ghost being present in only *one* way as if *in* individuals were all. There are three things connected with that Brighthouse Reading which seem incredibly strange, (1) that such a thing could be broached when the subject was the "Habitation of God" without perceiving that if that was denied there could be no habitation, and they might have shut their Bibles and dispersed; (2) that the "original" could have been so misread as to take out of it the contrary of what it says; and (3) that a "letter of J.N.D.'s" written to correct a certain false doctrine could have been so mistaken as to make it the warrant for propounding the very error it was refuting, and that this error could be hailed as "fresh light" and "blessed truth." Imagine what the system is that could be founded on things like that! Yet it is adhered to, and nothing would convince those under its influence that truth is truth and error is error. One remembers pointing out to two intelligent brothers the real purport of that letter of J.N.D.'s, and how it had been so palpably misapprehended, but what do you suppose they did? They actually turned round and argued that the small print at the bottom of the page was part of J.N.D.'s reply instead of what he was replying to, though I was as certain of the facts as I am of my own existence. I knew the exact history of that letter. It was part of a correspondence which took place in 1881 and was published the year following in the first volume of "Words of Faith." A brother who signed himself X wrote to the editor of that periodical a letter containing this error, and in almost the same terms as were used forty years before when it first appeared. The Editor replied as Y. X wrote again, and both his letters were sent to J.N.D., which led to the writing of the letter already referred to signed Z, exposing all X's false contentions. Any one, who wishes, can verify from "Words of Faith," vol. 1, that the small print at the foot of the page in Letters of J.N.D., vol. iii. pp. 239-243, are extracts from X's two letters, not part of J.N.D.'s answer, though the two brothers had become so involved in the meshes of the New Teaching that they could not be got to see the truth of the matter, and this applies to all who are under the spell of the system. In X's case the result of J.N.D.'s "critique" was that he acknowledged the error and accepted the truth of the presence of the Spirit *with* us, which constitutes us the house or temple of God

collectively, as distinct from His being *in* Christians individually, asking for further light on the difference between the presence of Christ and that of the Spirit in the assembly to which J.N.D. replied in a brief note. There is one other brother here who also knows the facts of that correspondence and the letter of J.N.D., for he was in the place at the time from which X wrote his letters and knew X, though his identity was not divulged in the Magazine.

What a grave symptom of the serious and rapid decline (however unconscious of it, even to dreaming it to be progress) it surely is, that the letter which convinced X of the error in 1881 should be so misconceived in 1894 as to be made the means of *bringing* it in again and alas! of its *staying* in, for J.N.D. was not here to refute it a third time! But to regard it as "new and blessed truth" crowns all, and so many to be carried away by it too, without so much as questioning its correctness is suggestive of some blinding influence.

From a statement in one of the early volumes of "Words of Encouragement" I was sanguine enough to believe that the truth was being returned to, but all these hopes were crushed when the teaching of Brighthouse was reproduced at Quemerford in 1900, as found in the Notes for that year.

Do you distinguish between the Spirit dwelling in the believer and in the assembly?

He dwells in the assembly as being in believers. The Spirit never came upon one single individual. The Spirit came on the 120 on the day of Pentecost, &c.

That is to say, the only way in which the Spirit dwells in the assembly is by His being *in* believers, which is what makes us members of the *body* of Christ. If that were true, there could be no *house* of God since that is constituted by the *dwelling* of the Spirit *with* us, not by His being *in* us. The Spirit's *abiding* with us for *ever* is a different and additional fact from either of these. This is just a repetition of what was said by another at Brighthouse six years before and the groundless argument then used in support precisely the same. To assume that the Spirit's "coming upon" the 120 on the day of Pentecost and not on a single person (which no one denies) disposes of this whole question, has really no force whatever. That the Spirit came on the 120 has been fully recognized and its true significance apprehended, being what is called in Scripture the *baptism* of the Holy Ghost, which is never said of *one*, always of *many*, as the case of the hundred and twenty proves. In Acts i they were commanded to "wait for the promise of the Father" (ver. 4), and told they were about to "be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence," so that it had not occurred before this. But in chap. ii, it was, on the day of Pentecost, accomplished, Peter declaring, "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the *promise* of the Holy Ghost, He *hath shed forth this*, which ye now see and hear." (ver. 33). Then the doctrine as to it is in 1 Cor. xii. 13, "By One Spirit have we all been baptized into one body," which tells us what the *baptism* of the Spirit means, namely, that specific action of the Holy Ghost that *formed the body*, and took place, as we have seen, in Acts ii, when the 120, hitherto *separate* individuals were baptized into one body as a *whole*. This was once for all. There cannot be another

formation of the body. It is perfectly true that the Holy Ghost did not "come upon a single individual," but after He had come, there is another kind of action, for, besides the *baptism* of the Spirit, there is also such a thing as the reception of the Holy Ghost by a single individual called in Scripture the *sealing* of the Spirit, so that the body of each sealed believer is the Holy Ghost's temple. Further in what way do we become part of the body of Christ now, when the Spirit does not come on many at once, as He did at the first? It is through our *one by one* being sealed into the very thing that was formed when the 120 were baptized into one body by the Spirit. In fact afterwards on the same day, that was how the three thousand were added and incorporated, by individual sealing. Peter said "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," not be baptized by Him. Now granted the coming upon or *baptism* of the Holy Ghost as to the 120, and the difference between that and the *sealing* as to the individual, how does that set aside another fact equally important in its place, we mean, the *presence* of the Holy Ghost with us *collectively*? This is quite distinct from the *baptism* of the Spirit *corporately*, and from the *sealing* of the Spirit *individually*. Indeed the *effects*, such as the "sound" the "rushing mighty wind" and the "filling of the house where they were sitting" afford undoubted evidence of the *presence* of the Spirit there *with* or among them first of all, before he was even *in* the individuals or had baptised them into one body. The Spirit's baptism, accordingly, is one thing, His sealing another, and His presence as a Divine Person with God's people constituting them God's house is a third. "In whom also ye are *built* together (not baptized or sealed) for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22). I *dwell* in a habitation, but I am not united to the individual *stones*, nor are these *united* to me, as in the case of the 120 by the Spirit's baptism. Once the *body* has been formed, you can only speak of its component parts in the *plural*, because "the body is not *one* member, but many." Hence Scripture always says "members of Christ," "members of His body," "members one of another." If it has to speak of *one*, it is "he that is joined to the Lord." On the other hand when a question of the reception of the Spirit by the *individual*, it says "What! Know ye not, that your *body* (not your bodies as in ver. 15.) is the temple of the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. vi. 19). Accordingly my *body* is as much the Spirit's temple as if there was not another; though of course there are others. Still it is each one individually. But there is the *collective* temple in 1 Cor. iii. "Know ye not that *ye* are the temple of God." The fallacy of the reasoning put forth ought to be plain to the simplest christian. It is like this, because the *baptism* of the Spirit is one thing and the *sealing* of the Spirit is another, or because he *came on* the 120 and not on one single person, therefore there is no *presence* of the Spirit with God's people as his house or habitation! This same error showed itself sixty years ago, and the recognition of its gravity was as decided as its refutation was complete. It is not pretended but that evil may come in, whether doctrinal as among the Galatians, or moral as among the Corinthians, but when it does so, we are responsible as soon as it comes to light to judge it and purge it *out*. If not, the whole lump becomes leavened, and then we are enjoined to purge ourselves *from* it.

In a communication entitled, "A Letter to the Saints in London as to the Presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church" (see Coll. Writings J.N.D., vol. 1. Doct. pp. 525-550), the error was unmasked and the truth vindicated, as the following extracts will show:—

"That which characterized the ministry and testimony of those called the brethren, however feeble, and feeble they were, was (with the accompanying revival of assurance by faith in the simple testimony of redemption) the bringing out and walking in the faith of the two latter doctrines, namely, the Holy Ghost in the Church and the coming again in person of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this ministry was blessed both in gathering many into a simple position by it, and extending the happy influence of these truths among many who were not so gathered. With this connected itself the unity of the church as the *body* of Christ by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and that, separate from the world, as *bride* of the Lamb. A comparison of what the Church was at first when filled with the Spirit led them to the sense of our present ruined state, and to seek in earnest devotedness more conformity to its early path, and that nothing should be owned which was not of the Holy Ghost. And they waited for God's Son from heaven. If the presence of the Spirit gave them the consciousness of being the bride, He made them also earnestly desire the coming of the Bridegroom, and the joy of that day when Christ should come and receive them to Himself, and take the kingdom and the glory. They entered in spirit in their little measure into that word "The Spirit and the bride say come," and they were happy and blessed.

"And where, beloved brethren, let me ask you with the Apostle, is the blessedness ye spake of? Did you suffer so many things in vain, or for an error, if it be yet in vain? Did you begin in the Spirit or was it all a delusion of your imagination which wiser minds have discovered and that you are glad to give decently up and to end in the flesh?

"Now the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church was (with the waiting for Christ's coming) the grand doctrine on which the whole testimony of those so-called brethren was founded. And this it is which it is sought to deprive you of. Let us not deceive ourselves, this is what is in question. It will soon be seen everywhere, save as this truth is forgotten anywhere. It may be clothed in terms which may seem not to deny it, because that would alarm—in terms suited, alas! to the failure of spiritual power, and therefore of discernment which may be found among us.—I dare say it may not be admitted, but if one comes to rob me of my treasure, his not telling me he is, nor admitting he is, cannot satisfy me. But this, perhaps, it will be said, they do not mean to do. I will admit they may be ignorant of the truth itself, and therefore of the loss of it, and therefore not be aware of the mischief they are doing. But if one is urging the vessel on the

shoals, and he is mentally innocent, because he does not know them, that will not content me as a passenger if I know, nay, not even if I suspect them.

“ But I will first bring out the idea before the minds of brethren that by it they may be able through grace to judge of the statements by which it is pared down and destroyed, and what they are losing for their souls if these statements are listened to. Let us remember the question:—the dwelling of the Holy Ghost in the church as such. That I may not misrepresent the doctrine I combat, take ——’s account of it: ‘ A dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the church, apart and distinct from the members, is what I confess my inability to receive.’ Again: ‘ But from the way in which I have heard some speak of the person of the Holy Ghost in the individual and distinct from this the person of the Holy Ghost in the church, the thought has arisen in my mind, which one almost fears to express, Do they believe in two Holy Ghosts?’ Again, ‘ I see these precious promises of the Spirit’s abiding and presence during our Lord’s absence in John xiv., xv., xvi., but surely no dwelling here, nor through the Acts of the Apostles, distinct from the individual believer.’

“ We have then distinctly before us the question. It is denied that these two things are distinctively true—the Holy Ghost in the individual and the Holy Ghost in the church.—I now turn to the main point: God’s dwelling with man. This I believe to be the peculiar and special blessing of man, and the highest honour that could be conferred on him, unless it be his being actually in glory with the Lord when something more is added, viz., being like the Lord and with Him. Redemption is the true ground of God’s dwelling with man. He did not dwell with Adam, He did not dwell even with Abraham, but as soon as Israel was brought out of Egypt what was the leading thought? Clearly a distinct one from dwelling or acting in an individual. In Exodus xxix. 45, 46, ‘ And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God, and they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them out of the land of Egypt, *that I may dwell among them*, I am the Lord their God.’ So 2 Chron. vi. 1, 2—But it is needless to multiply passages. We may take notice in all this that it has nothing whatever to do with the dwelling in an individual. It was a distinct thought altogether. The serious question is, are we worse off now as to this?—What we have to inquire is whether this presence of God in the midst of His people is spoken of in the New Testament, and that distinct from His gracious presence in the individual. It is true we look for His presence in glory, but surely meanwhile the main doctrine is the presence of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, as truly and really the presence of God in the midst of His people as the Shechinah. If God was in His holy temple then,

God is in His holy temple now—most truly, though after another manner; *not* merely in *individuals*, the aggregate of whose individual blessing is the blessing of the whole, but in His spiritual *temple*, the church of the living God. And here I would remark further, that His personal presence as acting in any power in the church is wholly denied. It may not be in words (this I should think much less of, the faith of simple saints might at once meet it); but it is undermined and taken from us without our being aware of it. It is vain to cry out about its not being fair to impute to a person what he denies. Are the saints to be robbed of their heritage and blessing, because he who does so denies he is doing it? It may be through ignorance, but it is much fairer to *detect* than to *deny* it, if the thing be so.

“And now to the statements of the New Testament on the subject. That the presence of the Comforter is the distinguishing truth of this age founded on the work of Christ, I ought not to be obliged to insist on. Suffice it to say, that it is on the fact of this presence that the Lord grounds the advantage of His going away. ‘If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go away, I will send Him unto you.’

“This name of One come down to take Christ’s place, and abiding for ever, is of all moment in this case, for the Holy Ghost, come as the Paraclete in place of Christ was to be among them as Christ was. Christ had acted among, and for, and by them too. Now they were to have another Paraclete who was to be among them in His stead (though glorifying Him) and to act among, for, and by them; and lead, and guide, and correct, and direct, and sustain them, and to be with them *for ever*. This was not merely man acting by the Spirit, it was a living divine person acting for them and by them. That, He being grieved, much of that in which He showed His power is lost, is true, but to say, because man has abused this grace, and feebleness has followed, because God has not honoured those who did not honour Him, or because the flesh has abused the doctrine, that He does not dwell amongst us, is merely that kind of unbelief hateful to God, which is called in Scripture ‘tempting God.’ The place was called Massah and Meribah ‘because there they tempted God, saying, Is the Lord amongst us or no?’ And here I will remark on the ‘with us’ and ‘in us.’ The distinction is perfectly Scriptural. The Lord said (John xiv. 25) ‘These things I have said unto you, being yet present *with* you’—the exact phrase which is used concerning the Holy Ghost translated ‘He dwelleth with you’ (ver. 17).

“But, further, this is fully brought out in Scripture as a distinct thing from being in individual ‘members.’ Both are spoken of, but they are spoken of to different purposes in Scripture. ‘Know ye not that your *body* is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you,’ &c.

(1 Cor. vi. 19). Here accordingly it is applied to personal sanctification. 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, &c. If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are' (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17). Here it is clearly the church of God, the building of God, which some might corrupt by false doctrine. They were God's building. The Spirit of God does clearly distinguish the dwelling in the individual and the dwelling in the temple (collectively).

"But having seen that the Scripture does speak of both distinctly, that is, that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that the church is so too, I would quote some passages which speak of both the one and the other, that we may see that both are fully taught in the Word. We read (John iv) 'The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life' John vii, 'Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, and this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive.' These are evidently personal and individual. But there is another truth besides. God is to be in His temple. What is a temple without God? Or is it only the individual poor weak saint that is so? No. The church of God, not looked at as individuals, but as brought together into one, is God's habitation through the Spirit.

"And now, suppose man has grieved this Holy Spirit, that the church has lost many of its manifestations, supposing its practical unity is gone and scattered, that the wolf, because there were hirelings has caught the sheep (though not out of Christ's hand) and scattered them, and the ruin is felt. Am I to confess the sin of man, and say, 'Let God be true and every man a liar,' and therefore recur in faith to the promise that the Comforter should abide for ever with us? or to say that unity is gone; that opening for the Holy Ghost to act in the members is a 'bygone mode of God's dealing in His house,' because 'the Holy Ghost acts neither *in mode* nor in measure, as in New Testament times.'

"That is, because man has perhaps abused a principle instead of correcting the abuse, the blessing is denied altogether. It is just simple unbelief in the presence and operation of the Holy Ghost. For my own part I desire through grace to correct the flesh whenever it appears, but I am not going to retrace my steps. I 'fear' to do so, because I know God led me on the road. I have found the blessing. Were we happiest when this was *believed* or since it has been denied? And if we have failed in maintaining or in using the blessing, are we to humble ourselves or deny the blessing? We found it when there was no such unbelief or teaching amongst us. There was blessing enough to cheer and help us on in spite of much weakness and infirmity. And I shall not deny God in His truth and blessing because man knows not how to use it.'

“I do not go with my ears there to hear man, however gifted, but to worship God, and I beg to press this on brethren. I feel thankful if anyone be led of God (I trust we may be forgiven for still thinking this possible in spite of the efforts to rob us of it) to give a word of exhortation or comfort. I know that the flesh has abused this, forgetting the word ‘swift to hear, slow to speak.’ But I add, *most decidedly* that, though I have seen liberty used for license, I have found where God was owned incomparably more of His presence and blessing than where man’s arrangements have taken the place of God. There might be evils to deplore and to correct, but there was God to enjoy because God was owned. Correct the evils, brethren, but let us not disown God nor His goodness. If you cannot know His presence in worship, nor what the blessing of this is, humble yourselves. You have suffered great loss, you have spiritually declined. Forgive me! But if (which I cannot believe, for I at any rate have found it among you) you have forgotten this joy—pardon me here also—I, poor as I am and I feel this unfeignedly, I have not forgotten it. I shall, with His grace, continue to trust Him. I will, if need be, *begin afresh*, and am not afraid of not finding His faithfulness and love, and of enjoying with a despised remnant that sweet and blessed fellowship with Him which He has granted us in times past.”

Could anything surpass this masterly vindication of the *truth* of the Spirit’s presence or dwelling with or among God’s people collectively as His holy temple or habitation, and its absolute demonstration as a distinct thing from His being *in* believers individually? The extreme seriousness of the *denial* of this vital doctrine is also shown in a manner to leave nothing to be desired, while the *error* and its destructiveness are made so undeniably plain as to be past debate. It has come to this that the very sense of that immense truth and of its supreme importance is lost for this system. To such an extent is this the case that so far from apprehending the necessity for purging out the erroneous teaching, which is quite openly avowed and insisted on at Readings here (the usual reply to any question asked concerning it being, “We once held *that*, but the notion has been given up long since”) the grievous fact is that the evil is not even seen to be evil, but boldly asserted to be *good*! Not only is it knowingly tolerated in their midst, which is bad enough, but it is actually regarded as precious truth, so insensible have they become to what is wrong. How very different from what was! Be careful to mark this. So serious and pernicious was this particular error considered to be that, had the saints in London, to whom that letter was sent, not responded to the appeal, refused the false doctrine, and adhered to the truth, J.N.D. would have *BEGUN AFRESH*. It is quite as deadly error now as it was at that time. If it warranted such a step then, it calls for it tenfold more now. Consider the errors already pointed out as to the Scriptures, New Birth, the Gospel, Salvation, Reconciliation, Eternal Life, the Kingdom, the Covenant, Deliverance, the Lord’s Table, the Lord’s Supper, the Assembly, with the additional fatal error of this paper besides, not to

speak of others yet to be noticed, and it necessarily follows that the only resource of those, who realise how imperatively the claims of Christ demand separation from all this, is assuredly to *start anew* on the divine principles which formerly characterized us as taught in God's Word, planting our feet on the Scriptural position and the sound doctrine recovered, occupied, and acted on, for so many years before any of the parties or offshoots now in existence originated. Why perpetuate them? Yet we know from experience that each of these sets of people will tenaciously cling to the particular thing on which their separate company is founded, but a re-commencement on the lines indicated would really afford a divine platform on which all, who seek to be true to Christ from any of these, might *be*, with a good conscience according to God, away from the evil that is so manifest. But be that as it may, the question for us is a simple one, when attention is drawn by the Spirit through any of the faithful to the evil, and it is not put away but called truth, is God with those who continue in the evil or with those who will not?

It is tried, however, to be made out that "breaking the continuity of fellowship" is such a terrible thing, in order to deter simple souls who are getting their eyes opened to the slough of error into which they have been entrapped, and wish to get out of it. Fellowship with what? Is to break continuity of fellowship with *evil* not just what God's Word insists on? "What fellowship hath light with darkness?" "Come out from among them and be ye separate." Is not error evil? Never were the cunning and craft of the tempter more deep and ensnaring than as shown in this system. Though scarcely a truth of Scripture is now held by those who have embraced it, as was once held, there are those (yet they must know better) who have the hardihood not only to say, but to put in writing, that they *are* as they *used* to be, and hold *all* they used to *hold*, in the teeth of their own ever recurring formula, "I once held so and so," "I used to think this," which proves the contrary. What enemy hath done this? The deceiver himself. His work is unmistakable.

Nor is this all. Another thing by which they profess to be shocked is the very idea of a "fresh start." Whereas when evil reached a certain point, J.N.D. had not the slightest sympathy with the morbid horror and dread of the "beginning afresh," as already seen, by which this system seeks to frighten simple souls from departing from iniquity. To have any longer to do with that which denied the essential characteristics of the church of God, and suffered the evil in its midst, became unfaithfulness to Christ, and, there being no remedy, *starting anew* was an absolute necessity to have the Lord's approval. While it would surely be sin to *leave* what is *right* and the *truth*, it would equally be sin to *remain* that which is manifested to be *wrong* and *error*.

He has further clearly stated the issue, thus:

"I admit it is a very serious thing to quit any body of christians, but it is equally serious to remain where the table is based on principles which make it not the Lord's in truth." "I fear nothing of the charge of a second table. There are many tables in—, and where dear saints go too conscientiously, but they do not, I judge, rightly own the

unity of the body, and you do not go there and I do not go there. I do not speak of a second table, more than I should say a fifth or a sixth, if I began to break bread where there were four or five other dissenting bodies already established in the same place." "Till judgment of evil and unity were rejected I could be in suspense. Now they are rejected" "I cannot stay in evil to preserve unity. I do not want unity in evil but separation from it. 'Get thee out' is the first word of God's call."

Again. "I should have been much disposed to begin afresh at——, not as rejecting many dear brethren, far from it, but that they and I might enjoy together the refreshings of God's love in joy and peace; and this (beginning afresh) is a general principle with me." "For to begin with God is always an encouragement."

To re-commence, therefore, on divine lines away from evil and error, having in view the whole body of Christ and refusing everything short of it, is just the Lord's reserve for even two or three in circumstances such as ours, as soon as God opens up the way for this to be done according to Him.

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W.S.F

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