

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

14. UNION DENIED OF THE BODY AND TO THE HEAD.

It is said :

“What I want to show you now is this—that the truth of union is not taught in connection with the body.” (Christ the Head, etc., p. 7).

“I think it a mistake to connect the thought of union with the body.”

The inevitable consequence of making Christ as *Head* relative to *body* nothing more than Chief, is the denial of truth long clearly established. You have only to ask the question, What kind of “body” is relative to Chief? in order to see what is involved. The answer shows it very plainly. Merely something like a “clan,” a “rifle corps,” a “regiment of soldiers,” or a “body of troops.” No wonder they deny union of that. There is no *union* in it, nor could be, for they are all separate individuals. Read Rom. xii., 1 Cor. xii., Eph., or Col., and say, whether that is the kind of “body” spoken of there? Are soldiers united to one another as the members of your body are, or to their general as your members are to your head? There could be no “body” according to the figure employed by the Spirit if the emphatic language of Scripture is perverted after this fashion. Take union from a body like yours or mine, and it would immediately fall to pieces. There would not be a single portion “one” with *anything else* in it after that. It would cease to be a body any more. It would be a unity no longer when union was gone. Blind is the man who does not see that.

On the other hand, you know how everything that enters into the composition of your body is *one piece* with every other piece, and this is the metaphor chosen by the Holy Ghost to show that between Christ and the church which is His *body*, there is as intimate a *spiritual* relation as that found in the natural body. Not, observe, any *material* union, but a *divine* spiritual fact by the Spirit which cannot be conveyed to the apprehension of our souls by any other figure than that of the human body. Because all perfectly united, the body is undoubtedly a *unity*, so much so that, if it wanted even the smallest joint of the little finger, it would not be complete. Hence there is no question but that “unity” is connected with the *body*, a special *kind* of unity that is true of nothing else. But is that any reason for denying the other fact *equally* inseparable from the body, nay, the very thing on which the unity peculiar to it depends? For what is it that makes and keeps it a unity? Just the wonderful fact of all the parts being *one* and the *same piece* with every other part. And what is that? UNION. That which holds and binds the entire complex mechanism into *one*. But what has *made* and *maintains* the body as a unity is one thing, the unity itself so formed and upheld is another. Both are true, and the *union* is positively indispensable to the very existence of that character of *unity* that is special to a body. Whoever denies this, could never have seen the truth of the church as the body of Christ relative to Head at all. He has another thing in his mind altogether which shuts out the true nature both of the union and the unity distinctive of the members of Christ’s

body united to the Head in heaven and to each other here. For there are both, and the refusal of what the members are to one another is sure to be followed by the refusal of what they are to the Head.

Accordingly one error leads to another, as follows :—

“Does the thought of union come in as connected with the body? The thought of union is not in connection with the Head and the body.”

Thus, if you reduce “Head” of Christ's body to *Chief*, and then deny *union* in connection with the “body,” dissolving it into a company of disjointed persons, what is the necessary effect? You are obliged to deny union of the body to the Head also, since there is no such thing as an army united to its commander-in-chief. It is the System and they cannot help themselves. But the sad fact remains that the distinctive truth made known by revelation to Paul is thereby completely lost, while by daring to change the divine figure, substituting in its stead a human one, with a totally different meaning, Christians are robbed of their true corporate blessing and the unique relation involved in it, wherever this sad distortion of God's Word is allowed and accepted.

As J.N.D.'s name has been taken in vain as to this also like the other, alleging that he did not teach the union of the body to the Head, though we might give quotation after quotation, let one testimony suffice :

“I am Jesus who thou persecutest. But how? If He were in heaven Paul could not persecute Him. But He esteemed His own as Himself; they were united to Him, so united by the Holy Ghost, that they were members of His body. He loved them as a man loves and cherishes his own flesh. The Head and the members were but one person before God.” (Coll. Writings Misc., Vol. III., p. 88).

The Deception of the so-called “Moral Side.”

Strangely enough, all this is done in the plea of professing to give what is said to be the “moral side.” We ask, the moral side of what? Certainly not of the body, for it teaches *that* completely *away*, so that neither moral, nor any other, side is left. It is all due, however, to a total misconception which has misled all round, because all, that is *essential* to the very meaning of a body like that of a man, must have been *absent* from the mind of the one who introduced this incompatible “moral” invention, borrowed from something else altogether, and is like an orange stuck on to an apple tree. While pretending to give what is “moral” according to the characteristic truth of the body in relation to the Head, this System does no such thing, but, going behind it, fraudulently brings in a wholly different set of conceptions, *destructive* of what Head is, and what body is, both morally and spiritually. Just as in the former Paper we saw that another *figure* was adroitly slipped in to displace the divine one, and virtually took it from us; so the moral *thoughts* proper to Head and body are here thrust aside to be replaced by *other* thoughts derived from a “chief” and the “company” he *leads*; thereby cheating souls out of all that is worth having in the mystery that was hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to the saints, which no one, with a Scriptural apprehension of that blessed truth, would ever dream of doing.

For the Mystery of Christ and the Church which is His body, He being the Head, is in its very essence and *constitution* a MORAL and

SPIRITUAL entity, as contra distinguished from anything *physical* and *material*, and has necessarily a moral *consistency* with itself all its own, while the special *kind* of moral *qualities* possessed and to be expressed by the body is but *one* of the many wonderful *results* which flow from *union* to the Head by the Spirit, and cannot be had apart from it. Whatever is "moral" about the body is inseparably bound up with what it *is*, not ideas taken from another thing, which is not it all; but *overthrows* it. No matter how you view it, this is the *abuse* of what is "moral" in reference to the *body*, whether as to its constitution, consistency, or expression, no less than as to the manner of treatment. We appeal to conscience. Can teaching away that divine, moral, spiritual, *reality*, which God intended to convey by the terms, Head, body, and members, according to the figure of a man, as expressing what Christ is to the church, and the church to Christ, be called "moral?" Is narrowing "Head" of the body to Chief, transforming "body" relative to Head into something like a regiment of soldiers, and reducing "members" to separate units, "moral?" Could evaporating Head down to "direction" and body to "description" be said to be "moral?" *is* to do all this, and then deny that they have done so, "moral?" Nay; under pretext of giving "moral ideas," to empty the divinely-inspired words of their true meaning and exchange them for something entirely different, is just what J.N.D. did not hesitate to call "immoral." Yet more to the point, it is what Scripture calls "handling the Word of God deceitfully," which the Apostle declares *he* did "not" do. Those, who wish to turn aside the edge of this, are ever ready to cry "bad spirit." We are prepared for the effort to discredit the truth. None of these things move us. We have to please but One. For the individuals under its influence there is nothing in our heart but love, and the sincerest desire for their deliverance; but the System itself, and especially its *subtlety* as evidenced here, call for "great plainness of speech," considering what is at stake, and what is due to Christ, to the Spirit, and to simple souls.

Explaining away "So also is the Christ."

How very distinctly 1 Cor. XII. 12 is felt to be in the way! As it stands, it is an insurmountable obstacle in the path of this System. Hence the amount of ingenuity displayed in trying to get rid of it and to make it mean anything and everything but what it says. Sad as it is to have to draw attention to it, the following is a striking example of the lengths to which they will go to effect their purpose:—

What is the force of "So also is the Christ?"

Does it mean the Head and the body?

I think the Apostle is referring to what is here in the power of the Spirit, and he uses the human body as an illustration of it.

You could not bring Christ into that?

I think I have heard you say that you do not get the Head in Corinthians.

Yes: but the baptism of the Spirit makes one body. *One* Spirit cannot make *two* bodies. (Weston Notes, p. 94).

Christ excluded from "the Christ."

Just imagine anyone saying you could not bring Christ into "so also is the Christ!" No stronger expression could be used to convey the absolute identity between Christ and His body than to call the entire

whole, "the Christ," and yet this system has the audacity to tell you, "You could not bring Christ into that;" whereas the fact is, the church, so to speak, is lost or merged in *Christ*, as if it were all Him, according to the express wording employed by the Spirit, where the many members are all regarded as part of Christ and so named. But it would upset this New Teaching scheme altogether to admit this. Hence on no account must "so also is the Christ" be allowed to include Christ (the Head), no, not even when the Holy Ghost uses the very term "the Christ," which is made out to be only the church, *i.e.*, a self-contained something *without* Him! Christ is not so much as permitted to be the Head of His own body, except as Chief, yet who could be the Head of Christ's body really but Christ? We mean Head as a man's head is in living union with every part of his body, and it is useless to try to evade the plain force of what the Spirit says.

There are two ways in which the human body is spoken of, (1) as the *whole* man, head, body, and members; and (2) we may speak of *head* and then body as its *complement* or that which *makes up* the full man. Scripture uses the figure in both these senses. Eph. and Col. present the latter and 1 Cor. XII. the former, *i.e.*, the entire human body including the head, and this is distinctly applied to what was formed by the baptism of the One Spirit, constituting the complete man, and the whole is designated "THE CHRIST"—(see ver. 12)—an expression never used in Scripture but of the *entire* Christ, whether personal or mystical. Here it is clearly "the (mystic) Christ," the whole man, embracing Head, body, and members. When body, as distinguished from Head, is intended, "Christ's body" is used, not "the Christ," yet His *body* never means something complete in itself, and apart from Christ, the Head. God's Word is always right, and must be read as the Spirit has written it. How have the best taught and most spiritual men ever amongst us interpreted "So also is the Christ?" Simply according to what it says, and with appreciative and adoring wonder at what that is.

One testifies: "As to the actual identification of the church with Christ and the way in which it comes to be so identified with Him we have a remarkable testimony in 1 Cor. XII. So absolutely identified are Christ and His members that the whole body, Head and members, is called Christ. 'So also is the Christ.' How is this unity, this absolute identity of the members and Head in one body produced? By the baptism of the Holy Ghost."

Another says: "So also is the Christ—the identification of the body with its Head is expressed in a remarkable manner by the use of this word."

A third states: "So also is (not the church only but) Christ. The Apostle is no doubt looking at the church, but He looks at it with the Head as inseparably united together. He does not so speak to the Ephesians. They did not require it to be so impressed upon them as the Corinthians. Impossible to have been so loose as the Corinthians were, if they had remembered that the whole being, head and body, was all one Christ."

The New Teaching has done its utmost to deprive us of this.

Finding, however, that the exclusion of Christ from "So also is the Christ" was too absurd to be credible, the attempt is made to, in a "characteristic" way, make it mean (American Notes, p. 308)

“Christ in the Saints here.”

But this is no explanation, except an explaining *away*, of 1 Cor. xii. 12, and is one of the evil effects of their false “moral” theory, at whose approach the very conception of anything, that could be called Christ’s *body*, vanishes. Undoubtedly Christ is *in* the saints for life and walk here, just as the saints are *in* Christ for acceptance and righteousness before God; but what has that to do with, “For *as* the body is one (the human body) and hath many members, &c., . . . *so* also is the Christ?” However true in its place, nothing whatever is said about Christ being *in* the saints *there* at all, but the stupendous fact that, being so *one* with Him, as members of His body by the baptism of the Spirit, the saints themselves are Christ *Himself*. Is a truth so blessed and wonderful to be frittered away by a miserable device of this sort? There could be no union to Christ as members of that body whose Head He is, unless *Christ* were first *in* the saints as life, but the latter does not mean the former, nor does the exhibition of moral *Christ-like* qualities by the saints, as the result of Christ in them, constitute “the Christ” of 1 Cor. xii. Read verses 12 and 13. It is a totally different thing from Christ “in” the saints in any “characteristic” way. They are part *of* Himself. The treasure being in the earthen vessels, most certainly the *life* also of Jesus is to be made manifest in our mortal bodies, but is that what “so also is the Christ” means?

Again, allied to this is a favourite form of talking away “So also is the Christ,” by making it mean (American Notes, p. 308).

“The Spirit when He came re-bringing Christ into the scene.”

The kind of speech indulged in is that “Christ having been once here under the eye of God, the Spirit came to bring in Christ again, and, therefore, it is said, so also is the Christ.” One could scarcely credit the utterance of such things unless he read them in print. But there they are, after being revised too. Could anyone be united to Christ as He was when “under the eye of God down here?” He was alone. Henceforth we know Him after the flesh no more. Scripture says it was expedient for the Christ, that was here under God’s eye, to go away, and that the Comforter would come in His place to abide for ever, but it says not a word about re-bringing in Christ along with Him. In truth, nothing is more certain than that He will never be here again as He was then. It was the Spirit who came down, not Christ, nor did He bring in the Christ that was *here* under the eye of God at the time of His descent nor since. On the contrary, He united us to Christ risen and *glorified*, as the Head, up *there*, and to each other as His *body* down here, constituting “the Christ” of 1 Cor. xii. or the “Me” of Acts ix., which is just the sense in which He *can* be said to be here, namely, that those persecuted ones on earth were so in union with Him that He could say of them “Me,” His very self, His body, and the same thing is true of “so also is the Christ.” The other way you can speak of Christ as here is in *spirit*, such as in the midst of His gathered ones. But moral *qualities* are not *Christ*, even when seen in the saints. They are only *from* Christ. It misleads to suppose otherwise.

In vain do they protest “we mean the moral thing,” or “it is not bringing in Christ literally but Christ *morally* we speak of.” Forgive us,

but we are perfectly aware of what is intended, and that it is the kernel of the System. Nevertheless, it will not do, because Christ morally is inseparable from Christ personally. The only time Christ was here morally was when he was here literally. It was from His person, as He walked here, that His moral glories shone out, what He said and how He said it, what He did and how He did it, and you have Him, both personal and moral, in the four Gospels. But where is it ever said that Christ is here morally *now*? All Christ's moral features reside in Him where He *is*, and any of these reproduced in the saints here must come from Him the living Christ there, but Scripture never calls that reproduction of qualities in believers here, "the Christ." Besides how are these Christ-like traits of character, when found in Christians, effected? By bringing Christ down? No. but by beholding Christ up *there*. It is as occupied with, and gazing on, Him in glory, we *here* are changed into the same image as He is *above*. The acquirement of moral qualities *like* His by the Spirit fixing the gaze of our souls on Christ in glory, is surely right and blessed when kept where Scripture has put it, but do not mock us by telling us that such is what is meant by "so also is the Christ," or "Christ's body" either!

Further, it is sought to be misrepresented as signifying

"Christ is the spirit of the body."

Does not the Word of God distinctly affirm that it is by One *Spirit* we are all baptised into one body? (1 Cor. xii. 13). The "spirit," therefore, that animates "the (mystic) Christ" is the Holy Spirit. Christ is the *Head* of His body, the church, always in Scripture, not the "spirit" of it. This, sad to say, gives rise to another error. "Drink into One Spirit" is made to mean "one spirit," not the Holy Ghost.

The spirit into which we have all been made to drink is, I judge, Christ, from whom we take character. (Quem. Notes, 1899, p. 123).

Then a different meaning is given to it the year after.

"Drink into One Spirit," what is that?

"One Spirit" there is not exactly the Holy Ghost. It indicates the end of Jew and Gentile in unity. (Quem. Notes, 1900, p. 116).

This is to defy the Lord's own words: "If any man thirst let him come to me and *drink*," etc. "But this spake He of the *Spirit* which they that believe on Him should receive; for the *Holy Ghost* was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (John vii. 37-39). When the baptism of the Spirit referred to in 1 Cor. xii. 13, took place at Pentecost, what was the actual fact? "And they were all filled with the *Holy Ghost*" (Acts ii. 4). Think of altering "One Spirit" to "spirit," (though it was before his eyes that the One Spirit of the latter part of the verse was the same as the first part), and of making it mean *Christ* instead of the Holy Ghost! What was the Spirit into which they all drank at Pentecost so as to be *filled*? "The Holy Ghost." It betrays the will at work, and a disposition to put any imaginable construction, no matter how untenable, on any Scripture, even so plain as "One Spirit," rather than recognise the true force of a passage as "it is written."

Then, even worse than the re-bringing in notion, is to make it

The "continuation of Christ" as He was here.

Accordingly the Church, as the body of Christ, cannot be for those who so speak, the entirely *new* thing that Scripture presents it. This would make it Christ in the days of His flesh *continued*. It may not have been realised what such a manner of speaking involves, but it amounts to a complete setting aside of the church according to the mystery that was hid in God. There was at least a *break* in the "re-bringing in" idea, but in this there is *none*. The church as taught in the Word is not a *continuation* of anything previous, but a totally new and unprecedented thing on this earth, for the first time brought into existence at Pentecost.

That it should be found necessary to resort to such diverse and contradictory statements in order to teach away "So also is the Christ" speaks for itself. It is made to mean (1) the church *without* Christ, (2) Christ *in* the saints, (3) Christ as He was under God's eye *re-brought* in, (4) Christ the *spirit* of the body, and (5) Christ *continued* as He was here below; everyone of which is an evasion of the truth and destructive of the Church which is His body. What need for all these meanings except to escape the true one. "The Christ" of 1 Cor. xii. 12 is just the mystical Christ, that is, Christ and the Church indissolubly *One*, like the head and body of a man, and no meaning that makes it the Church by itself disunited from Christ will avail.

Union affirmed of the Bride while denied of the Body.

The instances of this are so numerous in the New Teaching writings that it is unnecessary to give more than the following citations:—

"Does union with Christ refer to the body?"

The instant you bring in union, it is the thought of the bride."

"With Him is the great point in union." (Sonship, p. 16).

"The truth of union is not, I think, taught in connection with the body, union brings in the thought of the bride." (Christ the Head, etc., p. 10).

Every one ought to know that the word "bride" as to its real force has not got to the stage of *union*, and that as to "body," it could not be a body without it. The utter wrongness of the above is thus self-evident.

In reply to B.W.N., for the denial of true union is nothing new, J.N.D. said: "Union with Christ, spoken of in Scripture, conveys the idea of the body with the Head." "Union as a body with a glorified man could not be when the glorified man was not there." (Coll. W. Proph., Vol. III, p. 89). Then, in his "Scriptural unity and union," it is just in connection with the body, and the body only, that there is real *union*, though he shows two aspects of *unity*.

"Our question is: What, and of what, and how is unity and union? How far is it unity, and how far union? These are not the same." "Unity of saints on earth, and I may add in glory, is spoken of in a two-fold way. First, as individual saints, a family I may call it, as it specially refers to the Father—Christ being the first-born among many brethren. Of this John speaks; of the church as the body he never does. Its second aspect is this:—Those in whom the Spirit of God dwells are really *united* to Christ by the Holy Ghost, are members of His body. Who as man is exalted to the right hand of God in the glory He had with the Father before the world was. Both these will be

perfected in heavenly glory." "Union is with Christ the man in glory." "Here are *unities*, that is, of the family and of the body, one a relationship with the Father, Christ being first-born; the other *true union* with Christ, the Head, formed by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven." "Union is connected with Christ seen as a man whom God raised from the dead." "Christ does not unite Himself to sinners, nor does He even to saints, they are united to Him, by the Holy Ghost, when He is in glory. They are members of His body, not He members of them; members of it when He the Head is glorified and they are created again."

Bride is only on the way to union, and is, strictly speaking, nothing beyond *espousal*. Affirm union exclusively of the bride and where are you? Her sole connection with union is but in *prospect*. Deny union of the *body*, as this System does, and there would be no such thing as being united to Christ *now* at all. There is no *present* union as a fact except that which is connected with the body: for, though the body is unity or it could not be one, it presupposes *union*—the only *existing* union there is. But just because of that, covering as it does every less close kind of union, Christ treats the church as His *bride*, and cares for it as His *wife* now, as well as His *body*, *i.e.*, as Himself. We need all the figures, and yet, all combined, they come far short of the wondrous reality of what the church is to Christ.

The alleged Union no Union.

The union that a "bride" looks forward to, and a "wife" enjoys, though a different *kind* of union from the absolute identity inseparable from "body" is nevertheless *union*, *i.e.*, it has in it the *conception* of union, and expresses the love and affection side of the relation, super-added to the more than closeness of the uniting tie characteristic of the "body" figure. But this System abstracts *union* from the "body," professes to attach it solely to the "bride," and then teaches away the very thought of anything that could be called union altogether, for when you examine what they say they mean by union, it turns out to be no union at all. Alas! this is what the New Teaching does with everything.

The favourite expressions used to convey their notion of union are "touching," "reaching," and "being *with*." Is "touching" union? No, it is merely contiguity. Is "reaching" union? No, it is no more than presence. Is "with" union? No, it is only association. No one of these is within sight of union. There is nothing bridal or conjugal about them, let alone anything corporate. They were all true of the Queen of Sheba when she went to see Solomon. She "touched," "reached," and was "with" Solomon, but was she *united* to Solomon? Again it is said, "What I understand by union is that the bride shares the honours of the bridegroom." Is sharing the honours of the bridegroom union? No, that is in virtue of union. Further, "The idea of the Bridegroom to my mind is that He is one who has rights." Surely the thought in Bridegroom is that character of *love* that cannot stop short of uniting the object to Himself. There is no union in One who merely has rights.

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