

Immutable, Infallible, and Uncompromising Christianity

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HAD the papal system been in reality what it falsely claims to be-the one only Catholic Church, outside of which there is no salvation-many of its principles, canons, and claims, which are now the curse and bane of society the whole world over, would be logically and Scripturally sound and consistent. It is, for instance, a Scriptural fact that the true catholic Church of Christ, His mystical body, is the 'one only Church outside of which there is no salvation. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under Heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). Thus, were the Romanist political-ecclesiastical system perfectly identical with the mystical body of Christ, as its arrogant claim to the exclusive monopoly of the term "Catholic" asserts, its denunciation of all outside its pale, as "heretics," would be rationally and Scripturally justified. Popery itself, however, is the masterpiece of all satanic heresies and idolatries.

Were its pretensions factual, it would also follow, as a logical conclusion, as the national recognition of true religion is a Scriptural principle, that its claim to be nationally recognised as the true church of Christ in every nation under Heaven would be only "the words of truth and soberness." Being, however, the antithesis of true Biblical Christianity, no nation can officially recognise as valid its false claim, in this connection, without incurring Divine displeasure. Those Protestant and non-Romanist tax and rate payers therefore, who without perpetual protest, support the separate denominational schools of Rome, are not wholly immune from guilt. National governments that enact educational Acts of Parliament for the teaching of anti-Christian Romanism incur national guilt, resulting in God having a controversy with that nation.

Romanist themselves, being tax and rate paying citizens, have a right to State educational secular teaching, in common with Protestant and other non-Romanist fellow-citizens, but the religious part 'of their education is solely the concern of their ecclesiastical system. It is enough that Protestants tolerate such teaching, on the Scriptural basis, "Let them both grow together until the harvest," without expecting them, by way of rates and taxes, to propagate, support, and perpetuate, the most mischief-making perversion of Christianity in the annals of history, and Britain's inveterate undermining foe. This

toleration, of course, relates entirely and exclusively to the avoidance of physical pressure or persecution, whereas in our preaching, lecturing, and general witness-bearing, Rome and its blasphemous claims must be exposed and denounced with the utmost spiritual vigour, uncompromising faithfulness, and holy vehemence, as John the Baptist and the saviour denounced the Pharisees and their subtle, misleading, self-righteous religion. It is un-Scriptural on the part of papal Rome, or any other religious body, to claim the right to punish heretics, or so-called heretics, with the death penalty, as this is peculiarly a divine prerogative. There is not such a person as a forced conscript in Christ's church militant, but all of them are spontaneously loyal volunteers, who have been made joyfully willing in a day of His mercy, grace, and power. "If they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned, but now they desire, a better country, that is, an heavenly" (Hebrews xi. 15-16). Let Protestants pray earnestly, importunately, and ceaselessly for the downfall of Popery, and simultaneously for the everlasting salvation of Romanists.

Papal Rome's canons, laws, and claims, logically forbid the recognition of the validity of Protestant, or any other form of marriage service, outside the falsely so-called "Holy Mother Church." Its strictness, in this connection, however, would be Scripturally commendable, were its claim to catholicity valid, and it should rebuke the laxity of Protestants generally, and Free Presbyterians particularly, some of whom forsake true apostolic principles and Scriptural doctrines for the sake of a life-partner, who cares for none of these things.

Free Presbyterians, for instance, who marry outside our doctrinally-pure and Scriptural Church, in the teeth of parental disapproval, cannot expect the special Divine blessing promised to those who seek to observe the Fifth Commandment. Parents, on the other hand, whether professing Christians or mere adherents, who are only concerned with the social or financial status of their prospective sons-in-law or daughters-in-law, and altogether indifferent to their denominational connection, are, to say the least, inexplicably short-sighted. Though the Most High may, as has happened, in exceptional cases, over-rule such filial disobedience and parental irresponsibility and indifference for their ultimate good, their disloyal conduct towards their Scripturally-pure denomination, is no more justifiable than the action of the young man, who stole the Bible from the book-shop, notwithstanding, the fact that afterwards his first perusal of its sacred pages was sovereignly made the means of his supernatural regeneration.

As a general rule, Free Presbyterians who forsake the Scripturally-immutable and infallible doctrines embodied in our denominational distinctive testimony, for the sake of a wife or husband, act like the raven that went out from the Ark, to return no more. The loss, not only to themselves, but to their immediate and remote posterity, is immeasurable and incalculable. Next to being a member of Christ's mystical, body by a living faith, the greatest and most precious privilege under the sun is to belong to a Scripturally-pure and doctrinally-apostolic denomination. It is a privilege so priceless that it should not be bartered for anything that this world has to offer. Our Scottish Covenanters, in common with Christian martyrs in all ages and climes, parted with their most precious possessions, wives, husbands, sons and daughters, fathers and mothers, liberty, and life itself, rather than forsake or deny the Scriptural doctrines and principles for which the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland continues uncompromisingly to maintain its distinctive separate denominational and ecclesiastical position, in the midst of prevailing doctrinal laxity and indifference. Other professedly evangelical Presbyterian denominations, whose annual Moderatorial addresses are distinguished by learned expositions of the Reformed historic position, and exposures of infidel Modernism, display the most glaring inconsistency when they cordially invite, as brethren in Christ, these very propagators of Modernism and Scoto-Romanism to address their meetings at induction services.

While we have reason for deep gratitude to the Most High for the many excellent men and women who have found their way into our denomination through marriage, it is a matter of fact and history that the leakages from our church into less pure and less Scriptural denominations, through the same cause (marriage), have been considerable. By our young people, and those no longer young, bringing their life-partners and others into our church, they may thus be instrumental and. honoured, as has happened often already, in fulfilling Scripture: - "Let him know, that he who converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from, death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James v. 20). God never asked anybody to leave a pure Scriptural Church for a less pure and less Scriptural one, so that such as do so act carnally and not spiritually.

To those who, through lack of spiritual discernment or faithfulness, or both, declare that we may have too much Free Presbyterianism, let us reply in the language of an old Free Church Magazine: - " He, or she, who is the most loyal to the distinctive testimony of his or her doctrinally-sound denomination will

also be generally found to be the best Christian in that denomination.

"Primitive apostolic Christianity knows no ministerial gradation of rank, no compromise, no mutation, and no surrender, and so let it be, to the glory of God. Bishop Lightfoot asserts that as late as A.D. 70 there was no distinct system of episcopal government, and when better day's dawn, according to Scripture prophecy, the denominations that have forsaken the Scriptural standards of doctrine, discipline, government, and worship, will return, sincerely and penitently, to the simple, primitive, apostolic norm of Christianity. Those still on that impregnable basis must await, prayerfully and patiently, the penitent return of those who, with unholy haste, "moved with the times." - J.P.M.