

The True Church

William Law
(1686-1761)

How many various groups of professing Christians are there today, each of whom in opposition to countless others say that the only way for this unity to be scripturally expressed would be for all others to espouse its particular Scripture interpretation?

On what basis are these various divisions established? They could never be upon the basis of life and light and love, for Christ is not divided; and that which is truly from Him must ever be in harmony and unity with itself, no matter in whom it be found ...

What now is become of the true Church, or where must the man go who desires to be a living member of it? He needs to go to no particular place, because wherever he is, it is with him ... The true Church has no members but those of whom it can be said, "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" ... [N]o man is outside the Church except as he is described in these terms, "*If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His*" ...

Many reformations have taken place throughout church history; but truth forces one to say that they have been in large part so many runaway births of one and the same mother Babylon ...

In this new dispensation ... which is free from veils, shadows, and figures of good things to come, God Himself is manifested among men. ... He is not thundering from the mountain, nor speaking between the cherubim, nor is He found in an earthly sanctuary made with hands. He now lives and rules over us as the essential light of our lives ...

True worship is an attitude of the heart which is inwardly attentive to God ... Christianity is nothing else than living unto God in the power of Christ as He lives in us. Herein lies the only basis for the "*unity of the Spirit*" that makes men one "*in the bond of peace.*" ...

Church unity is not a matter that depends upon any human agreements or organization ... In the present fallen state of things, every church distinction is but a reflection of the fleshly wisdom of the worldly-minded man who has so long been building carnal religious systems with the things of God. Divisive factions, under a pretense of serving Christ, act for their own glory by that same spirit which keeps the selfish, partial man solely attached to his own will ... This is the evil root at which the reforming axe should have been laid ...

Under this light I am neither Protestant nor Papist, according to the common acceptance of the words. I cannot consider myself as belonging to only one society of Christians as distinct from all others...

I am not afraid, but am humbly desirous, of living and dying in an attitude of love toward every man in whatever division of the church he may be.

An Affectionate Address to the Clergy (1761)

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