

THE DOCTRINE OF FELLOWSHIP

by

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Psalm 133

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it
is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

*It is like the precious ointment upon
the head, that ran down upon the beard,
even Aaron's beard: that went down to
the skirts of his garments;*

*As the dew of Hermon, and as the
dew that descended upon the mountains of
Zion: for there the Lord commanded
the blessing, even life for evermore.*

"I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together:"

"That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it" (Isa. 41:19-20).

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee" (Isa. 41:10).

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1. THE CHURCH AND THE CHURCHES

THE CHURCH OF GOD

“Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners?” (S. of S. 6:10).

Who? The Church of God, which is Christ's. The echelons of the Church “triumph” in “victory” and “set up banners”, “in the Name of” their God (Psalm 20:5). They “make mention of the Name” of the Lord their God (v. 7).

The Church, terrible, clear and fair; triumphant, sanctified and justified, looks forth as the morning, for the star of her fellowship is the Morning Star.

This is the society of Christ's own, whom He calls His fellows. Each member of this society has been inducted by baptism of the Spirit, and sealed with the Spirit, is quickened into spiritual life in Christ by the Spirit and is indwelt by the Spirit. All members together are baptised into the Name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and they identify themselves with the Lord Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.

It is the full fellowship of all such. They lift up their banners everywhere “in the Name”, and in a coming day will accompany “Faithful and True” when as “The Word of God” He comes to judge and rule the world.

As the fellowship of the Church is also a fellowship or communion in the Spirit, and is a fellowship which “truly . . . is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3), the fellowship within the Church has the same character and quality as that within the Trinity of the Godhead. It is a fellowship of holy love.

As it fellowships with heaven, the Church serves Heaven at ambassadorial level among the nations of the World, charged with the good news of the grace of God.

Each member of this fellowship is of noble rank, is of a royal priesthood, and is “complete in Him” (Col. 2:10). The members are different from all other persons in the world, for they have light where others have darkness, and they have life where all others are dead in trespasses and sin.

They are “peculiar”, for they are set aside for God's special possession and purposes, and because of this, they are as lights to light and as salt to savour, each in his sphere of influence in the world.

Within itself this fellowship delights to be occupied with its Redeemer. It is the singing and worshipping fellowship of the redeemed, who love Him who first loved them, and who are His and who serve Him. Scripture calls it “the fellowship of His (God's) Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Cor. 1:9).

Now the Church of God is not the total of the local Churches, nor

the sum of all the so-called “denominations” of the Churches.

It is not comprised of denominations or of Churches, but of individual believers who trust in Christ, who have been redeemed by His precious blood, and have become personally united with Him in a holy fellowship.

Of each individual who belongs to Christ it may be said:—

(1) He *is* a member of the Church of God.

(2) He *should be* and probably is a member of a local Church, for these are closely related, but different entities.

The New Testament has the fellowship of God’s Son in view particularly. But there are other fellowships around us today. There is the form of fellowship between groups of Churches called “Denominations” and there are the modern ecumenical fellowships preparing the way for the fellowship of Babylon, the apostate world Church which God will judge in a coming day. There is also the fellowship of the World, which is at enmity with God. Let us then consider carefully the distinctions between these different fellowships.

There is also another form of fellowship we should later consider in which individual Christians may confer with the Lord Jesus personally, in a special way, tête-à-tête, just the Lord and the individual.

2. THE DIFFERENT FELLOWSHIPS

(a) THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCH OF GOD

The register for this fellowship is the Lamb's book of Life (Rev. 21:27, Phil. 4:3).

It is a fellowship of the redeemed, indissolubly linked with the Redeemer, and so with the Trinity.

This fellowship can only reckon within its fellowshipping its own fellows — only those registered in the Book of Life, and the fellowshipping must be such that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit can also participate therein. This is accordingly an "exclusive" fellowship, inclusive only of the Redeemed and the Trinity. While exclusive, with "naught that defileth" therein, it is also infinite, permanent and blessed.

Heaven sees this fellowship as an entity, complete in Christ Jesus, without spot, without schism, holy, catholic, and truly ecumenical. It is the fellowship of the full membership of the Church.

The Head Office of this fellowship is in Heaven and the only Head is Christ. The angels are ministering spirits who help the members of this fellowship at Heaven's behest, but the Church looks direct to Christ its Head. There are no offices on earth at all, and no officers except that in the formation period of the fellowship there were officers called apostles.

The whole body of the fellowship centres only on Christ Himself, and there is no other basis for a fellowship meeting of members of this fellowship than having Him in the midst. Such meetings of members are "in His Name", and a quorum is two or three. He laid it down a long time ago and the rules still apply — "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20).

The individual members of such gatherings may have right and proper affiliation with local Churches, but when members are gathered in the Name of the Lord, only *His* Headship can be realised. In the fellowship so enjoyed with Him is embraced in principle and in prospect all the other members everywhere who are not actually present at the gathering. The wholeness of the Church is always expressed and represented in all meetings of the members with Him.

Such gatherings with the Lord in the midst though often small in number are mighty in power. The Father does what they ask, when they are agreed together in a request (Matt. 18:19), and the One in the midst has all power in heaven and in earth (Matt. 28:18).

If we could see what Heaven sees, the constant appearance everywhere of gatherings in the Name, then we would see the banners set up in the Name of the Lord, and understanding the power of such an array, would rejoice to see how "terrible" is this "army with banners".

This is the true Church which Satan cannot touch and against which

the gates of Hell cannot prevail.

For over 1900 years this fellowship has been enlarging, growing in Christ, and will continue to do so until the time appointed by the Father when the whole edifice has been completed and "He (Christ) shall be satisfied". He loved the Church and gave Himself for it. He will catch it up, soon now, and then it shall be "ever with the Lord" in a rapturous fellowship of eternal delight.

(b) THE FELLOWSHIP WITHIN THE LOCAL CHURCH

While members of the Church of God may and do fellowship together with Christ anywhere, in small and large groups, without any permanent form or special order, nevertheless it is the purpose of God that all members of *The Church of God* should also be members of a Church of God, a spiritual society which has its own individual form and order and authority and responsibility, as well as its own separate and distinguishable membership.

Scripture speaks of one Church, *the Church of God*. But it speaks also of many local Churches. Further, each local Church is complete in itself, with Christ its Head, just as He is Head of *The Church*. The great Church of Christ is a spiritual building "fitly framed together" which "groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord". It is the welding together of all Christ's own into one, "for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:21-22). In Scriptural concept it is grand and eternal and is distinct from the local churches.

The Churches, on the other hand, while also habitations of God through the Spirit, are local and not permanent, and members may join and leave. Each Christian is a member of *The Church* for ever, but he may in his life on earth have belonged to several local churches.

The Church is one Church and is for ever and is Christ's purchased possession and His special inheritance and treasure.

The local churches are intended as Christ's torches in the world. They are lamps He lights. But they are spiritual buildings built for the service of the Lord among men on the earth. They are composed of "two nature" beings — persons who have the spirit of Christ and have eternal life but who also are mortals and who hold this treasure in earthen vessels. Accordingly the House of God which each of these Churches become, are all places of judgment, for in the world, judgment always begins at the House of God (1 Pet. 4:17).

Jacob, who typifies the Christian in the wilderness journeys and in the tumults of this life on the earth, found his lodestar at Bethel. At that local place that was called Luz at the beginning, he saw the ladder up to heaven with the angels of God ascending and descending. So there he set up his pillar which had been his pillow, and there in that local spot, he declared "this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17).

Now Jacob knew that this was the house of God, because "he was

afraid and said 'How dreadful is this place' and 'Surely the Lord is in this place' ” (v. 16-17).

Behold the local Church! It is that dreadful place where the Lord is, in any local area, and that place is also the House of God and the Gate of Heaven — Luz to the World, Bethel to the Church.

If the place you go to, brother, is a place where everybody does what he likes and all is peace and there is no judgment or dread of God, then the place, brother, is Luz, not Bethel. You have the pillow but not the pillar.

“The House of God . . . is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15).

COMPOSITION

The local Church consists of Christ and the men and women who are the acknowledged members thereof. The families and friends of members and visitors to the district as well the children and people generally of the neighbourhood of the local church may all have varying degrees of relations with the Church, but they have no part in the actual composition of it.

It will be known in the area if Mr White is a member.

Anyone who is Christ's, living in the area, has the right to belong, and should be a member, provided his testimony agrees with his profession.

ESTATE OF MEMBERS

All are of equal estate. There is no difference in equality of members, in that all have equal rights of membership and of the communion or fellowship thereof which membership means, both with Christ and with all fellow members, irrespective of sex, race or social status (Gal. 3:28).

HEADSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

All submit to Christ and to one another. Headship is allowed by all to Christ, and by every wife to her husband, and by the women generally to the men (1 Cor. 11:3). Leadership is with the men who are recognised as having been equipped and appointed by the Holy Spirit to carry out certain responsibilities involving rule, leading, guarding, supplying, watching and encouraging. These men are called elders or overseers or bishops.

RESPONSIBILITY

General responsibility for the administration of the Church falls on all members according to their part in the life of the Church. All

have a responsibility to obey all the commands of God, to live spiritually and in holiness before the Lord and to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Each person is responsible direct to Christ for all these things and for much more besides.

The elders have special responsibilities in addition, to feed the flock and to see that members are not lost or cut off by the enemy of souls and that evil doctrine and wicked men and hurtful practices do not obtrude. Also they are responsible to the Lord for all major decisions affecting the corporate life and testimony of the Church.

POLITICS OF CHURCH

The Church is not a democracy and no matter can rightly be subjected to the vote of members. This is sometimes difficult to appreciate where the Church is set in a country where democratic rule is generally accepted in most institutions.

The Church is not a democracy, and God is not democratic. He is supreme and does not share his vote with any other. The Church is His and obeys Him, and is not part of any earthly form of society. It is a society with its Head in Heaven. The only policy is to do Christ's wish and will and under God the Elders have the responsibility to give effect to His purposes, the whole Church approving and supporting and helping.

FUNCTIONS OF THE CHURCH

The local Church is intended to nurture the flock of the Lord, to ground the young in the faith, to uphold high the Word of the Lord, and to light the world around. Central is Christ who is adored and loved with the love that respects His every wish and which fears and dreads to offend Him. The young men labour and grow strong in the Lord and the daughters of the Church are so engaged that the whole fellowship sings and shines with a joy and polish after the order of a palace (Psalm 144:12), for it is a King's House. It has rich store of spiritual wealth and perennially spreads forth meat for old and young and displays anon its Treasures new and old. Further it is self-multiplying. It warns from peril and it sends and runs out life-lines everywhere around it. It sows and gathers in, and sifts the fruit. It grows in Him and feeds on the Bread of Life. It buys up its opportunities and does business in the sea of men around it, and there it drags in its net to net its gains for God for eternity.

SERVICE IN THE CHURCH

The Deaconite or servants or ministers of the local Church are of course those who do its service. There is service for all to do, and with prayer and exercise and continual meditating and studying in the Word of God, all members are capable of expanding and improving their God-given special aptitudes and callings.

Those who develop a special facility to teach or to evangelise or to care for the flock, to defend the faith, or to administer the business of the Company, in course of time become recognised as having a special calling in these matters and they lead therein accordingly.

GENERAL PRACTICES OF THE CHURCHES

These are:—

1. Continuing steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine.
2. Fellowship.
3. Breaking of bread.
4. Prayer.

(see Acts 2:42)

EXPANSION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

This is by obeying the directions of Christ to make disciples of all nations and to baptise them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that the Lord has commanded (Matt. 28:19-20). The Church evangelises and baptises and teaches, so that those who compose it learn and keep the Apostles' doctrine, and observe the breaking of bread (keeping the Lord's supper). They continue in fellowship and in prayer as they are so engaged.

Now remembering the local Church is the House of God, set in its position for these purposes we shall be helped to appreciate the nature of its fellowship, which is the subject of later chapters.

(c) THE CHURCHES

Paul spoke about "the care of all the churches," a burden which came upon him daily (2 Cor. 11:28).

The churches are of course the total of the local churches. John was directed by the Lord to write to the seven Churches in Asia Minor. There was one at Ephesus, another at Smyrna and there were the seven churches of the area.

Scripture speaks thus of groups of local churches but not of denominations. By Churches we do not mean the collective denominations, like the Presbyterian Church and the Anglican Church, but the total of the individual local churches no matter what denomination they call themselves or belong to.

It is clear from Scripture that God intends the building up of local Churches, but not denominations. It is also clear that each local church was intended to be autonomous and independent of any central authority or group control. This is implicit in the truth that each local church is a theocracy — a Christ-headed organism. Headship and responsibility to Christ are fixed and determined as between any man and Christ, any local Church and Christ, and *The Church* as a whole and Christ, for these are the units of His Headship. But no other

grouping of Headship is known to Scripture, and a little reflection should be enough to show that no other grouping of *organistic* relationship with Christ is possible.

A question for consideration is that of fellowship of local church with local church or of individuals in a given local church with those of another local church.

For a further study of the Churches see the author's booklet "The Doctrine of Brotherly Love".

(d) THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE WORLD

The apostle John says "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19).

There are two great spiritual inter-heavenly systems. There is the Kingdom of God, and there are the Kingdoms of the World. God's Kingdom centres on the Throne in Heaven and the others are of this World entirely. God's is related with the Church, whereas the World's is related with the Devil and the flesh.

The Devil offered all the kingdoms of the world to Christ if He would worship him. But Christ refused the World, though this meant a cross for Him. He said "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:10).

Because of this John says again to Christians generally "The world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not" (1 John 3:1).

James declares that the final vindication of pure and undefiled religion before God is this: "to keep unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1.27).

James also says "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4).

The question of whether the Churches or a Christian can fellowship with the world is an easy one. The answer is "No, a thousand times No".

The world is attractive to the flesh, however, and the Devil is always whispering to Christians about it, and making attractive offers with plausible explanations. The question becomes rather, whether the fellowship offered is really with the world or what is it?

When is the world not the world? It is always the world, especially when it sparkles and seems innocent and nice.

(e) THE APOSTATE CHURCHES

This expression is used to refer to local churches which claim to be Christian Churches but which Christ does not acknowledge and in which He is not allowed the Headship or cannot accept it.

If Christ is not the true Head of a local church it is an apostate church, and it is not a true church of God at all. Wrong doctrine is always at the root of the trouble which produces this result.

All the local "Churches" which worship the Virgin Mary are apostate, for by that worship Christ has been dishonoured and dethroned.

All the local "Churches" that do not teach the Virgin birth of Christ are apostate, for they have not honoured and enthroned Him.

These two tests are from opposite poles of teaching but the result is the same — apostasy.

Any Church which consistently refuses to act on clear Scripture in important matters is a disobedient Church and is open to become apostate. Christ will judge and deal with all His churches. But the final issue of judgment where moral or doctrinal error continues, is His withdrawal from the Church. Any Church so judged is an apostate Church.

Clearly true Christians should have no fellowship in or with apostate Churches. The problem of the day is to recognise them.

(f) THE WORLD CHURCH: BABYLON

This is the Church system concerning which the prophet heard the angel say "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:4-5).

Today it is common knowledge that the great Denominational Church groups are moving to form one great World Church. This movement is called the Ecumenical Movement (meaning world-wide). To effect this union, doctrine is being sacrificed on all denominational altars, and the result of this sacrilege and unholy union and alliance must ultimately bring God's judgment.

Prophecy clearly envisages such a Church and it is now forming before our eyes.

Dr John R. Mott is generally allowed the doubtful reputation of commencing the process which is leading to the formation of the World Church. At the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in 1910 Dr Mott introduced measures which produced "The International Missionary Council". Following the same plan of "World" co-operation two liberal-tone Church conferences were held in 1925 and 1927, the first at Stockholm called "The Universal Christian Council on Life and Work" and the second at Lausanne called "The World Conference on Faith and Order".

The next step was the formation of the World Council of Churches in 1944 and from this date the plan has openly been revealed to be the amalgamation of all Churches in one great World Church.

The Roman Catholics have given every encouragement to the liberal-minded other Church groups who initiated the movement. Then in 1961 at New Delhi the Roman Catholics joined with the World Council of Churches as observers and some of the prayers at that conference

gave a preview of the future worship of the World Church. The intonations commenced "Christ our true God, by the intercessions of His most pure mother ever-virgin Mary, of our Father among the Saints, John Crysostom —."

The last Pope then instituted an "Ecumenical Council" and the present Pope presses on with measures to achieve the bringing together of all the Churches of Christendom under his own headship.

In every town and hamlet in almost every land today, the Churches are preparing for this union, and efforts are made at every level to implement its early acceptance and a degree of union is already exhibited in many places.

The most popular of all the forces working for Church union and towards the formation of the World Church is Billy Graham. Through his recent conference at Berlin on World Evangelism, workers from Laodicean Brethren assemblies and Pentecostals have become associated together with those of the Faith Missions, within the structure of The World Council of Churches which sponsors him. While they all approve and follow him, he now has entered upon a course of fellowshipping everywhere with Roman Cardinals and dignitaries, addressing priests, nuns and novices and accepting honorary degrees from Roman Catholic universities.

The effect is to break down resistance everywhere to fellowship with apostates and Romanists and to usher in the World Church.

At his Boston campaign Graham sought an interview with Cardinal Cushing, and was rewarded with the Cardinal's public announcement "I am 100 per cent for the evangelist".

And at the recent Sydney Crusade, instead of following the injunction of Ephesians 5:11 "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them", Dr Graham "had tea" at the Palace of his Eminence the Cardinal.

Graham's thinking is illustrated in a press message from London in May, 1966, in which he is reported as saying "I think the Roman Catholic Church today is going through a second reformation . . . If only all this had happened 400 years ago!"

And then when he found that Pope Paul's Encyclical on birth control was not well received he expressed concern that it might weaken the cause of ecumenicity!

What is the Pope's view of all this? In his new Creed given just prior to the meeting of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, *Pope Paul* affirmed: "We believe in One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, built by Jesus Christ on that rock which is Peter . . . *We believe in the infallibility enjoyed by the successor of Peter* when he teaches ex-cathedra as pastor and teacher of all the faithful . . . We entertain the hope that the Christians who are not yet in the full communion of the one only Church will one day be reunited *in one flock with one only shepherd.*"

But what does Scripture say about this World Church ?

It tells us that this Church is called "Babylon" by Heaven, and prophetically that is its name.

The Scriptural connotation of course is with the city that Nimrod built which became the centre of the first great anti-God religion — the mystic world religion of Nimrod and his demon-possessed wife Semerimus who gave birth to a son whom she claimed to be the promised "seed of the woman" and as a result of this claim she was herself deified and called "The queen of heaven". This in turn became the worship of Baal which in one form or another spread throughout the ancient world, and gave to the decadent Christianity of the early days of Roman Catholicism the worship of the Queen of Heaven. Only Mary the Mother of Christ replaced Semerimus under the more sophisticated idolatry of Romanism.*

The Mother-child worship of Ashteroth and Baal is with us today in Rome and will be the rallying point of all worship in the final stages of Babylon the World Church of the Apostasy.

Also, as all men went to Babylon to build the tower of Babel which God ended with a judgment, so will the modern babel that is Babylon, having gathered from all nations, in a babel of depraved worship, end with judgment as is set out in Revelation 17 and 18.

The Baal — Babel — Babylon religion was also the religion of Jezebel the wife of King Abab whose name is ever linked prophetically with Roman Catholicism. John is told to write to the Church at Thyatira and say "Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols" (Rev. 2:20).

In the final judgment, The World Church, Babylon, is still viewed prophetically as a woman — she is "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the Earth" (Rev. 17:5). She is "The great whore, that sitteth upon many waters with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication" (v. 1-2).

But her name is also "Mystery", for in prophecy she is seen sitting "upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy having seven heads and ten horns" (v. 3). "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth" (v. 9).

Paul said that even in his day "the mystery of iniquity doth already work" (2 Thess. 2:7), and this he said is to conclude with the revelation of "that man of sin", "the son of perdition", thus relating to the prophecy of Babylon. Paul says further in 2 Tim. 3:13 "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived".

Now while all the deceivers of our day are bustling about to set up the World Ecumenical Church of Babylon, God is saying "Come

* See the author's booklet "The Doctrine of Gold" for an account of the relation between Babylon and Rome.

out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins”.

Man says unite, be ecumenical, help in the big crusades and World Conferences. But God says of those who lead “contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned”:—

1. “Mark them and avoid them” (Rom. 16:17).
2. “Rebuke them sharply” (Titus 1:13).
3. “Have no fellowship with but rather reprove them” (Eph. 5:11).
4. “Refuse” or “avoid” or “reject” such (Titus. 3:11).
5. “Be ye separate” (2 Cor. 6:17).
6. “Withdraw yourselves from” (2 Thess. 3:6).
7. “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 John 10-11).

Accordingly the fellowship we should have with the World Church is no fellowship, and those who lead God’s people to it should not be admitted to our homes. We must be careful not to bid them God speed.

3. THE MEANING OF FELLOWSHIP

In a general way, all who are fellows one of another, in any social sphere, have "fellowship" when they confer or commune together about any matter of mutual concern or interest. Thus convicts could have fellowship together in the courtyard of a prison as they exercise together and talk about their past exploits, their present sorrows and their intentions for the morrow.

However, when we consider the New Testament doctrine of fellowship we must hold this term in the restricted sense in which it is there employed.

The fellows of this fellowship are the fellows accepted and acknowledged as such by God's Son (Heb. 1:9). The only fellowship recognised by Scripture for the Church is "The fellowship of His (God's) Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9). Whether in the Local Church, or in the occasional meetings of members of the wider great Church of God, the fellowship is the same. It is the fellowship of Christians one with another and with God's Son.

In the New Testament the Greek word "koinonia" is first used in Acts 2:42 where it is stated that in the very early days of the Church believers "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and *fellowship*, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers".

The word "koinonia" is thereafter used some twenty times and the consistent manner of its use throughout, limits and illustrates and defines the meaning Scripture intends it to have. The width of meaning is indicated by the different English words used in the Authorised Version for the one word in the Greek. The words in the English translation are "fellowship" (12 times) "Communion" (four times) "contribution", "distribution", "communication" and "communicate" (once each).

Now the *first* use of the word occurs in the statement that the believers continued steadfastly in *fellowship*, as they did also, in the apostles' doctrine, in breaking of bread and in prayers. That is, it was a fellowship of believers in Christ which also related to the apostles' doctrine, breaking of bread and prayers.

Next, note that the last uses of the word are in 1 John 1:3-7 where the word is used three times and we are told that the fellowship of believers "is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ". The final reference in this section which is the last of all, is consistent and thorough, agreeing with all before, for the wording is "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have *fellowship* one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin".

The fellowship is not only with the Father and the Son, but it is also "a fellowship of the Spirit" (Phil 2:1) so that the Three Persons of the Trinity give their Name to this Fellowship.

It is referred to as a “fellowship in the gospel” (Phil. 1:5) and it involves the “fellowship of His sufferings” (Phil. 3:10). It is “the fellowship of the mystery” (Eph. 3:9) — the mystery of “the manifold wisdom of God”, which is “known by the Church”.

The fellowship for knowing this wisdom, participated in by The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit involves the very “communion of the blood of Christ” where the cup of blessing is blessed and the bread is broken within the one body of the fellowship, for all are “partakers of that one bread” (1 Cor. 10:16-17).

THE PRACTICE OF FELLOWSHIP

Scripture enjoins against neglecting fellowship. The directive is “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is” (Heb. 10:25). The effect of gathering together and fellowshiping is that the Lord’s people “hold fast the profession of faith without wavering” and they “consider one another to provoke unto love and good works” (v.v. 23, 24).

Fellowshipping involves “speaking to yourselves” or (R.V.) “to one another”, “in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 5:19-20).

To participate in and to practice fellowship, is the believers’ birth-right privilege. It is a fellowship of joy and power, of prayer and praise, in singing and speaking, in joy and sorrow, and is related to all the holy things of God. It relates God-ward, in association with other Christians.

The thing that distinguishes Christian fellowship is that it is a fellowship not only with other Christians but also, and primarily, with God’s Son. It is the fellowship of His with Him.

There is something special within the fellowship for “doers of the Word”. These are His special friends within the membership of the fellowship. They are those who exercise the right of all members to do His will and work. He says “Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you” (John 15:14).

Just as the Lord conferred with Abraham before He overthrew the cities of the plain, so now, today, the Lord is looking to see who in the fellowship of the Church, will “keep the way of the Lord and do justice and judgment” (Gen. 18:19), that He may confer with them regarding His mighty works that He is doing and is about to do in the earth.

4. THE TWOS AND THREES

Verses 19 and 20 of Matthew 18 must be read together to obtain the full significance of either verse. Verse 19 states that if two Christians shall agree on earth about anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by God the Father in heaven.

Now this could not mean that if two Christians ask anything that God the Father could not approve, that this would be done for them. The "anything" they may ask is obviously to be limited to things they ask when they gather together in Christ's name, with Him in the midst. If the agreed asking is at a gathering in Christ's name, and with Him present "in the midst" as the central participant in the gathering and so in the request, then, of course, it will be a request Christ will approve, and accordingly it will be a right and proper request which the Father will honour.

Verse 20 reads accordingly "*For* (linking with the previous verse) where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst".

Where, "on earth", Christians gather in Christ's name, "*there*", He is in the midst. The "two" needed for minimum agreement in verse 19 become the "two or three" of verse 20 considered as the necessary nucleus for a gathering in Christ's name.

These Scriptures are true of the position of each local Church. Each Church is at a location on earth, "where" the saints gather in Christ's name. So they know that "there" He is in the midst, and anything asked by such a local Church with Christ in the midst has its requests fulfilled by God the Father in Heaven.

However, we must not ritualise the effect of these two verses and apply them only to the position of a recognised local Church, operating as such. It *does* apply to such a Church, but it goes further, and means just what it says. It says "If two of you shall agree" and it says consistently with this that Christ is in the midst where two or three are gathered together in His name.

Accordingly the Lord envisaged that any two Christians or small groups of Christians might gather together in Christ's name for the purpose of making special requests to God the Father. They might be two or three who form only part of a local Church, or they might be from different local Churches. John may be from Hong Kong and James may be from Patagonia and they may meet in a London bus shelter. There at that spot on earth, if they meet asserting and acknowledging to one another that they are Christ's and pray the Father in His Name, there, then, He is in the midst, and the matters agreed upon, with Christ approving, whether for things in Patagonia, Hong Kong, London or elsewhere will surely be performed by the authority and power of God the Father.

Now, here in the bus shelter, we have the elements essential for true fellowship. We have brother John and another brother, in fellow-

ship together “agreed” and with Christ in the midst, in such a way that all that is done is recognised to be “in His Name”, so that the Father is also in attendance. The Father is in Heaven, but listening and watching and Christ is in the midst of the two on earth.

This is the special form of fellowship under review in this study.

The elements are these:—

1. It is a fellowship in connection with a gathering in Christ’s name.
2. Christ is a participant in the midst on earth.
3. God the Father is also a participant in Heaven.

Put another way, the fellowship is of two or more Christians:—

1. With the Father.
2. With the Son.
3. Concerning matters which the Son approves and which the Father authorises.

TWO OF YOU

Next notice that this fellowship is limited to Christ’s disciples. It is for Christ’s own — Christ’s ones — for born-again Christians. The verse says “if two *of you* shall”.

Two *of you*, with Christ, brings in the Father. And so it is that “*Our* fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ”. “Truly”, it is so (1 John 1:3).

THE WORD AND THE NAME

It is *this* fellowship which carries the Name. The Name is however always in right perspective with “The Word”, and indeed the Word of God is exalted, above the Name, for Scripture declares “Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name” (Ps. 138:2). Christ always accepts the Word of God and every jot and tittle of it, and He is bound by it, and so is everyone who would fellowship with Him.

Accordingly, this is the fellowship which is concerned with the secret things of God, for it is “the fellowship of the mystery” (Eph. 3:9), “the fellowship of His sufferings” (Phil. 3:10), and “the fellowship of the gospel” (Phil. 1:5). Because it is all this it is also “a fellowship of the Spirit” (Phil. 2:1), who “breathed” the Word. The Living Lord of our fellowship is ever loyal to the inspired Scriptures of the living God.

It must be deduced accordingly that a joining together to engage in gospel work and in the mysterious works of God, should be:—

1. Of Christians only.
2. Of Christians who give Christ the central place in the Fellowship.

3. Of Christians who accept the Word of God as magnified even above all the Name of God. That is, they recognise that God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit are bound by the Word of God and accordingly they are so bound by it also: They are completely subject to it, and accept every part of it as binding and authoritative in all matters.
4. Of Christians who accept that gospel work must be done within the directives of the Word, and only under the Name, and only as within the Christ centred fellowship of the Name.

COMMITTEES AND SOCIETIES

There is the local Church which has divine authority and which is intended to light its area for Christ. It has a recognised form and a Scriptural basis of authority.

The great Church of God is mysterious in that the world cannot see it as a whole. Part of it is in heaven, part on the earth, and all members of true local Churches are also members of it.

The Twos and Threes who meet in Christ's Name with Him in the midst, are simply members of the great Church of God, and their simple fellowship is an expression to themselves and to Heaven of the greater fellowship of the whole mysterious body of Christ.

Now these simple gatherings which are so effective and powerful with Heaven, have no form or organisation. They meet, agree, achieve their purpose and dissolve and the members may continue to meet and regroup as circumstances may require, sometimes within the orbit of a local church, sometimes apart from the sphere of a local church.

What then about more formal associations of Christians who set themselves up as *The Society* for this or that, or as, say, *The Fellowship* for the evangelisation of Utopia?

Just two things need be noted about these societies or special fellowships:—

1. They are exclusive “formed” groups restricted to certain people by certain criteria peculiar to each group. A true New Testament Church is not exclusive in this sense, and a gathering of two or three in the Name is not a fixed or formal Society and could not be exclusive with Christ a party to it. In that they are exclusive, such Societies are also of necessity schismatic. They meet in their own names, rather than in His Name.
2. Scripture authorises the setting up of the Local Church and the gathering of the twos and threes. There is no Scriptural authority for the setting up of restrictive or limited fellowships. The New Testament gives a wealth of detail of the activities of the early Church and of the churches in the first decades of the Church era. If this form of limited fellowship was a

proper one, it would have been seen in some form in the early years and have been given apostolic and Scriptural authorisation. There is absolutely nothing in Scripture to agree with what we see today.

The Word, which is magnified above the Name, because the Persons of the Name acknowledge it, and work only in accordance with it, does not authorise a limited restricted fellowship, though the Lord is often pleased to bless and honour the work of His servants who sincerely serve Him while so restricted. It is contrary to the purposes of the liberty of the great fellowship of the Church of God, to have such limited fellowships within it, other, of course, than what is actually authorised, that is the local Churches.

It should be made clear that committees and groups within or under the authority of local Churches are not referred to in this section. Here the committees and societies referred to are those which act autonomously and are outside the authority of any single local Church.

THE SOCIETY OF SOCIETIES

Christendom today has been soaked in democratic political customs and runs to committees and Chairmen and ballots and voting all at the drop of the hat.

Every level of Christian thought and action seems to be permeated with this extraordinary phenomenon and we now live in a ripe age of active, dead and moribund Societies with committees and sub-committees slicing every strata of Christendom.

Instead of "two agreeing" the majority vote carries the day, destroying the effect of agreement in the Name of the Lord.

Prophecy looks to this era and in Laodicea we have what the word implies "the people ruling" — or "the manners, rights or judgments or decisions of the people".

Note that in the Committee Society Church state the decisions are *by the people*, whereas where Christ is in the midst in circumstances where the Word is fully honoured, it is Christ's purposes which are achieved through the gathering.

What a plague of societies is upon us! There are Societies of local Churches called denominations and other Societies of Churches not called denominations, but equally deplorable. There are disquieting "united oversights", youth societies, camp and mission and a thousand and one varieties of societies too numerous to name.

In mission work, often a call to one man is rightly acted upon and a fine work is established within the Scriptural pattern, with others co-operating here and there as opportunities serve, so that the "two or three" principles of agreement carry the work further, and perhaps some local churches are commenced as a result of these activities.

But then, at popular level this man's work must be "incorporated" and perpetuated so that "his" work does not die. The result is a spiritual curiosity called "a faith mission" or a "mission fellowship"

complete with General Director, Central Committee, Home Committees, Field Committee, magazine, receipt-books and audited accounts and annual balances.

Then, of course, there are societies of societies and we have the District and National Missionary Associations, and conferences of this or that denomination or group, first at district and national levels and then at world stage. The biggest of them all is the Billy Graham world combine heading at world conferences like those on Evangelism at Berlin or Singapore, in effect actually overshadowing the greatness of the World Council of Churches under which it works. The final fruit of our world crop of societies will be the World Church of the apostasy, the fully ripe position at which God will judge the whole system. Societies, denominations and world councils are the structure, and ecumenicity the burnished cover and dome of the Super Church.

CAN WE STOP IT ALL ?

No, we cannot. It will continue and increase and culminate in judgment.

WHY LABORIOUSLY SET OUT THE TRUTH THEN ?

Because truth must be set out. Someone may act on it. The Lord says, set it out.

WHERE DOES THE LORD SAY THIS ?

In 2 Tim. 4, at verse 2. He says "Preach the Word, be instant in season, out of season; reprovè, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine".

WHAT HAS THIS TO DO WITH FELLOWSHIP ?

First, if the society comprises Christians only, they have some of the elements of true Christian fellowship, but they have tarnished the Name by limiting their fellowship and they have grieved the Holy Spirit by their schism. They have deprived themselves of some of the authority they might have had by the Laodicean texture of their democratic structure, and because they are not on a sure Scriptural basis, and do not magnify Scripture, in this regard, as they should, the future of their organisations cannot be satisfactory, for sooner or later they must drift the way of all such.

Secondly, if some non-Christians get in, or some with doctrinal infections, some modernists or cultists, then the movement to apostasy will hasten. Here there is the unequal yoke and matters calling for judgment, and God will see that such a society is left to its depraved downward descent.

Please notice, that where Christians form societies and join denominations or puddle in united Church politics contrary to God's intention and desire, He does not prevent them from so acting. Christians and

each Local Church act with full responsibility and they have the Scriptures. God deals with all according to the manner in which they handle their responsibilities. Each such institution may have a measure of blessing as God sees fit, within the limits of its own making.

The free servant of the Lord, however, will choose his liberty in the Lord, and refuse to be bound in such a way. If possible he will be an active member of a truly autonomous local church and he will act with others only where the rules of Matthew 18:19-20 apply.

But some will say, well if the Utopia Society is not on right lines, can I not, even so, have some measure of fellowship with those dear people? Yes, let them come to your Scriptural ground, brother, and unrestricted fellowship may be enjoyed. But hold fast to what you have, for it is more important than you know. It is for this reason that the Lord commends the Church at Philadelphia, the bright Church of the end-days — because it keeps His Word and honours His Name. The Lord expressly directs this Church “Hold fast that which thou hast” (Rev. 3:11).

It is true that the Lord is always with His people, even within the limits of their own restrictions. The question then arises, Well, if the Lord can meet with Christians so restricted, cannot all Christians go where He goes? In this matter we must distinguish between the omnipotent Head and the members. The Head alone has the quality of omnipresence and He alone is creatorially responsible for organically sustaining all His members at all times. Each mortal member so sustained is related with all the other members but has no omnipresent powers and not the *same* responsibility. On the other hand, each mortal member is subject to laws of time and space. Unlike his Head, he is in only one place at a time, and it is his specially designated responsibility to be only in the place which is right for him, in accordance with the directions for members as delineated by the Word of God, and as the indwelling Spirit reveals and guides.

5. FELLOWSHIP BETWEEN CHURCHES

Within each denomination there is a special fellowship of Churches and members, restricted or exclusive to the denomination. In these ecumenical and liberal days there is however a loose and easy fellowship being developed which as we have seen is paving the way for union of all in the great World Church system — Babylon.

But let us turn to consider the form of fellowship that God intended of local Church with local Church and the position of individuals moving from local Church to local Church. Here we are to consider the relationship between truly autonomous local Churches which seek to fully adopt and maintain the Scriptural Church pattern.

Similar Churches naturally fellowship together and a general interchange of members and of ministry, is what occurred in the apostles' day and is to be expected in similar circumstances today. Members normally fellowship together where their Lord is the same, the unifying Spirit is the same, and the whole Faith is the same, based on the same simple acceptance of the whole wholesome Word of God.

On this basis believers have held rich fellowship together in Conferences for the ministry of the Word over the years and the Lord's people have freely moved from place to place, always finding "their own" who are also, of course, all "His".

Problems arise where there has been moral or doctrinal disorder in such a Church, and discipline has been exercised pursuant to the relative Scriptural directions for the particular case.

Where a person has been "dealt with" by a Church and that person then seeks fellowship with another Church, what should be the attitude of the second Church?

If the Second Church knows that there has been discipline then it also knows that it must act warily. Prima facie it can assume that the person disciplined must be treated with extreme caution. However, it must act entirely on its own initiative as an autonomous Church and decide whether or not it should hold the person concerned under the same discipline. It is accountable to the Lord and not to the other Church.

The idea that all the Churches must "judge" any question that arises in a sister Church is illogical, unnecessary, and not supported by Scripture. Clearly there is no requirement on any Church to be concerned with the internal affairs of another Church, unless there is an interchange of members.

This is the Scriptural position where the question is an internal matter of discipline or order. But the more serious question that is developing in this day of departure and apostasy is how to treat with a Church and its members where apostasy has taken over. How should a Church be regarded which does not deal with gross immorality or with wicked spiritual practices or with soul-blighting doctrinal error? What of the Church that absorbs atheistic evolution, writes the Bible

down to agree with current theories of godless materialists or that is out on an ecumenical course to help build Babylon? How treat with a Church which has thrown away the Divine Rule Book and which moves democratically to please itself, and act contrary to Scripture in matters of life and witness?

In a recent letter from overseas the writer was told of a Church where there are "many sex problems including one well-known brother involved as a homo-sexual and known to some but still carrying on in the assembly". How much fellowship is this Church worthy of?

It is reliably reported of another Church (not in New Zealand) that a leading brother divorced his wife and wanted to marry a maiden lady in the Church. This Church refused to marry them so they were married elsewhere, and the man "took a letter which had been given for himself and his former wife, and presented it to a new assembly as he took his new wife there". Here both local Churches have grave responsibilities, and such people as this ruthless person are legion today and menace all the Churches.

Instances may be multiplied on all sides of local Churches which are harbouring errors of one sort or another, some worse than others. The wolves are in, in some places. Apostasy, liberalism, libertinism, anarchy, democracy, evil workers and self-seeking opportunists are in varying degrees in control in many Churches.

What then should be the attitude of other Churches to such a Church? Here again, except inasfar as there is an exchange of members there is no need for any action, except of course that on notice of what has happened all other Churches have the opportunity to condition themselves to avert a similar disaster for themselves. Also they will "*mark them* which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

With knowledge of these things, each local Church must act on its own responsibility to the Lord as to the receiving of such people into its fellowship and similarly it must act responsibly before the Lord concerning any participation in the affairs of doubtful Churches whether by ministry or in any other way.

Missionaries or workers issuing from such a Church must always be very guardedly regarded, especially if they maintain their relationship as emissaries of that Church.

Those who know the position have a duty to other Churches to warn them of the position that they may be on guard.

JUDGMENT OF CHURCHES

If Churches would judge themselves, the Lord would not judge them. But the House of God is the place where judgment in this world should always commence, and it is a sad thing indeed where judgment is defeated in the House of God, for if that condition continues it ceases to be the House of God, and that is the ultimate in judgment that can fall on any local Church.

A look around the world today is frightening to any who can see the finger of God in judgment on the Churches.

Look at any local Church which has accepted the teachings of Modernist Ministers or teachers, where the Bible is no longer accepted as the verbally inspired Word of God, where the deity of Christ and the virgin birth of Christ and the fact of the resurrection are not accepted — and you will see the judgment of God.

God is not there. Not that God is dead, but that the Church is dead.

This is now befalling independent Churches, as well as those of the denominations. As worldliness and Laodicean democratic policies take over, Christ is still referred to, and worshipped. But He has less and less to do with such Churches and in the end He departs. Churches that refuse to deal with Balaamism and Nicolaitanism Christ fights against with the sword of His mouth (Rev. 2:16). If serious moral and doctrinal error is not eradicated from a Church, Christ judges the whole Church by departing from it.

Care should be taken to refrain from all fellowship with a Church with which Christ Himself is not fellowshipping, and He will not be fellowshipping where the Word of God is flouted and where there is apostasy or unjudged immorality or spiritual wickedness.

6. INTERDENOMINATIONALISM

Ever since the first days of the Church there have been independent autonomous Churches on the pattern of those of the Apostles' days. The history of these Churches through the centuries has been described by Mr E. H. Broadbent in his work "The Pilgrim Church".

A particular group of such Churches which appeared in England and Ireland in the spiritually sterile period of the early nineteenth century and then mushroomed everywhere in the revival atmosphere of the mid-nineteenth century, has since produced a multitude of Churches in all lands.

By the end of the nineteenth century some groups of these Churches had found their respective shibboleths and under the direction of leading individuals had produced a system of differentiation from other Churches and of cohesion together with a common discipline and effective control. Within the limited confines of their own definitions they produced all the paraphernalia of denominations. These schismatic groups are the denominations of the Exclusive Brethren, and "Needed Truth" groups.

The other such Churches, not so welded into denominations have been widely referred to as "Open Brethren Churches", and a great majority of these Churches have been truly autonomous local Churches on the New Testament pattern, full of all the frailty and foibles of humanity, but also charged with the dynamic of the power of God.

The mid-twentieth century has witnessed a turn to denominationalism for large sections of the Open Brethren Churches. Whereas formerly the autonomous independence of each Church was jealously guarded, now unashamedly all the Churches in a given district may fall under the dominance of an hierarchical group usually led by ambitious and outstanding men. These men so weave their policies throughout the Churches in their area that eventually they legislate for the area through the pretence of a democratic "united oversight".

The self-confessed denominationalism of the Churches in the area of Auckland, New Zealand, appeared in a letter to "The Witness" as appears in extract "C" of the appendix hereto.

This position is today multiplied on every hand, supported and encouraged by "Missionary councils", and the organisations of certain magazines which issue lists of Assemblies, lists of accredited home workers and lists of accredited missionaries overseas. The persons who organise these things acquire a power over the Churches within their sphere of influence which ties them all in to at least a limited control, basic to denominationalism.

This light holding of the reins is strengthened by other trappings of hierarchical power. The old system of open conference platforms is now largely replaced by control by hierarchies of the conference platforms. Only those who will defer to and accept the domination and disciplining of the hierarchy are appointed. The camps and Bible schools and other committees and societies develop under hierarchical

direction and supervision and again only those who please the hierarchy and accept their authorisation can expect to be the camp leaders and speakers and the Bible school teachers, and the general home and foreign workers. This is the new denomination of Open Brethrenism.

This also is Laodicea. But Philadelphia continues. There are still many Churches throughout the world which are truly independent and autonomous and which are entirely clear of all such Laodicean, Nicolaitan, denominational error and schism.

Recently, there has been a spate of books on the Brethren Movement, the burden of which is to encourage a still greater integration in a widely "recognised" group of independent Churches which would be "in a strong position" to take a place with all the other denominational Churches as the ecumenical movement develops. Brethren are encouraged to be, and they are, represented at such gatherings as Billy Graham's Berlin and Singapore conventions on evangelism.

This is the picture for the future. The "Official" hierarchically-led majority of the Open Brethren Churches will be drafted with honour into a special niche in the ecumenical Church of the Apostasy.

But not all the Churches will be lost. Salvation is in simplicity. In remaining truly independent of all else except the Word of God. In autonomy. Not in union, but in isolation, is the only hope for any Church in this dread day of the great apostasy. Isolation? Yes, outside the camp with Christ where He is. Christ is isolated today, but He is with each Church that will meet with Him so that He is the only fountain of directive control.

7. QUASI-FELLOWSHIPS

The fellowship of the Church is a rich full fellowship with fellow members of the Church and with the Godhead. But can a person who enjoys this fellowship also be involved in other fellowships? We all have a duty to earn our own living and to support our families and to do this it is necessary to enter into association with other people who are not Christians. The employer-employee relationship is a form of fellowship, and so is the relationship of a storekeeper with his customers. School children have a fellowship of their own and so do the members of a college or university whether they are Christian or not. Instances of this kind may be multiplied. Scripture acknowledges that such wider fellowships are necessary.

God expects us to have such general associations, and it is necessary that we should meet with and do business with non-Christians and even with people who may be fornicators, covetous, extortioners or idolaters. The implication of 1 Cor. 5:10 is that if you are going to keep clear of such people altogether, "then must ye needs to go out of the World".

Of course, the very purpose of the Church's place in the World is that it should meet, live among and light the way for non-Christians.

How then do these two forms of fellowship relate? How relate the absolute fellowship of the Church with the quasi-fellowships about it? Scripture guides thus:—

1. If a member of a Church has been disciplined with expulsion from a local Church because of a serious moral or doctrinal lapse, then there must be no fellowship of any kind with the person so refused. The direction is "not to keep company", and "with such an one no not to eat" (1 Cor. 5:11). We are to have in common with unsavoury unsaved persons what we are not to have in common with unsavoury persons expelled from the local Church.
2. We are to honour our true and holy Fellowship and to behave as members of it should do, in whatever other association we may come. The Christian doctor will act in relation with other doctors and with his patients, and among the hospital nursing staffs and in all his necessary medical relationships remembering that he is first a fellow of Christ's and only secondly a fellow of his school or profession. The result is that he will always interpret God and represent Christ in his subordinate fellowships. He will be holy, righteous, good, merciful and faithful, and he will act as salt in his other associations. He will be an emissary of Heaven therein, and will light the Gospel torch there.

3. He will avoid unequal yokes. That is, he will not harness himself *too* closely with unbelievers. He will not marry out of the family of the great Fellowship of God's Church and he will not form binding business partnerships with unbelievers. It is one thing to work with and live among the unsaved, it is something quite different to be shackled to them so that on a basis of equality enterprises are engaged in together.
4. Most important of all, he will not attempt to do the business of the Church in partnership or with the help of a non-Christian or of any who deny the important things of Christ — His deity — His Virgin birth — His saving blood — His resurrection. For a servant of God to link with such in the alleged service of God or of the Church is abomination. This is the unequal yoke in holy things.

These four simple rules are amply expounded by the text and typology of Holy Writ. Reduce it thus:—

1. We live in the world sharing quasi-fellowships with the people of the world, but we are to be ever distinguished from them, at the same time.
2. We must have no degree even of quasi-fellowship with
 - (a) A moral or doctrinal Church pervert,
 - (b) An unconverted person in relation to the actual business of the Church fellowship.

It follows that the questions of the day may be grouped around these two principles, and we consider them under the headings:

1. The quantum of fellowship permissible or necessary to Christians within the quasi-fellowships above referred to;
2. The kind of loyalty God requires for service under the Name. This is the fellowship of the Gospel.

8. THE QUANTUM OF FELLOWSHIP

The quantum of fellowship permitted or expected of Christians with non-Christians is:—

(a) THAT NECESSARY TO PROVIDE SUSTENANCE FOR ONE'S OWN HERE IN THIS SCENE

“Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men” (Rom. 12: 17-18).

“If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel” (1 Tim. 5:8).

This necessity is nevertheless limited by many Scriptural injunctions against covetousness, and the love of money. To seek such things for their *own sake* is to serve Mammon who is a God operating in opposition to our God.

It is limited also in relation to disputes and offences. Christians must be subject to the authorities of this world as to all matters right and proper for the administration of business and social life at all levels and they must never be offenders. Any disputes between Christians must not, however, be judged by worldly courts and institutions, but by Christians only. They should be willing to suffer loss rather than displease God in these things (1 Cor. 6).

(b) REPRESENTING GOD TO MEN

God loves all men and Christians are here in this scene to help to reveal this love and in particular to be messengers of the Gospel.

Now Christ became a *kinsman* redeemer, and it is because we are also kinsmen of our fellow men everywhere that we have a special responsibility. *Our* kinsmanship is expressed in “neighbourliness”. Christ became our Kinsman, and we must make this known to our neighbours who need a Kinsman Redeemer.

Simple neighbourliness requires that we render neighbourly assistance to all around us in every matter in which it is right and proper that such assistance should be given. In sickness and accident, hard times and sudden difficulties, in sorrow or in gladness, the rich and the poor, we should be available to succour and help, to give and to advise, as best as we are able.

“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and to keep himself unspotted from the world*” (James 1:27). Notice the words in italics, for here we have the point of limitation in neighbourliness. The Christian is to be neighbourly with the unsaved of the world, but he is not to let the world of the unsaved neighbour sully his own holy position in the fellowship of the Name.

He does not need to be sanctimonious. He remembers he is first God's, and that God loves all men. He serves simply and sincerely and with the love of God in his heart.

This brings the ultimate thought in neighbourliness which is love as expressed by Paul in Romans 14: "Owe no man anything but to love one another: He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law . . . and if there be any other commandment it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (v. 8-10).

The quantum of love is limitless; the quantum of neighbourly fellowship is limited to keeping unspotted from the world.

But as neighbours who know about the Kinsman Redeemer our debt of love demands more than "pure religion". It requires pure religion plus Gospel responsibility. As fellows of the Son we stand charged to represent heaven here in the world to all mankind.

Now this responsibility while expanding the necessity for neighbourliness, demands at the same time that great care should be used, for this is also the very service of our fellowship with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit — the fellowship of the mystery of the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 3:9-10), and ours is thus a "fellowship in the gospel" (Phil. 1:5).

The care always needed in representing the love of God to men, must be exercised with special discernment in view of the cross of Christ, for this fellowship in *this* service is also "the fellowship of His sufferings" in which we must be "made conformable unto His death" (Phil. 3:10).

Scripture warns against many things that it would be improper for this fellowship to be involved in. To illustrate and explore the truth, it is proposed to relate the subject to the Graham campaigns. It is better always to relate Scriptural principles to the active questions of the day, rather than to suppositional propositions.

Seven tests are submitted as to whether a Christian will please God or not by working in association with Billy Graham in his modern evangelistic campaigns. These become the subject of the next section hereof.

9. TESTS OF DIVINE FELLOWSHIP

- (a) The Yoke Test
- (b) The Wolf Test
- (c) Helping the Ungodly
- (d) The Contract Test
- (e) The Apostasy Test
- (f) The Cross Test
- (g) The Name Test

(a) YOKES

Three horses may go well yoked together, but how about two horses and a donkey?

Three huskies pull well together in the snow, but how about two huskies and an elephant?

Now your Church, in fellowship with God, desires to preach the true Gospel and relate it aright for God all the way. If Billy Graham and his team would do the same, in fellowship with your Church, and other similar Churches there would be no problem. All horses or all huskies.

But if Billy's team comes to your town and you see that they are to work mostly with people you cannot approve, and you know God does not approve, and they show they prefer it that way, and you are brought in as the odd group in the work, then behold the horses and the donkey!

If Billy and his huskies are going to drive in to help the lukewarm Churches of Laodicea, so that the building of the apostate world Church called Babylon is hastened, and all the evil workers are made to look respectable, with the Cardinals all applauding, then don't be an elephant!

It is common sense that two cannot work together successfully unless they are agreed: but in this matter Scripture directs "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness" (2 Cor. 6:14).

Now if Graham is doing a work with A and B, are not A and B also working together and yoking together with each other as well as with Graham? Elementary mathematics rules that this is so.

But could God be a partner in these campaigns? The answer under this test is that God will not join in an unequal yoke, for He *is* righteousness and could never fellowship with unrighteousness. If Graham is unequally yoked, God is not a partner in that venture, for he has chosen what God refuses.

First, however, it should be noted that Graham does know the truth about unequal yokes and originally he acted on it. In 1951 he wrote "I have never been, nor will I ever be in favour of a modernist being on the committee or in any way having any working fellowship in

this meeting . . . ”

The change came in 1957 in the preparations for the New York Crusade. He sold his spiritual birthright of unequivocal obedience to God's Word for greater popularity and allowed himself to be sponsored by a Committee of 140 of whom many were liberals and modernists, and non-Christians. He preached, yoked to people who denied the deity, the blood and the resurrection!

Some other instances of Graham's unequal yokes are as follows:—

(i) SAN FRANCISCO CRUSADE

The chairwoman of arrangements for this campaign was a woman who also chaired the Festival of Faith for the area, which promoted a united prayer meeting of Hinduists, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Roman Catholics, Jews and Protestants! Accordingly at the Graham campaign the heretical, spiritist Bishop Pike who denies the Trinity and the Virgin birth, supported the campaign and led in prayer.

(ii) LOS ANGELES CRUSADE (1963)

The chairman of this campaign was Bishop Gerald Kennedy, who wrote for the paper cover of Dr Nels F. S. Ferre's blasphemous book "The Sun and the Umbrella", approving of its intent and content. In this book Ferre says "To call Jesus God is to substitute an idol for incarnation", and he also says "The use of the Bible as the final authority for Christian truth is idolatry".

Isn't it an unequal yoke to work with Bishop Kennedy and his fellows?

(iii) BERLIN

Here Graham held the hand of Oral Roberts publicly and invitingly for all to join with Faith Healing Pentecostals like Roberts in the future evangelisation of the world. Graham then endorsed this position by opening Oral Roberts' new University and he identified himself publicly with all that university stands for.

A yoke with Billy is a yoke with Pentecostalism, and do not mistake the deep significance of this evil. See the writer's booklet "The Doctrine of Tongues".

(iv) ROMAN CATHOLIC YOKES

Graham is similarly committed now with the Roman Catholics. We have seen his yokes with Cardinal Cushing in the Boston campaign. This has now become the pattern of Graham's recent movements.

When Graham accepted the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters at Belmont Abbey College, a Roman Catholic University, he said in his address to the assembled Roman Catholics "Now we can speak to one another, work with one another and be brothers to one

another”.

How can a fellow of Christ's be a fellow also with people who repudiate the authority of the Bible, who sacrifice Christ again in every celebration of the Mass; who worship Mary; and who claim her to have been sinless always, and now the Queen of Heaven; who teach purgatory and deny salvation by faith? How fellowship with the slayer of the martyrs, dear to the heart of the Saviour?

That this yoke relates to the Crusades also, is illustrated in connection with the recent Pittsburgh Crusade (September, 1968). Here Roman Catholic Bishop John J. Wright of Pittsburgh called on the Catholic clergy and laity to pray for the Billy Graham Crusade. He said that though “for faith and conscience the Catholic diocese in Pittsburgh cannot be a co-sponsor of the evangelistic crusade” it would help in other ways. For instance, Mt Mercy College was made available to give much needed parking space for those attending the crusade meetings at nearby Pitt Stadium.

Be warned: Don't yoke with a man unequally yoked, because his unequal yoke will become yours also.

The popular thought today is that if a man has a great following, then this is proof that his work is a work of God.

Gamaliel posed a somewhat similar proposition to the Jewish Sanhedrim when he said of Peter and John “Let them alone, for if this counsel and this work be of men it will come to naught; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God” (Acts 5:38-39).

The fact that Gamaliel made this statement, some parts of which are supported by general Biblical authority, does not make right the parts of the statement which are not so supported by Scriptural teaching generally.

It is not godly or Scriptural to “let alone” and see if a thing comes to nothing or otherwise. Scripture and God require us to act responsibly in every circumstance, and also not to test whether God is in a thing by popular or numerical appearances. We are to test by the Word of God. That which grows large, and is popular, is not necessarily of God.

Let us test the answers not on the Gamaliel basis of “Let them alone and see if they multiply or die out”. We know from clear prophecy that the great apostate professing Church of the Last Days will be universal, big and proud, but that it will *not* have God with it. Christ will spew it out of His mouth (Rev. 3:16). The numerical and the popular test is clearly the wrong test, as to whether God is with a man or a Church or a group of Churches in this our day.

Now Gamaliel says that if a thing grows and gets big and lots of people fall for it, then it is of God. But Gamaliel is wrong. The fact that masses turn in with Billy Graham proves nothing. Sure, we can all do what falls to our lot to do, to help individuals who have “come out” at the great campaign rallies, and the fact that some are saved

as God honours His own Word, makes no difference to the issues under review.

At Graham campaigns take some typical results:—

1. There are a number of people who appear to be truly converted and who find their way to Churches where they learn more of the way of life.
2. Numbers of others are drafted to Modernist and Roman Catholic Churches.
3. All sorts of dangerous evil workers are brought in and given a place of respectability and Church people are made vulnerable to their machinations.
4. The cause of ecumenism is enhanced and the building of the mongrel Church of the last apostasy is hastened.
5. The sound Churches participating have their resistance to evil doctrine weakened and tend to lose the power to contend for the faith.

Question: Does No. 1 outweigh Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5?

Question: Even if it does, would God work like this?

The God of the Bible will have nothing to do with unrighteousness, and He could not be, and He is not, a yoke partner in any such work. He is not “with” those who do such things.

(b) WOLVES

There will be “grievous wolves” damaging the flock in the later days. There will be offences, and Christ says “Woe unto the world because of offences! For it must need be that offences come”. Then Christ says “but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh” (Matt. 18:7).

Graham introduces wolves and their offences into the flock of God. He does it in that:—

1. He introduces Pentecostals to his campaigns so that they mix as equals with all others who help therein. He gives them respectability so that they are received and accepted everywhere, as they are in his crusades.
2. He introduces the modernists to the flock of God in the same way.
3. The evolutionists are also frocked up and brought in.
4. He lets in all the cults — a whole pack of ravening wolves. His crusades are a happy hunting ground for them all and they all see to it that the campaigns are well advertised and they participate without let or hindrance.
5. He sells ecumenicity, both in idea and in practice. All the ecumenical workers of the area smile and attend. They are dolled up in pretty sheep skins and Graham foists them on the flock of God. At the campaigns no-one says “What big eyes you’ve got”, or “what a big mouth you’ve got”, for

- they are all made to appear like kindly old sheep !
6. Now he is also bringing in the Roman Catholics. They will devour the sheep and the other wolves as well.

(c) HELPING THE UNGODLY

God is not with a man who does this. As long ago as in Jehoshaphat's day, the prophet was sent to say "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord" (2 Chron. 19:2). Later, when Jehoshaphat continued to do the same thing the message was "Because thou has joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works" (2 Chron. 20:37).

Graham helps the ungodly in that:—

1. He sends inquirers to apostate churches.
2. He gives respectability to evil workers and honours those that God does not honour.
3. He encourages fellowship wrongly between the people of God and the enemies of God.
4. He is helping the ecumenicalists, and is now playing a most important part in the building of Babylon. No wonder Cardinal Cushing should write an editorial in the Roman Catholic paper "Pilot" headed "Bravo Billy!"

(d) COMPACTS

Billy makes compacts with Modernists and Roman Catholics and Pentecostals and all sorts, that if they support him, and converts nominate their Churches, he will see that they are drafted to them accordingly, and all workers in the campaign must consent to this arrangement.

This is contrary to the Lord's directions in Matthew 28:20. The Lord said that those made disciples were to be taught "to observe all things whatsoever" He had commanded them. It is contrary also to "the apostles' doctrine" which was enjoined upon the Church from its earliest days (Acts 2:42).

No man who so bluntly disobeys His Lord and the apostles' doctrine can have God with him.

(e) THE APOSTATE WORLD CHURCH

Any man who is patently assisting in the building of this Church does not have God with him.

This is the World Church of union with Rome which is already drunk with the blood of the martyrs.

This is clearly Billy's course. He takes honorary degrees from Roman Catholic Universities, thereby honouring what God calls Jezebel and spiritual fornication. He befriends and accepts the friendship of

Cardinals and princes in a system ripe for judgment. He preaches to priests, novices and sisters and tells them that they and he stand for the same thing.

Graham has *many* associations with Roman Catholics. He has spoken at *many* Roman Catholic Institutes. When he made his first such speech at a Roman Catholic Institution speaking to 1500 priests, novices and others at Belmont in 1963, he claimed that what was then being initiated (by him and others) "is the beginning of something so fantastic it could change all of Christendom and will affect you, your children and their children". Strangely, also, Graham embraces Jewish leaders entrenched in their religion which denies the Christ of God, and he fellowships with Jewish Rabbis as he does with Roman Catholics. The World Church is to embrace them all.

Which Church is Graham building? Christ's? Or that of the Great Whore?

(f) THE CROSS

Readers are referred to the companion booklet with this one, "The Doctrine of the Cross" in which this matter is fully covered and in which the truth is related to the Graham crusades.

For the reasons therein stated, Graham is an enemy of the cross, though he preaches the cross.

Paul said "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil. 3:18).

God is not with enemies of the cross of Christ.

If the cross is being preached one result in the world will be "offence". If there is no "offence of the cross" in the world, then the true cross is not being preached. It is only the enemies of the cross who preach the cross without offence.

That Graham is doing this is proved, again from the mouth of Cardinal Richard Cushing, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston. He says that Graham's message is one of "Christ crucified", and he says further, still referring to Graham, "I only wish we had a half dozen men of his character to go forth and preach the Gospel of Christ crucified".

That is, the Cardinal approves the Christ Crucified Gospel of Graham for it agrees with that of the Roman Catholics. They both speak much of the cross, and of Christ being crucified, but the cross is so presented, in both cases that there is no offence. It may *seem* like the preaching of the cross of the Bible, but it is *not* the preaching of the true cross of Christ which is an offence in Roman Catholicism, in every false religion, and in the world around us, everywhere.

The "Orlando Sentinel" of Georgia, U.S.A., Monday, 29th July, 1968, reporting on the Baptist World Conference which had just concluded at Berne, Switzerland, states that in his closing sermon at the

conference Billy Graham said "True Christians form only a small minority of mankind. It seems we are losing. But God has a plan for the future, and Christ is the future ruler of the world. There are signs of this everywhere. The youth of our time does not demonstrate against the Church. This shows they search for the teaching of Jesus. Jesus had long hair. So have our hippies. And at least in the United States they wear Jesus boots (sandals) and this seems to express their hidden longing for God".

The preaching of the cross by a man who says such things, is the preaching of a non-Biblical, improper, popular, inoffensive cross.

(g) THE NAME

Is the work such that the Holy Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit should be associated with it ?

God will not fellowship where the Word is plainly disobeyed, or where the fellowship includes the ungodly and the grossly disobedient. He will not be partaker in such a work.

As has been shown, Graham is holding his campaigns in open association with the ungodly and grossly disobedient, and he is plainly disobeying the clear Word of God in vital matters. God is not "with" such a man in such work. It is not sufficient to keep on saying to others "The Bible says . . .". The Bible says "Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (Jas. 1:22).

10. SUPPING WITH CHRIST

In some places today, God's people are finding that all the Churches in their area are heading towards apostasy and are seeking to be linked with the Ecumenical Church that is Babylon. The apostasy is so far advanced that a family group or just an individual may find they must stay apart or become part of the Apostate Church.

And the position is rapidly worsening and soon this may be the position world wide.

What does Christ direct ?

As He considers the Laodicean position of the end-age, Christ finds Himself outside the Laodicean apostate Churches. He repudiates them. He spews out the apostate democratic Churches. Then from outside the Churches He looks for the man and the family — for the few who are looking for Him.

He calls "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him and he with Me" (Rev. 3:20).

Our subject has been the fellowship of Christians with one another and with the Father and the Son. But now even if no fellowship with other Christians is available, a special fellowship for the end-age of Laodicea is offered by the Lord. He and the individual may sup together privately, or "within", while outside the building of Babylon continues as the time of world judgment draws near.

It is true that conditions are bad, that evil is advancing on all sides, both within the professing Church and without. It is true that there seems to be little that can be accomplished by Christian endeavour today and that the enemy has it much his own way.

But the saints of the Lord who understand this, also have honour and power unknown in the whole history of the Church. Unknown to the apostates around him, the loved of the Lord hears his Lord's voice, opens, and entertains the Master Himself. While the Lord and the loved one sup together, the Devil trembles. Spiritual work is being wrought ever, where the all-powerful One is fellowshiping with one of His.

There was a special manifestation to the early Church. Special gifts of prophecies, knowledge, miracles and tongues were given to the early Church as signs and to help in the initial period when the New Testament Scriptures were in course of transmission to the Church. Christ revealed the deep things of God through the Holy Spirit in a special way. Now, at the end of the Church period, not in the same way, but in another special way, Christ is manifesting Himself to those who have the completed Scriptures in their hands. The Holy Spirit indwells all members of the Church, and today where the door is opened, Christ enters personally, and reveals in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

He has always been "at hand" to His own. He is ever in the

midst of the twos and threes. But in Laodicean conditions He is pledged to sup within doors with "any man" who will hear His voice and open to Him.

Every Christian is in union with Christ to have life spiritually at all. But now, by special promise, related to the special conditions of our day, our Lord has pledged Himself to fellowship and to come in and to sup, He, the Lord, with any man, who will open the door.

The Lord has always been "with" His friends, especially when they were alone in trying circumstances. He was "with" Martin Luther when he stood his trial at Augsburg before the august might of the established Church and Empire of his day. The Lord was "with" him and in association with Luther wrought to change the whole course of history. John Bunyan influenced all later generations, because God was "with" him in his lonely prison.

Today, however, God is not only with special people in special circumstances, but He is "with" any man who will open the door. The "any" men the Lord is "with" today, are those who are ostracised by the popular Church systems of the day, and who find themselves outside the camp, with Christ. With a receptivity of heart to obey Him sincerely and simply, they "hear His voice", and they "open the door", and He is then "with" them. And He is with the simple, ordinary, "any" man, thus.

The test is not how popular they are, or what they have to boast about of service for the Master, but obedience is the test of Christ "with-ness". The prophetic truth is being fulfilled today, in that while the masses fête popular men, the Lord is "with" another class of men altogether. The Lord sups "with" them and they sup "with" Him. (Rev. 3:20).

Tête-à-tête, in the sweetest of all fellowships, just Christ and a man, the mysteries of the age will be understood aright, as God's Word illumines and relates the circumstances of the day, and as the Redeemer's work and glories are discerned.

FINDING FELLOWSHIP

Let us seek the fellowship of a Biblical Local Church, where such is available.

Let us seek the fellowship of the twos and threes and obtain thus the further fulfilment of the Lord's present purposes.

"Let us go forth therefore unto Him, without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Heb. 13:13).

THE FRUIT OF FELLOWSHIP

What is Christ doing? In the Churches, amidst the twos and threes, and when supping with His friends, the Lord is completing His purposes in the World in this Gospel age in association with His own, and He is preparing His true Church, sanctifying and clearing it

with the washing of water by the Word, “that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:27).

This is to fellowship and to sup with Christ. Those so engaged will soon be changed. “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” they shall be changed — caught up, “to meet the Lord in the air”: and so they shall “ever be with the Lord”. From fellowshiping with Him in this Laodicean waste, the fellows of the Son will be translated to the fellowship sublime. “Wherefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thess. 4:18).

APPENDIX

Extracts from correspondence appearing in "The Witness": —

"A" Extract from letter appearing in the issue of October, 1965, over the signatures of Robt. A. Laidlaw, Will T. Miller and Dr William H. Pettit, all of Auckland, New Zealand:—

"In Auckland, a city of 500,000, we have 35 assemblies and it was our painful duty to deal with an assembly which had gone completely astray on the sign gifts and a representative meeting of overseeing brethren from the other assemblies unanimously passed the following resolution which was printed in the 'Treasury', our Dominion-wide monthly, in April of this year:

"Brethren taking responsibility in the Te Papapa Gospel Centre have declared that while not permitting women to teach, they allow them to participate in the Lord's Day morning meeting by:

1. Reading the Scriptures.
2. Announcing hymns.
3. Engaging in prayer.
4. Prophesying.

"They also stated that, on three occasions women had already prophesied; furthermore, they said they would allow speaking in tongues if an interpreter was present.

"In view of the above, this meeting of elders of Auckland Assemblies considers that the Te Papapa Gospel Centre has put itself outside the fellowship of Assemblies of Christians generally known as "open brethren"."

"B" Extract from letter appearing in the issue of December, 1965, over the signature of Metcalfe Collier, of Middlesex, England, referring to the paragraph quoted above contained in the letter from Auckland:

1. It appears that elders from a number of assemblies in a particular geographical area have met in some representative capacity to settle beliefs and practices which are acceptable within their assemblies. In what way does this action differ in principle from the Papal Convention now being held in Rome?

2. It appears that these brethren expect their views to be accepted by other assemblies in New Zealand, in Britain, and, presumably throughout the world. There exists in their mind a category of churches known as 'assemblies of open brethren', and for this category they presume to speak in a representative capacity. . . .

3. The term 'outside the fellowship' is the focus of my objection. In what way does this differ from excommunication? Who are these brethren who claim the right to state who is, and who is not 'outside the fellowship'? Where in Scripture is there any justification for the exclusion from fellowship of a whole company of believers, regardless of their individual spirit-

uality? Where in Scripture is there any justification for treating any believer as 'outside the fellowship' at all? — or at least on grounds other than public and grievous sin? Outside what fellowship — the fellowship of the body of Christ? The fellowship of some man-made sector of the body of Christ?"

"C" Extract from letter appearing in the issue of March, 1966, over the signature of the same Auckland brethren, Robt. A. Laidlaw, Will T. Miller and Dr William H. Pettit:

"In your December issue Mr Metcalfe Collier writes, 'There exists in the mind (of New Zealand brethren) a category of churches known as assemblies of open brethren'. We admit that this is quite true, and the same exists in Great Britain in printed form, giving the name and address of the corresponding brother for each assembly. Moreover, 'Echoes' issue a list of missionaries who have gone out in fellowship with the said 'category' of assemblies, and are supported by them. Why try to live in a world of make-believe instead of facing reality?"

· · · ·
"A few years ago, when our leading papers were featuring and denouncing the edicts issued by the Exclusive Brethren hierarchy, we felt compelled for our testimony's sake to publicly state that those known as 'Open Brethren' had no connection or sympathy with such teaching. Open Brethren here had to be designated in an intelligible way to obtain the privilege of supplying some 500 of our members to take the half-hour weekly Bible lessons which are permitted in all Government Schools throughout New Zealand"

"We cannot imagine those responsible for the publishing of the list of assemblies in Great Britain including a group which has adopted the pentecostal principles and practices of the Te Papapa Gospel Centre."

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