

44. Scripture Admits of No Compromise.

If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. *John 8,31. 32.*

Even those who in doctrine declare the word of Scripture to be the Word of God are nevertheless in danger of disobeying the Word of God in practise. This is done by the making of compromises, that is, it is done when the Church maintains only so much of God's Word as the world and worldly-minded Christians are willing to put up with, in other words, as human reason deems compatible with its ideas of what ought to be done or left undone. All the passages bearing upon this question inculcate upon all Christians the duty of abiding in the Word without making any compromise. God says: "Ye shall not add unto the Word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it." Deut. 4, 2.

While Luther was ever ready to sacrifice life and all for Christ's sake, he was never willing to yield one jot or tittle of the Scriptures. And only those are Lutherans indeed who accept the whole Bible, — not only certain doctrines which appeal to certain groups of men, but everything that the Lord has commanded to teach and observe, — not the Law alone nor the Gospel alone, but the whole revelation of God; not only those parts which appeal to man's fancy and whim, but also those books, chapters, and verses which transcend human reason; not only those parts which contain articles of faith, but also those which contain historical, geographical, geological, astronomical, or any other scientific statements; in short, the whole Bible, unabridged, uncurtailed. For it behooves us to accept all the doctrines revealed to us by God in Holy Writ, also less prominent and less fundamental ones. It must be our earnest concern not to lose or vitiate anyone of them. For the doctrines of the Bible form a united and connected whole; all the various parts of this divine unit are wonderfully interwoven, so that it is impossible to restrict any of them without at the same time, in effect, corrupting and destroying the others. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Prayer.

Lord God, heavenly Father, we pray Thee to give us Thy Holy Spirit that He may dwell in our hearts, daily keep us in Thy grace, and protect us in every temptation. Let us never depart from the Word of Truth, but fearlessly confess it. Whether we meet with approval or disapproval, honor or reproach, whether the membership of our congregation be increased or decreased, let us guard against all falsifications of the Gospel. Restrain, we beseech Thee, all enemies of Thy Word, for the sake of the glory of Thy name. Amen.

Away with human wit, say we,
Away with human story;
God's Word to us the light shall be
And to His name all glory.
Forever shall the Church alone
On His pure Word be founded,
And Christ shall be the Corner-stone
On which our faith is grounded.

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