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Description

The word sect is employed in the English translation to express the Greek word "hairesis." The meaning of this word is well known. It is used (except in the Acts of the Apostles, where it is found six times) only once in the Epistle to the Corinthians, once in the Epistle to the Galatians (v. 20), and once in that of Peter (2 Peter 2). In the first epistle to the Corinthians it is translated by the word heresy (1 Cor. 11:19). It signifies a doctrine, or a system, whether of philosophy or religion, which has its adherents united as adopting this doctrine. Its meaning is a little modified now, because the professing church (at least the greater part of it) has taken the name of Catholic, that is to say, universal. Then every religious body, every Christian gathering, which does not belong to this community (so-called Catholic), is by it called a sect; from this the word is become a word of censure. All the Christian bodies are sometimes called sects, in the sense of divisions, when they separate themselves from the whole complement of Christians, or from those who bear this name. However, the word sect implies in itself always more or less of censure, from the idea that those who compose it are re-united by a doctrine or a particular denomination. We cannot say that this way of looking at it is entirely false; the application may be false, but not the idea itself. But what is important is to discover that which, in fact, is an

8 pages – Pamphlet – Author: J. N. Darby