

vers, and saints; knowing, as we do, that neither in any past age, nor in the present, amongst ourselves, or in any other Christian community, has it been, or is it so, that "all are Israel which are of Israel." But, seeing that we are expressly addressing ourselves to many who, in a certain respect, are of us, while yet they make only a partial or equivocal profession of their connexion with the Saviour—those we mean who have been baptized in infancy, and now, excepting in so far as regards their attendings on the preaching of the word, and contributing, it may be, to uphold it, give no other distinctive evidence of being Christians—we cannot but speak to them according to the character which they sustain.

We know, indeed, that such of you are often expostulated with, and reprov- ed, in the ordinary ministrations of the word, for your inconsistency: and yet, "dearly beloved and longed for," as we may call you, we would, even now also, plainly and affectionately admonish you, that, if you would not be the veriest fools for time and eternity, you must be not almost, but altogether Christians. You must realize your baptism, by putting away all your sins, and cordially embracing Jesus as he is tendered to you in the Gospel. So shall you be- come one with him; and salvation, in all the boundless extent of its present and reversionary blessings shall be yours. You will then love Christ su- preinely, and devote yourselves to his service; you will glory in his death, delight to commemorate it, and number yourselves with those who are waiting for his coming.

And to all into whose hands this letter comes, who, with or without a pro- fession of being the followers of Christ, have never seen the glory of his charac- ter and salvation; nor surrender themselves to him as his willing and obedient people, but continue worldly and ungodly—it may be even vicious, licentious, and intemperate—we would say deceive not yourselves concerning your charac- ter and condition. You are of "the congregation of the dead," and nothing but an entire renovation of heart and life can save you from having your por- tion with the lost in the regions of outer darkness.

It is good for us Brethren, as well as for you, frequently to remember, that our office as rulers in the Church of God, is directly conversant with your spiritual and immortal interests. The Ministry is the very principal institu- tion of that Kingdom which God has established in our world for the salva- tion of lost men, and the manifestation of his own glory. It is charged with the administration of the laws and privileges of that Kingdom; it interprets his oracles, and fetches from these instructions to men according to their varied circumstances and characters. It is in short, a grand instrument of the Holy Spirit, by which he brings men into union with the Son of God, and a fellowship with each other, and by which also, he purposes them for a hol- ier and more exalted condition in his heavenly kingdom. Ministers them- selves may well feel their entire unworthiness of their office.—A deep sense of this indeed, will always characterize those who are best accomplish- ed for it. They may yet properly call on their hearers, as we would now do on you, to honour the ministry, to expect much from it, to attend diligently on it, to concur in the gracious designs of God respecting it, and to strive ear- nestly in prayer, for the Holy Spirit to put forth his saving power by it. You

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