

for the unity of his disciples, he declares the great effect which would result, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John xvii. 21. Brethren, should not a world perishing in the wicked one lead you to do every thing in your power to recommend the religion you profess; and what can better do this than to shew it is a *Religion of Peace*?

The exhortations and commands to this duty, in the word of God, have a special claim upon our attention. When the Apostle exhorts the believers at Ephesus to walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith they are called, it is "with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; *endeavouring* to keep the unity of the spirit in the *bond of peace*:" and the great reason urged for this duty is the unity of those things connected with their profession. "One body and one spirit, one hope of their calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph. iv. 2—6. How incongruous, then, that they should be divided and opposed to each other. Peace is a blessing ready to fly away, but its value is so great, that we must follow after it, and if possible retain it; hence we are commanded, "Seek peace and *pursue* it." "Have peace one with another." "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men." "Let us follow after the things which make for peace." "Follow peace with all men." It must be important, therefore, for us to consider how this peace can be attained and secured. In doing so, we shall give a few directions, such as appear, from Scripture and observation, most suitable to the point in hand.

1. *Carefully watch against that love of precedence which is natural to man.*—This has been an early, great, and perpetual source of trouble to

the Church of Christ. It commenced among the Apostles, under the eye of the Saviour. Whenever the desire of being the greatest had possession of their hearts, it immediately led to a strife as to who should enjoy the honour, for each considered himself worthy of this pre-eminence. Part of the work which the Gospel effects on the heart of a sinner is, to cast down his high towering thoughts and imaginations, and give him low views of himself; yet it frequently happens that the old man seems to revive, and shews himself in desires and contrivances to be great in the Church. Let the claim of superiority arise from wealth, talent, or any cause whatever, if the desire exist, it is sinful, and will lead to most disastrous consequences, if permitted to operate unchecked. Diotrephes loved "to have the pre-eminence," and this led him to refuse an Apostle; to slander his character, and to cast out of the church those who would not be as wicked as himself. The individual who would be truly great in the church, must have low views of himself, and highly esteem his brethren, not so much on account of their wealth, rank, or talent, as for the likeness they bear to Christ; and he must be ready to do them good. Jesus says, "He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."

2. *Great care should be taken in regard to the treatment of offences.*—If, when a member of the Church feels offended, instead of following the Saviour's direction, and talking to the offender in private, the evil be permitted to rankle in his breast, or be talked of to others, great evils will be likely to follow. If a brother or sister has given offence, an early opportunity should be seized of visiting the offender, and in the spirit of Christian love, meekness, and self-denial, efforts should be made to induce