

tion and charity; yet it is by the daily walk and conversation of avowed christians that they form their estimation of the value of piety. *Consistency of character*, therefore, is of the highest consequence; both to our own peace and satisfaction, the benefit of others, the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom, and the glory of God. The enemies of christianity have generally raised their opposition to religion in its *corrupted* form. Such a course on their part is unreasonable; but as they hastily conclude that all who *profess* to be christians are such, they avail themselves of the weapon thus furnished by formalists, and lukewarm professors, with a view to overturn religion altogether, or to justify their own scepticism and indifference. But is this manly and consistent? We should judge of religion, not by its perversion, but by its genuine tendencies; not by what it seems to effect, but by what it would effect, if those who profess it did their part. The religion of the Bible is pure, and those who sincerely and fully follow its dictates, will be pure also. This was Paul's incessant study: "Herein do I exercise myself, to have *always* a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." He could ever appeal to his blameless life, and without any arrogance say to those he addressed. "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." In the character of Jesus we have a perfect pattern presented for our imitation; and, "He that saith he abideth in Him (Christ), ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked."

Christ's disciples are likened unto virgins, clad in suitable array, waiting for the Bridegroom, with their lamps trimmed and burning; and their righteousness is compared to white and fine linen. The expectation of realizing what God has promised, exerts a purifying effect. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." Heaven, the home of the christian pilgrim, is set forth by figures that denote a high state of purity. There is "no night there;" meridian splendour reigns. The end too of trials and afflictions is our sanctification. God places His children in the furnace with a view to their good, and that they may be made "partakers of His holiness." This also was the design of the Saviour's sufferings. He "gave Himself" for the church, "that He might sanctify and cleanse 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."

Let none then lose sight of the obligation to advance in holiness, love, and zeal, and to aim after "a closer walk with God." We must be "living epistles, known and read of men." It should be evident to all, that our principles have *power*, and that their influence is holy and blessed.

The purity of the church has relation to its *government* and *extension*. The Head of the church has encouraged and commanded His people to associate themselves for the observance of religious ordinances, and the advancement of religion. Christ has a *right* to universal empire, and the time is rapidly approaching, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." On his people then devolve various duties in the great scheme of redeeming love. They are plucked as "brands from the fire," and wade monuments of mercy, that they may live wholly to God. Whilst their personal growth and prosperity claims their first consideration, they are to care for others, and labour for their good. The particular church and con-