

grace, from the lusts natural to men in their unregenerate state. Should his character exhibit palpable and glaring deficiencies, the brotherly esteem in which he is held by other members of the household of faith must needs be affected by this. Brotherly love is an enlightened and rational sentiment; and it is neither possible nor suitable that it should burn very ardently towards one in whom the distinguishing marks of the brotherhood are much obscured, perhaps concealed, beneath qualities of a forbidding kind. Still it is certain that, with all his defects, one whom we are called to acknowledge as a brother in the Lord will have much about him that is truly estimable. He would not be recognisable as a brother, unless the fundamental lines of the image of Christ were perceptible in him. The image may be faint and clouded, but it will be there; and its presence, even in a faint and clouded state, claims a complacent regard, such as none can be entitled to, who are strangers to vital godliness.

(2.) In the second place, a Christian should love the brethren, because *their views and feelings, on points of the highest interest, are identical with his own.*

Community of sympathies tends to produce love. Soldiers who have marched under the same leader, shared the same dangers, won the same victories; philosophers who are prosecuting their researches in the same fields of science; philanthropists who have at heart the same plans of social good, and are uniting their energies for the accomplishment of these,—naturally acquire (except where professional rivalry disturbs their amity) a mutual friendship, which is traceable to the conformity of their original tastes, or of the mental habitude produced by external circumstances. But no sympathies which a Christian can have in common with any of his fellow-men, admit of a moment's comparison with those which he possesses in common with other Christians. All who are brethren in