

importance of Christian baptism, and in what sense remission and washing away of sin is applied in God's word. In this I would examine the duty of Ministers and Churches in receiving persons to the fellowship of the Church of Christ.

To receive persons to baptism and the Lord's supper without true piety, is the greatest injury we can do to their immortal souls; for it is well known that when Ministers of the Gospel receive others into fellowship (particularly young persons) as subjects of grace, they will soon think of themselves as others profess to think of them. It was the complaint which God made against his ancient people, Jer. 6, 13, 14—"From the prophet even to the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughters of my people slightly, saying peace, peace, when there is no peace." I have showed in my last letter that the faith of Christ is connected with holy feeling. Why should religion be the only subject in which we must not be allowed to feel. Yet it is the duty of Ministers and Churches to be governed not so much by a person's feelings, as by what appears to be the motives that produce those feelings. When we attend at the funerals of the dead, where children are weeping over a beloved deceased father, the sympathies of our nature lead us to participate in their feelings of grief and sorrow. And when we witness persons deeply affected with sorrow for sin, as humble penitents, or rejoicing in a newly found Saviour, as young converts to religion, we cannot, from the laws which govern our nature, but feel with them. Such feelings arise from the excited temperament of our minds. In the scriptures we never read of any of the primitive Christians rejoicing in those feelings, but in the Gospel of Christ which caused them. Such truths as the following were the cause of their joys, and the life of their comforts. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." "And he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him." "The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth from all sin." These divine truths which moved the hearts of the ancient saints of God, seem to lose their charm, and many want something else; the elevation or depression of their sorrows and joys, is with them their favourite themes. How many will say they will be baptized, and unite with the Church, when they feel it their duty, while others who have professed their interest in the Gospel of Christ, in the absence of religious feelings, give up family worship, the meetings of the Church of God, and the important duty of secret prayer. All such are moved to duty more by the impulses of the mind, than by the word of God, the commands of Christ, or even by the affecting story of Calvary, the highest of motives to induce us to take up the cross of Jesus.

In receiving persons to the ordinances of Christ and the fellowship of the Church, we should never expect the same account from all, as it respects the true manner or occasion of their conversion to God. These circumstances are under the control of sovereign wisdom. Some are called in early life, others in middle age, and some, though few, in old age. Samuel, John the Baptist, Jeremiah and Timothy,