

whole of the day, however, one man alone is employed as the speaker, and the fellowship of the church is hardly, at all exhibited. \*\* The very important ordinances of prayer and exhortation by the brethren, and of discipline, are thus excluded altogether from the first day of the week. These, however, are acknowledged by the churches as social ordinances, and are observed on a week-day in the *church meeting* as it is exclusively denominated; which, from different circumstances, is attended but partially by the disciples, and by a very small number from the world. These last are even shut out from witnessing the discipline of the church, in its various exercises of receiving, reproving, or putting away members, duties which are highly calculated to carry conviction, and to convey instruction to their minds. Many evils arise out of this unauthorized arrangement. These ordinances being put out of their place, several mistakes are occasioned regarding them. Prayer and exhortation by the brethren are considered as an improper waste of the Lord's day, and discipline as not sufficiently holy for it. \*\* Neither is that improvement made in them that ought to be, nor that advantage to all the members derived from them which is intended. From the above order, by the unequal means of instruction afforded to the church, a foundation of schism is often laid; while the obtaining of pastors from the churches themselves, is rendered almost totally impracticable, and the doctrine or the necessity of a plurality in each church, becomes a mere speculation. On the whole, a method has been adopted on the Lord's day, not pointed out by the word of God but devised by human systems,—the popular mode in which all depends on the qualifications of one man, and in which every thing goes on well, independently of the state of the church, be that what it may. This perfectly suits a worldly society. It is equally fitted for all established churches. It is, in fact, practised by the church of Rome, the church of England, and the church of Scotland. \* \* \*

As it is impossible that *they* should exhibit Christ's Kingdom in the world, how great a loss is sustained when his body, the churches of the Saints, fail in this respect to hold forth the word of life. But when these shall walk in all the ordinances of the Lord blameless, they will do more to bring the insulated and erring followers of Jesus out of Babylon, and into the fellowship of the gospel, than by all the reasonings that can be used on the subject; and by the same means, they will do more for the conversion of the world than all the missionary societies that could be instituted.

I shall now state what appears to me to be the scriptural mode of association, which is calculated both for the propagation and permanency of the gospel in its purity.

When there is one believer in any place, he must of course act as an individual. But when there are more than one, association is attainable, and therefore duty. Wherever there are two or three disciples, they should meet in Christ's name, and he will be in the midst of them, Matt. xviii, 20. Here is a church. For what is a church, but association and fellowship in the gospel, of which, in the