

When we turn our attention to the character and exploits of his first disciples, his *ambassadors to the world*, what an illustrious exhibition of the excellency of his doctrine, and of the purity of his morals do they afford! In them how conspicuous faith, hope, and love! What zeal, what patience, what self-denial, what deadness to the world! How gladly they spend and are spent in the good work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope! They glory in reproaches, in privations, in stripes, in imprisonments, in all manner of sufferings; yea, in death itself, for the Son of Man's sake. How freely, how cheerfully, how laboriously they performed the ministry which they had received! They look for no applause, for no stipend, no fixed salary, no lucrative office, no honourable title among men. They have continually in their eye the example of their Chief, "looking off from the ancients to Jesus the Captain and Finisher of the Faith, who, for the joy set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down on the right hand of God." Amidst their enemies and false friends, how calm, how meek, how prudent, how resolute, how persevering! They exhibit virtues, in comparison of which, the virtues of all other religionists appear either as splendid sins, or as meagre empty names. Such was the character of the ambassadors and subordinate ministers of the New Institution.

The societies called Churches, constituted and set in order by those ministers of the New Testament, were of such as received and acknowledged Jesus as Lord Messiah, Saviour of the World, and had put themselves under his guidance. The **ONLY BOND OF UNION** among them was faith in him and submission to his will. No subscription to abstract propositions framed by synods; no decrees of councils sanctioned by kings; no rules of practice commanded by ecclesiastical courts were imposed on them as terms of admission into, or of continuance in, this *holy brotherhood*. In the "apostles' doctrine" and in the apostles' commandments" they steadfastly continued. Their fraternity was a fraternity of love, peace, gratitude, cheerfulness, joy, charity, and universal benevolence. Their religion did not manifest itself in public fasts nor carnivals. They had no festivals—no great and solemn meetings. Their meeting on the first day of the week was at all times *alike* solemn, joyful, and interesting. Their religion was not of that elastic and porous kind, which at one time is compressed into some cold formalities, and at another expanded into prodigious zeal and warmth. No—their piety did not at one time rise to paroxysms, and their zeal to effervescence, and, by-and-bye, languish into frigid ceremony and lifeless form. It was the pure, clear, and swelling current of love to God, of love to man, expressed in all the variety of doing good.

The *order* of their assemblies was uniformly the same. It did not vary with *moons* and *seasons*. It did not change as dress, nor fluctuate as the manners of the times. Their devotion did not diversity itself into the endless forms of modern times. They had no monthly concerts of prayer; no solemn convocations; no great fasts, nor