

than in a practical manner to do the will of the Lord—in short they are exposed to many dangers which may be always, expected to occur, when the flock is wandering from the shepherd's tents—not taking heed, to the words of the apostles, the only infallible teachers of the will of the Lord to the churches, and should they finally unite as a church, still they are unsettled. They have no idea of looking to the Lord for pastors, from among themselves—but unscripturally continue to depend entirely on a preacher from a distance. It often happens after the preacher comes, and has been with them a short time, that they are not pleased with him, or he with his situation, and another is to be sought for—and the work begun anew with renewed exertions, for money. All this often introduces questions of strife, and divisions among the brethren, and a spirit of intrigue and scheming, far removed from the simplicity and honesty of believers, especially as from certain considerations, not always the purest, the taste and inclinations of worldly hearers, are to be consulted as well as their own. Thus they have the name, of a church, but are very far from enjoying the advantages and security which the Lord by that ordinance, has provided for his people, while travelling in the wilderness.

Continuing long without pastors, the want is severely felt in different ways. Much confusion in the mean time often ensues, and wrong sentiments and principles are embraced and acted on, which afterwards it becomes very difficult to eradicate. Besides, they often conclude, that until they have pastors ordained among them, they have not a right to observe the Lord's supper; and thus they lose the benefit of this most useful and delightful ordinance, which is so much calculated to cement their union, and increase their faith, and to enable them as the church of Christ, the ground and pillars of the truth—statedly on every Lord's day to exhibit it, and to enforce for the conviction of themselves and all who attend, the truth and proof of the Gospel of the grace of God, in all its leading facts, the death, the resurrection, the coming of the Lord, the unity of his people, and their motives and obligations to live a life of faith and of holiness. It is easy to perceive how ruinous all this must be—how hurtful to Christians and the world—how obstructive to the diffusion of the Gospel, and the maintenance of its purity. * * By these means, many who at first appeared to run well, are hindered. Several of them, after a while, fall away, and go back to the world; and others, entirely discouraged by the attempt they have made, return to the unscriptural connexions from which they have separated.

The most perfect state to which the churches have yet attained, falls now to be considered. Here again it appears there are many deficiencies. An order has been adopted on the Lord's day, that is very far from being scriptural. That day is consecrated to the memory of the resurrection of Jesus our Lord, and for the meeting of the saints, in order that they may hold fellowship with him and with each other, in the observance of every social ordinance. Through the