

character, that is to open the door of admission to the Church? In our view, Scripture and common sense decide that communion must flow from the heartfelt enjoyment of the truth; to put it on any other ground may swell the list of the Church membership, but utterly fails to secure the purity of the Church, and its consequent power to advance the glory of Christ. Some evidence of heartfelt religion ought to be submitted, in order to meet the end of a union—that we may have fellowship one with another. There is a fellowship of *admission*, a joy in the reception of saved souls to the fold of the Church, like that of Barabas when he saw the grace of God. In *covenant* agreement the hand is put to the engagement to walk together as fellow heirs of the grace of life. A visible expression of the fact that they are of one heart and of one soul, appears in giving the *right hand of fellowship*.

Many confine their ideas of fellowship to one great occasion, namely, the observance of the Lord's Supper. Robert Hall, in his "Terms of Communion," has observed—"Nothing is more certain than that the communion of saints is by no means confined to one particular occasion, or limited to one transaction, such as that of assembling around the Lord's table; it extends to all the modes by which believers recognize each other as members of a common Head. Every expression of fraternal regard, every participation in the enjoyment of social worship, every instance of the unity of the Spirit exerted in prayer and supplication, or in acts of Christian sympathy and friendship, as truly belong to the communion of saints, as the celebration of the Eucharist. In truth, if we are strangers to communion with our fellow Christians on other occasions, it is impossible for us to enjoy it there, for the mind is not a piece of mechanism which can be set a going at pleasure, whose movements are obedient to the call of time and place. Nothing short of an habitual sympathy of spirit, springing from the cultivation of benevolent feelings, and the interchange of kind offices, will secure that reciprocal delight, that social pleasure, which is the soul of Christian communion." This witness is true. Admitting then the numerous opportunities of taking sweet council together, we yet see peculiar meaning and excellency in the fellowship of God's people in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. In that time of remembrance there are many truths which crowd on the joyous spirit. Jesus is revealed. His body broken, and his blood shed are brought into view, with the great object he has secured by the sacrifice of himself. But in the very nature of the ordinance, it is social in its character. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread." 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. On this passage we introduce an extract from a tract on *The nature of Christian fellowship*.

"The word communion or fellowship—for they both mean the same thing—signifies the joint action of a select number of individuals, in giving, receiving, or enjoying, that in which they have fellowship. Partaking of the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, being the joint action of the whole church, they all had fellowship together in that action. This was admitted; hence it followed by parity of reason, that, when Christians went into the Idol's Temple, and became partakers with idolaters, of the cup and of the table of Devils, (see 1 Cor. viii. 10) they had visible fellowship with them in that social action! This could not be denied, without denying what Paul