

nothing should satisfy one short of personal and present evidence of "repentance towards God, of faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." It will be found, however, that one of the best securities which a Church can have against the introduction of improper members, is a high state of spirituality. It is when the contrast is the most striking between the Church and the world, that "of the rest durst no man join himself to them." While such a state of matters in a Church attracts the thoughtful and enquiring, it repels those whose hearts are given over to carnality. When a Church is filled with the Spirit of God and its services and its entire course are thereby animated, it has no attraction for the gay, the thoughtless, or the money or pleasure loving. They may jeer and scoff, but they will not be disposed to join.

In conclusion it may be observed, that while the polity of our churches is eminently fitted to foster and maintain purity of communion, there seems no good reason why adherents of other forms of ecclesiastical organization should not give themselves to the same course. We discover a facility and a harmony in our polity which some of them do not possess: but as it appears to us, they might and they ought all of them to restrict the fellowship of the churches to a communion of saints and faithful in Christ Jesus. As to ourselves let us be specially watchful in this matter. It is the great thing for which we as a body distinctively contend. It is of more importance than our testimony against union of Church and state, of moment as that is: it is of greater consequence than our time-honoured conflict for the suffrage of the Christian people within the churches, and the independence of the churches from all external control in the management of their affairs, good and righteous as that conflict is: in fine, it is next, in momentous interest, to a clear and faithful preaching of the gospel, if indeed it be not truly a part of such preaching, a practical part. Let it be ours then, brethren, to be faithful to this great principle of communion, cost what it may in individual cases or in general estimate, assured that it is when a church is "fair as the moon and clear as the sun" that it is terrible to the great foe of God and man "as an army with banners."