

dence of their union to Christ. It may be that in times of religious excitement we have been too anxious to multiply our numbers, and that we have taken tears and zeal, apparent penitence and enthusiastic joy, for genuine religion, and when persons thus influenced have succeeded in entering the hallowed door of the Church, they are placed in circumstances in which they will be likely to do much harm. They may appear to run well for a season: but they will sooner or later evince their love to the world and their hatred to that holy self-denying course which the Bible inculcates; and when they do so, if not properly disciplined, they become factious, perhaps succeed in gaining a party, and in the end bring disgrace and misery upon themselves, and upon the Church which has received them.

Again, we observe, if discipline be neglected, what distinguishes the Church of God from the world? If for example a man can be decidedly covetous in his heart, and manifest that he is so, by shutting his hand against the poor and against all the religious institutions of the day, or by refusing to do what he ought for the support of the Gospel at home and abroad, or if he can indulge in habits of intemperance year after year, and join with the multitude that do evil in works of darkness and sin, if he can grind the face of the poor, and deal unjustly with his neighbours, or if he can employ his time and talents in blowing up the coals of strife and division amongst his brethren, and can still retain his seat in the Church of God; where, we again ask, is the line of discrimination between the Church and the world? And with what propriety can we speak of the Church of Christ, as being made up of lively stones, of spiritual subjects, who are crucified to the world, to its affections, and its lusts? Alas, dear brethren, if such individuals be allowed to approach the holy communion of the Redeemer, we become a reproach and a by-word to all around us, and instead of being dignified with the exalted title of the light of the world, and the salt of the earth, we might more properly be called the synagogue of Satan, and a cage of unclean birds. Can we with confidence look up to heaven and implore the divine blessing, while such unholy "Achans" are in the camp? May we not rather tremble with fear and dread, lest the curse of him that troubled the Camp of Israel, should fall with tremendous weight upon us. If there be any one sin more likely to grieve the Holy Spirit than another, and deprive us of his reviving, converting, and sanctifying influences, surely the neglect of a faithful discipline on the part of the Church must be the one.

How imperatively does the word of God urge us to this duty. As for example, "A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject." Titus iii. 10. "We command you brethren in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly.—2 Thes. iii. 6."

"But now I have written unto you, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, with such a one no not to eat.—1. Cor.

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