

with the wicked in the church cannot fail to injure the better disposed. "Their word will eat as doth a canker." "Evil communications corrupt good manners." The young of the flock are often more inclined to look at older professors for an example, than they are to look into the Bible. We do think that the time has come when it should call the church to the action of discipline to know that a member is not decidedly pious. It is not enough for the church that her members are doing no particular harm; she must know that they are all doing particular good; unless this is the case, they are necessarily doing much harm as "no man liveth to himself."

The influence of inconsistent professors tends to *paralyze the efforts of the pastor*. The conduct of such persons tends to undo through the week that which costs the pastor hard study and labour on the Lord's day—they pull down as fast as he builds up—they say to the world that religion is not of that importance which his sermons declare it to be—they cause the way of truth to be evil spoken of—and in too many instances stand between the souls of their neighbours and of their children and God's salvation. We do sincerely pity that faithful minister who is compelled to endure such painful drawbacks on his usefulness as the inconsistent impose; but witness them he must until they are removed out of the way.

The retaining of members of the above stamp in the church, *gives an incorrect view of our strength*. Statistical returns are annually made to the Association, of members in *regular standing*. Now we say that if members that are returned in this manner ought to be included in the column for the excluded, then is such return an incorrect one. For persons of the character here described, are not our strength. They are our weakness—our shame—and not the 'glory of Christ.' Such lifeless, fruitless branches, can only be considered as incumbrances—destructive both of the vigor and beauty of the tree. Whenever a church holds in its connection, and returns such a class of professors as regular members, *it must operate to the injury of the individuals themselves*. May not such say, "I am considered as a christian by the pastor and the church, who know how I live; my life cannot be at variance with christianity, or surely they would call me to account for my conduct. Or he may at length come to view religion with contempt, and infer that neither pastor nor people believe what they profess, or they would certainly notice his delinquencies, and punish him accordingly. Thus one chief end of scriptural