

in the cause of God show that they have drank from the fountain of life and become partakers of the Divine nature, can a christian church consistently with its obligations to the world, to itself, and to Him who has loved it "even to the death" continue to fellowship as consistent members, those, however exemplary they may be who give no evidence of piety beyond what the ordinary civilities of society or the laws of the country demand of all? will not such fellowship have a direct tendency to satisfy the conscience, and more and more to deceive an unfortunate brother who through the inexperience of youth, ignorance of the extent, and holiness of the law or undue excitement sometimes attending revival seasons, may have been led to take up with something short of a saving knowledge of the Saviour? ought not such member, after the employment of proper means to awaken him to a sense of his obligations, to be told by an outspoken act of the church, that, however consistent as a citizen of the world or as a neighbor, he is very inconsistent as a professed follower of the Saviour? True, the preaching may have been faithful, exhortations very pointed, but if the light that is in one be darkness how great is that darkness, and when all other means failed, the voice of God in an act of discipline might have been heard.

As an illustration of the general truth we would select one or two from among the great variety of christian duties. The study of the word of God is acknowledged to be indispensable to a consistent and intelligent piety. "The Bible the only rule of faith and practice" is one of our much loved doctrines. "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life." This we regard as a command to the individual christian. We hold to personal responsibility in matters of religion. Can we consequently contend for this truth from the pulpit and press and yet recognise as members in good standing those who habitually and constantly neglect this pleasing and important duty, and are in consequence left ignorant of the truth, exposed to the attacks of infidelity and liable to be carried

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