

with subterranean catacombs excavated in the rock where thousands of Christians were secretly entombed during the time that to bury after the Christian manner was a violation of the laws of the Roman Empire; and when to adhere to this mode of burial or to acknowledge themselves Christians was liable to cost them their lives, the confiscation of their property, or liberty.

This change, however, was not wrought at once. Unfortunately for the progress of Christianity and the peace of mankind, the Emperor Julien, the Apostate, in 361 attempted to reestablish the Pagan religion in the empire. This brought on a bloody struggle, which resulted in an amalgamation of Christianity and Paganism. Idol worship had always existed in Rome. The gods of the Greeks and Romans, and the gods and goddesses that were manufactured for the occasion had temples built to them, and their worship not only directed but enforced by the laws of the Empire. But when Christianity became the religion of the State, these rites were banished and a vast amount of Pagan property was confiscated.

The rites and ordinances of the Christian religion were few and simple, when compared with the ostentatious display observed in the worship of Pagan idols. It might not be amiss to enquire what the religious ceremonies of the early Christians really were. They believed in the divine mission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and endeavored to follow his precepts. The Savior said, "Let him who will be my disciple take up his cross and follow me." When the Savior commenced His mission He went to the waters of the Jordan and was baptized by immersion, thereby setting an example to all to follow Him. His dis-

ciples preached faith, repentance, and baptism for the remission of sins, and the ordinance of laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost, and the administration of what is termed the sacrament. In these were comprised the principal portion of the outward ordinances and ceremonies that were observed by the early Christians. They met on the Sabbath day to worship, receive instruction, and to call upon the name of the Lord and to partake of the emblems of the death and sufferings of our Lord and Savior, and to witness unto him thereby that they were determined to keep His commandments unto the end.

Their places of worship were generally private houses, or such retired places as they could obtain so as to be free from the interruption of their enemies. And in connection with the ordinances to which I have referred, their religion consisted in the observance of a strict moral code. When a man entered the church by the door, that is by faith, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins and the laying on of hands, he was required to live in strict obedience to the principles laid down in the teachings of our Savior, to sustain and uphold the truth and to lead a pure and upright life, and "to do unto others as he would that others should do unto him." These, in short, were the prominent religious observances that existed at the time of the Apostles of our Lord and Savior, who had established branches of the church in nearly all parts of the known world. But these simple principles were soon trespassed upon by philosophers. Paul, in warning the members of the church of this, says: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."