A

HISTORY

OF THE

SABBATARIANS

SEVENTH DAY BAPTISTS,

/A\* AMERICA.

TIIETR RISE AND PROGRESS

To tUe year 1811,

TITH TUKIR

LEADERS' J^JMESy

AND THEIR

DISTINGUISHING TENETS, Ecc.

BY HENRY CLARKE,

rASTOU OF THE PTftST CHURCH IS BROOXPTELD, COUNTY

OP MADISOy, STATE OF WEW-YOflK.

J\*rove all things ; holdfast thai which ie goQd,^^St^ PauL

lllttca r

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

D¥ SiHWAKD .\yu WILLI AMS\*

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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE CANDii) READER.

X HE following narrative is taken from the most au-

thentic sources that I could, practicably, obtain; and

Is thought to be the most correct account of the Sabba-

tarians in America, that may be obtained in the present

state of things. It is well known, that the first English

inhabitants of America were of another denomination of

christians ; and in their first settlements were not only-

most numferous, but retained all power of a legislative

nature in their own hands, and was zealous of their way

even to persecution of all other sects ; (but let us cast

a veil over such conduct in christians)— consequently

they had the controul of all the records, and all the sem-

inaries of learning in this country ; which circumstance

together with the trouble all our forefathers had by the

convulsions in Europe in the time of Cromwell, &c.

with the conflicts with the native Imlians, and doubtless

great neglect on the part of the Sabbatarians about keep-

ing and transmitting to 'posterity their own affairs — all

conspire to render their history obscure.

Again ; the present difliculties in church and state af-

fairs, generally the scarcity of cash, and the inattention,

illiberality and great neglect of some sections of the

community in forwarding the necessary information

timely, has made it impracticable for the author (who

has no leisure) to pay that attention by transcribing, in-

specting and correcting the work, he would been glad

to have done ; — which together with his own inability

may render the work incomplete. The most he can ex-

pect is to make a plain, faithful beginning, and leave to

time and abler pens to make improvements, as leisure

may serve — and he trusts the candid inquirer after truth

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ly

"Will be more intent for matters of fact, than elegance of

diciion.

The method pursued in the "book, will be, first, by an

introduction; secondly, by taking up the churches as

they were organized ; thirdly, general remarks, and if

the limits of the book will admit, give some arguments y

on their distinguishing tenets. Sec. The materials of

this History will be taken from the bible, and other hi&»-

tories, manuscripts, and letters or written memorandums

ancient and modern ; and from church records, (of whicb

notice will be given in the work) together with the au-

thor's personal knowledge— -as he has been intimately

acquainted with the affairs of the Sabbatarians for the

last forty years ; and has visited nearly all the churches

in the Union, of that sect ; and has had personal ac-

quaintance with, I believe, every ordained preacher,

now living, of their order ; as also nearly all the elders

that have been living in that order for fifty years pa&t>\*«-

And being in part sensible, of the responsibility of aa

author, he is determined to be as accurate, as to matters

of fact related, as possible.

That it may meet the approbation of the great Judge

of all— and by divine Providence be, in some degree,

beneficial to the cause of Truth, and pure Religion a-

mong his fellow mortals — :s the sincere wish, and fer-

vent prayer, of the public's humbic servant,

EIJENRY CLARKE.

Lrookjield, Feb.

37, 1811.

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HISTORY, &c.

X HE word Sabbatarian^ appears to be a very appro-

priate term applied to those people who hold the sev-

enth day of the week as the Lord's Sabbath. And whe-

ther that name was first assumed by the Seventh -day

Baptists, or was given them by their opponents, is to mc

uncertain and immaterial.

As the seventh day of the week is, in divine Revela-

tion so positively and abundantly commanded to be sanc-

tified as a Sabbath, by God himself ; and not the least

colour of a command from God, in all the scriptures,

for any other day of the week as a weekly sabbath ; and

as baptism was expressly commanded by the divine Sav-

iour, and so abundantly confirmed and practised by scrip-

ture accounts, (of which we shall say more hereafter, if

the Lord will) we as rational christians, have no objec-

tions to have such an appellation to distinguish our sect.

JBelieving we have the command of God, and the exam-

ple of our divine Saviour, as also his apostles and the

primitive christians, to support the principal doctrines

we profess ; — and was it not for the numerous persecu-

tions, and the corrupt practices and doctrines of profes-

sors of the christian religion, together with the tyranny

of princes, popes, &c. and the various convulsions that

have taken place in the world in church and slate, in

such a length of time j it is more thail probable, that wc ,

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.... . . '■■■■■ s

'jiU^lft- irac« 'a regtflaf -succession, from our Saviour'^

days to the present time, of our main doctrines and min-

istry. But such has been the fate of the christian sys-

tem, tjiat by false Christs (as Mahomet and others) and

enthusiastic and fanatical leaders ; together with the

pride, arrogance and power of the popes, and tyranny of

princes ; and by connecting ecclesiastical and political

i^ffairs together, in such a way as to destroy vital piety,

iis is abundantly evident by Mosheim'9, and other histo-

ry, that it is now difl&cult for any one denomination of

christians to trace their succession, with certainty, from

the apostles' days. However, it is evident, from Mo-

iheim and other liistorians, that a considerable portion

of christians have, at all times since the apostles\* days,

been in the observation of the seventh day as a Sabbath,

^Vitncss the Abyssinian church, and some others, that

a re known of at this day ; who have not ever been, any

considerable time, subject to the pope's jurisdiction\*—

1 and yet retain the seventh day of the week for a Sabbath,

us may be seen by several historians. [\_See the Abbe MiU

j (Ot\*8 General History^ vol. 2,]

As to the article Baptism, I conclude there are few,

jf any, in the christian part of the world, but will own it

I\* of divine appointment ; and that it has ever been prac-

1 tlsed by the most of professed christians from our Sav-

iour's days, (however they may differ in sentiment about

the candidates to it, and the mode of performing it)—

:ind although it may be a matter of doubt, whether any

one of the christian sects now extant, retain all the chris-

, lion rites and doctrines upcorrupt; and, if charity will

3 i-iilow all sects to have some of them, as all mortals arc

I imperfect in sentiment as well as practice,— yet it must

I bj allowed, that those who come the nearest to the di-

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^ine pattern, arc the tightest. And if God^is concerned

for his own honour, who alone has a right to institute

and command, and will punish man for disobedience and

for making void his law by their traditions, or vainly

think to worship him by teaching for doctrine the com-

mandments of men, &c.-\*»how should it concern souls,

to have a Thus aaith the Lord for theii\* faith and prac-

tice.

But leaving disputed pokits of divinity to the learned,

or to some future opportunity, let us attend more imme-

diately to the rise of the Seventh-day Baptists in North

America.

It is evident from Mr\* Isaac Backus' history of New-

England, [yoL \yfiage 5 3, t^c] that soon after the first

planting of Massachusetts, and as early as Feb. 5th)

1631, Mr. Roger Williams came from England to Amer-

ica ; that he was of good report as a godly and zealous

preacher; and had been some years employed in the

ministry in England. He preached at Plymouth two or

three years j and also at Salem about two years ; where

he was ordained, (I conclude in the Congregational fel-

lowship) and not long after, was banished Massachu-

setts territory, for holding or teaching, what then was

called Anabaptist sentiments. Mr. Williams then went to

what is now called Providence, and obtained lands of

the Indians, and became the founder of the ^tate of

Rhodeisland. He also, it appears, received other white

settlers with himself; and was baptized in the year 1639

by a lay-man, as he could not obtain an administrator to

baptize by immersion, in America. And said Williams

was the constitutor of the first Baptist church in Ameri^

,ca, and second in the British dominion»\*

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As Mr. Backus has done ample justice to the merno^

ry of that pious and benevolent man, in his said History,

I shall leave him and observe, that by comparing Mr,

Backus' History and Mr. Calender's, which was written

long before his, as to the rise of the first Baptist church

in America, it appears to me that Mr. Williams did not

long have the lead in said first church ; but rath'er that

Mr. John Clarke (whom I expect was a member with

Mr. Williams, and probably was baptized and ordained

by Mr. Williams) took the lead in said first Baptist

church, soon after it was constituted; as Mr. Calender

styles Mr. Clarke, the first pastor of the first Baptist

church in America, and they both agree that said church

Was formed about-the year 1 644. And as I have not ob^

tained any satisfactory information, but that the gather-

ing of the Baptists at Providence and at Newport under

the care of Mr. John Clarke, were considered as

but one church, I shall consider them as such at the dtite

of the year 1644.

It also appears by Mr. Backus' History [vol\* 2, fiage

39 j that the said church divided on the principle of lay-

ing on of hands, about the year 1656— and William

Vaughan was their first leader\*— which I conclude was\_

the rise of the six principal Baptists so called.

It also appears by Mr. Backus' History [vol, 3, pag'e

23a ^c] compared with Mr. Calender's Sermon, prea-\*

ched at Newport at the commencement of the year 1 700

and Church Minutes, &c.— ^hat Mr. Stephen Mumford

came over from England in the year 1664 ; and brought

the opinion with him, that the whole of the Ten Com-

mands, as they were delivered from mount Sinai, were

moral and immutable : and that it was the antichristian

power which thought to change times and laws, that

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changed the Sabbath from the seventh to the^r\*/ day of

the yreek. And that several members of the first church

in Newport embraced this sentiment; and (by Backus'

History) finally a separation took place, in Dec. 1671—

when William Hiscox, Samuel Hubbard, Stephen Mum-

ford, Roger Baxter and three Sisters, joined in covenant

as a distinct church; and Mr. Hiscox was their first

|>astor, &c.

Mr. Calender states that, about the year 1665 a num-

ber of the members of the church under Mr. J. Clarke,

removed to the new settlements at Westerly, among

whom Mr. John Crandall was a preacher and elder.-—

They afterwards generally embraced the seventh-day

Sabbath.

Mr. Backus says {vol. 5, fiage 241] Mr. John Cran-

dall lived at Westerly before the separation took place

on account of the Sabbath, as before stated, in 1671—

that said Crandall was one of them that was imprisoned

at Boston, in 1651, 'for Baptist sentiments, &c.— that it

appears probable thSit those observers of the seventh-

day Sabbath, from the year 1664. to the year 1671, (in A-

merica) remained In the church with their first-day

brethren. In which time, I find mention made of seve-

ral corresponding letters that passed between them and

the seventh-day Baptists \xi London. Copies of several

of them, I have now by me ; and much regret that the

limits of this book will not admit of more copious ex-

tracts from them ; as also that the correspondence ha,s

not been renewed or kept up since the AmeHcan war.

It is evident by those letters, and by the several vol-

umes published by the reverend and learned Joseph

Stennet, near one hundred years ago, that the numbers

af the Sabbatarians in England inust have been quite »u-

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xnerous and respectable ; and that some of their leaders

were in as great repute for learning and piety, as an 7

other denomination of christians.

But such is our present circumstance, that I can onl y

make some short extracts, &c. The earlie&t I have by

me, is dated Feb. 2dy 1668, and is from Dr. Edward Sten-

net of the seventh-day Baptist church, meeting in Bell

Lane London — and directed to the Sabbath-keepers in

Rhodeisland Extracts :

\*' Dearly Beloveds

I rejoice in the Lprd on your behalf, in that he hath

been graciously pleased to make known to you his holy

Sabbath, in such a day as this ; when truth falleth in the

streets and equity cannot enter. And with us we caa

scarcely find a man that is really willing to know, wheth-

er the Sabbath be a truth or not— and those who have

the greatest parts, have the least anxiety to nteddlc with

it.\*\* (too similar to American people now) " We ha¥e

passed through great opp<)t»ition for this truth sake, es-

pecially from, our t^rethren, which made the affliction

heavier. I daye not say how heavy, lest it should seem

incredible.

" But the opposers of truth seem jinuch withered;

and at present the opposition seems to be dying away-—

for Truth is strong. This spiritual fiery law will burn

up all those thkigs that men do set before it : £G(^r was.

there ever any ceremonial law given us ? This law was

^iven from the mouth of God, in the care of so many

thousands— \*wrote on tables of stone with his own finger

•^-promised to he wnote on the tables of their hearts —

and confirmed by a miracle for the space ^ forty years

in the wilderness. The manna not keeping good any

day but the Sabbath, God gave them the bread of two

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days, because he gave them the Sabbath. But whatever

-was gathered on the other days and kept until the next,

stank and was full of worms. And no ceremonial law

had the penalty of death annexed to it, to be inflicted by

the magistrate, but the wilful profaner of the Sabbath

was to be put to death by the magistrate, as the wilful

murderer ; which clearly proves it to be a moral law—

as may be seen Exodus, 16th chap, and elsewhere ; << If

they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they

be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Luk. xvi 3 1 .

\*\* Here is in England about nine or ten churches that

keep the Sabbath ; besides many scattered disciples, who

have been eminently preserved in this tottering day,

when many eminent churches have been shattered to

>iecesJ

liXtracts from a letter, dated 26th March, 1668, and

signed in behalf of the church by eleven members —

one of them, William Gibson.

" The church of Christ, meeting in Bell Lane, Lon-

don, upon the Lord's holy Sabbath ; desiring to keep the

Commandments of God, and the testimonies of Jesus—

sendeth salutations to a remnant of the Lord's Sabbath-

keepers, in or about Newport (R. I.) in New-England—

unfeignedly wishing all needful grace, truth and ho-

liness, may be multiplied and increased in your more

and more unto the perfect day.— -

\*^ Beloved and precious Brethren, although unknown

to you by face, yet through grace trust we can call you

so: being affected by hearing of you by our beloved

brother John Cowel ; and the more when we perceive

the grace of God that is in you, by those choice and sa-

voury letters you sent him, which he communicated to

us : which, with his desire> hath encouraged us to write

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unto you at this timcj desiring that you may be stedfast

and immovablei always abounding in the work of the

Lord, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appear-

ance of tlie great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ —

that in his day he will shew who is the blessed and only\*

potentate, the king of kings and Lord of Lords. And

not only so, hut will also make manifest, both who are

his, and what is his— that so his people may not through

antichristian darkness or mistake, call light darkness,

or darkness light ; which evil is too much practised in

the present day.

" So then It will be out of doubt, those vain objections

of no Sabbath or a seventh part of time, we shall then

see that the ark wherein were the table laws only, will

be there ; the Lord will then make manifest tlfat princi-

ples and precepts will stand together in a gospel ^u\*fcir\*

state." &c.

Copy of a letter from Peter Chamberlain, senior. Doc-

tor of both Universities, and first elect Physician in or-

dinary to his Majesty's person— Dated Sept. 15th, 1677,

and addressed to tlie Governors of New-England :

" Peter Chamberlsdn, a servant of the word of God

to the excellent and noble Governors of New-England,\*

grace, mercy, peace and truth from God our Father, and

from our Lord Jesus Christ :\*—

" Most noble Governors, I humbly salute you in our

Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ : pf aying for you, that

you may abound in heavenly grace and temporal com-

forts. I have- always had a love to the intended purity,

and unspotted doctrine of New- Engl and— for Mr. Cot-

ton was of the same University of Emanuel m Cam-

bridge that I was, and several others, - with whom we

were all cotemporary ; and I never knew them but of a

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hoij conversation. I was also acquainted with several

others ; all of whom have a share in the foundation of

your government. — But, certainly, the first intentions

were, never to deter the truths of scripture, and liberty

of conscience guided thereby ; but to suppress sin and

idolatry, and prevent all the advances of Rome, to whom,

all thingsTare lawful, and especially lies and hypocrisy^

to promote their most damnable doctrmes, and covetous

supremacy\*

«It is great wisdom to suppress sin, bul not oppress

the liberty of a good conscience ; and while men grant

liberty of conscience, not to admit liberty of sin. All ma-

gistrates have not attained to this wisdom ; else Eng-

land would long since been freed from Popery. " What-

soever is against the Ten Commandments, is sin.\*\* Rom.-

iii. 20. << and he that sinneth in one point, is guilty of alh

because he that spake 9ne word of them, spake allj and

added no more :'\*— -while Moses and Solomon do so

much caution men against adding to, or taking from,

Deut. iv. 2. and so doth the beloved ^[H>stle in Rev. xxil.

12, 19. What shall we say then, of those who take away

those ten words, or of those that make them void, and

teach men so, dare give the lie to Jehovah, aild make Je«

si|s Christ not only the breaker of the law, but the very

author of sin in others causing them to break them.-\*^

Hath not the little horn played its part hastily in this,

and worn out the saints of the Most High, so that they

become like little horned men ?

^ If you are pleased to enquire about these things, or

to require any assistance or information ; be pleased, by

your letters, to command it. From your humble ser-

vant in the Lord Jesus Christ,

PETER CHAMBERLAIN."^

B \_\_\_..\_..

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1 have now by me, another letter from Dr. Chamber-

lain, sent to Governor Breadstreet of Boston, much on

the same subject— Also, several other letters, written

about that time, by Mr. Joseph Davis, in England ; and

a church letter from a Sabbatarian church in East Smith-

field, London: together with lengthy memorandums

and letters, written by Mr. Samuel Hubbard of New-

port, relative to the affairs in church and state, about the

time of the establishment of the first seventh^ay Baptist

church in America: but as most of them relate to the lov-

ing exhortations, cautions and advice, mutually given to

each other in their correspondence ; as also, their reso-

lutions, and feelings of their minds ; together with ac-

counts of their sufferings and persecutions from other

denominations of christians in power, (which no doubt

are true, yet I think had better be forgotten— as it dis-

graces the christian name, and it is hoped the like will

never take place again) I think it inexpedient to pub-

lish them' : — hoping to fill the limits of this book with

matters I conceive of more real advantage to the peace

of society, the cause of God, and the souls of men.

It is quite observable, and the candid and judicious of

all denominations of christians will notice it, that pure

religion ever has been liable to suffer from two main

sources ; viz. the pride, power, and wisdom of man ;—

and from the ignorance, superstition, and enthusiasm of

man.— -No doubt the devil may assist both, all in his

power.— The first is manifest by over-rating human lite-

rature ; the other by under valuing it : the first, gain on

the passions of the young, the wealthy, and best inform-

ed ; the latter, on the poor, decripid, and aged that are

iljiterate— And, on close Inspection^, we may see that

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both have nearly one and the same fountain to rise from,

even an evil, deceitful, carnal, selfish mind, that is not

subject to the law of God ; for where either have ob-

tained numbers and power, they have, generally, perse-

cuted their opponents. Witness, the bible account, and

all ecclesiastical history. What a blessing it is, there-

fore, that God, in his word of divine Revelation, has

made'plain the duty and privileges of man, in the various

concerns of life ; that we might have a pole-star to steer

by — even his law and gospel ; which appear as insepa-

rably connected together, to exhibit the character of

God, and the accountability of man, — as tlie soul and

body of man, to make a living creature. But if we

leave that standard of divine truth, and follow our own

Tain conceit, or man's pretended revelation, when oppo-

sed to God's written word ; alas, where shall we come

out!

When we contemplate the causes of divisions in the

church, generally, since the apostles' days, we find that

the dissenters have alledged, as justification, either some

new revelation, or some corruption in doctrines or man-

ners, of the bible doctrines ; some additions, or neglect

of due observations of divine commands or institutions s

and (excepting the name of God, and of Jesus Christ)

what cause can be less justifiable, than a wilful breach

of God's positive law ; which, like himself, is immuta-

ble in its nature— For by the same rule that we may dis-

pense with one precept, we may with all of them.

I see not but that the Sabbatarians have as fair ground

for pleading justification in their separation from the

other Baptists, as any sect extant can have. Let us see :

The church ©f Rome claims immediate descent from

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Hie apostles, and the succession in the ministry ; as also

jurisdiction over all christian churches, to make laws

for their faith, manners, &c.\*— and she brands dissenters

from her, as hereticks ; and has often pei\*secuted such

\vith fire and sword, in order to reclaim them, or extir-

pate them from off the earth.— But this she could not

have done, if it had not been for connecting church pow-

er with secular foixe, and assuming all polver on earth.

Martin Luther, being assisted by several powerful prin-»

CCS, separates fixjm the Romish church ; and, in justifi-

cation, protests against a number of her corruptions in

Joctrines, practice, power, Sec.\*?— But how many errors

did he still bring out with him and retain ! A Protest-

ant church and churches, are soon established ; and in

many countries by law too i and one thing they appear

generally to be agreed in ; viz.— to call the JRomish

church Babylon^ the Mother of harlots^ &c. But let u»

remember, that God does not always call things by the

same name that man docs. The Puritans, Presbyteri-

^ ans and Congre gationalists, separate on account of er-

. rors in Episcopal, or Church government ; and they, it

1 seems, must have civil law to support their sentiments :

and where that is the case, I know of no instan<?e,.where-

in some degree of persecution has not been apparent.

'^ But if Luther was gospelly or legally qualified to ad-

1 ' minister the ordinances, and to ordain elders, presbyters

\\ or bishops ; and those that dissented from him down to

A J the Puritans in North America, were also legally autho-

\* '\* rised in the ministry, (of which I have no doubt) surely

Mr. Williams was regularly ordwned and baptized ac-

. cording to their order ; and was as cq>able to adminis-p

J ter and ordain, as any other presbyter or bishop. His

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being baptized by immersion, by a lay-man— or even if

he had plunged himself ^ could not invalidate his infant

baptism : and if he ever was qualified in a gospel or Ic-

^al manner to baptizei— surely he still retained such

qualification, and had an undoubted right to baptize oth«

ers by way of plunging or immersion ;— -as all agree

that such was the mode practised by John on our Sav-

iour, the apostles, &c. As he was banished by his breth-

i^n, not for any immorality, but merely for his religious

sentiments, it could not Effect his gospel authority, at

least any more than Luther's ; or than those that came

off from him, were affected by the pope's anathemas &c.

So then, the Baptists can demonstrate as regular suc-

cession in the ministry, as to ordination and baptism, e-

ven from the apostles\* days, as any Protestant church or

sect whatever. And it may seem as strange, for an es-

tablished Sabbatarian to get along with, or fellowship,

externally, a first-day member of the other Baptist order,

as it is for them to fellowship the Pedobaptist ; or for a-

ny to fellowship those that hold the doctrine of Tran-

substantiation, &c. or fellowship the church of Rome in

many of her errors.

Man cannot possess, enjoy, and practise truth, without

being sincere ; but sincerity does not make truth— as

truth is a property, and constituting attribute of God.—

Now if sincerity is to be the criterion of christians\* ex-

ternal fellowship, where shall we put the period ;— for

charity may admit, at least, some of the Romish church,

and even the Mahometans^ to be as sincere, in their way

as any other people.

Whether the alledgcd cause of separation^ will be

justifiable at the bar of God, is a matter that each sect

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of christians, in my opinion, is responsible for— But as I

purpose, if the Lord pleases, to say more on this subject

in another part of this work, I shall pass over it at pres-

ent.

Where the Sabbatarians in England came from,

or who was their founder, or whether Mr. Stephen Mum-

ford was an ordained minister of that order, when he

first came over, are questions I am not authorised to

solve vnih. certainty. By way of summary, we find that

the Baptists in America, sepamted from the Pcdobap-

tists, principally, on account of the candidates of bap-

tism, and the mode of performing it. About the year

1644, they had formed a regular gospel church, and the

Sabbatarians or Seventh-day Baptists separated from

them, chiefly, on account of the Seventh-day Sabbath^

and became a regular gospel church in the year 1671 —

first composed of seven members ; viz. William His-

cox, their elder, and Stephen Mumford, Samuel Hub-

bard, Roger Baster, and three Sisters.

But let none despise the few in number, since we read

in the good book, that " many go in at the wide gate aiid

broad way which leadeth to destruction, when but few

find the straight gate and narrow way to life." It Is

somewhat difficult, for want' of authentic records, to as-

certain whether those seven members that entered into

covenant, as above stated, all lived in Newport, (R. I.)

at the time of said separation, or elsewhere. However,

it is evident from the accounts of Mr. Backus and Mr.

Hubbard, and from church memorandum, &c, that all

the Seventh-day Baptists in America were considered

as forming but one distinct church, until the year 1700.

Their principal places of residence were Newport, and

Westerly (now called), Hopkiuton and New London.

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Mr. Hubbard wrote to his friend in Jamaica, 1678, and

says, " Our numbers here, are 20 ; at Westerly, 7 ; and

at New London, 10."— JSac^w\*. It also appears, by Mr.

Hubbard's Diary, that several members came off from

Mr. Clarke's church, as also new converts joined them

before 1678— And it is clear, both by the records of New-

port church, and by that of Westerly, or Hopkinton^ that

several ordained ministers resided at these different pla-

ces, that were considered as belonging to that one churqh

both previous to, and even after the amicable dismission

of those brethren at Westerly, from their Sabbatarian

brethren at Newport, in the year 1708— And in our ac-

count of the several churches, of this order, from the

time of their organization to the present day, I shall

consider Newport (R. I.) church as the oldest church of

the Sabbatarian ordery and as the third Baptist church in

America.

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NEWPORT (R. I.) CHURCH

WAS constituted or organized, by Mr. Hubbard's ac-

count in October, 1671. First number, seven members\*

Their first pastor was William Hiscox-»He died, May

24th, 1704, in the 66th year of his age. Their second

elder was William Gibson, from London. Whether Mr\*

Gibson received his ordination at London, or in Ameri-

ca, is not ascertained.— He died, March 12, 1717, Mu 79.

Their next, or third elder, appears to be Joseph Cran-

dall, who was ordained. May 8, 1715, and was a coll-

eague with elder Gibson for two years, and then took

the lead in said church.— He died, Sept. 13, 1737.

It appears, by the church records of Hopkinton, that

Joseph Maxson was chosen to the ofi^ce of an evangelist

or travelling preacher, at Westerly, the 1 7th of Septem-

ber, 1732 ; and also, by a vote of the church at Newport.

He was ordained at Newport, Oct. 8, 17S2, to serve both

churches— -and died, Sept. 1748, in the 78th year of his

age. And, it appears, that Thomas Hiscox was also or-

dained at Newport, by the joint vote of both churches,

as iei travelling preacher, at the same time elder Joseph

Maxson was ; and that elder Hiscox took the lead in the

church at Westerly, 1750; and that elder Hiscox died,

May 20, 1773, JEt. 77.

There was also, one or two elders, by the name of

Peckham, who officiated as ministers in the Sabbatarian

order, about this time : but I find no regular account of

what church they belonged to, or when they died« One

of them I well remember, when I was young.

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^ n

Elder John Maxson was their next pastor, from the

year 1754, until his death, March 2, 1778. I well re-

member elder Maxson, of this church, to be a man much

esteemed by all, as a pious, godly man, and an able prea«

cher.

Mr. Ebenezer David, who was converted in Provi-

dence College and took his first degree there 1772, was

admitted a member of this church, Sept. 12, 1770, and

called by the church, to the improvement of his gift,

Sept. 19, 177« ; and he was ordained. May 31, 1775. He

being a young man, and our churches then supplied with

preachers, he accepted the place of chaplain in the A-

merican army ; where he was much esteemed — He died

in the army, near Philadelphia, March 19, 1778, in the

bloom of his days.

I was well acquainted with Mr. David ; and may safe-

ly say, that few young men can be found, more promis-

ing than he was.

The church at Newport, about this dme, experienced

very heavy afflictions.— Their pastor's death— about the

same time this youth died.— As the seat of war was there

their deacon, Mr. Tanner, a man much esteemed, with

Col. Bennet and a number of their principal members,

left the Island to be more secure from the< British, and

moved into different parts of the country, for refuge.—

None but those who have experienced the like, can sym-

pathize with them.

William Bliss (with whom I was intimately acquaint-

ed, as also his brother Henry Bliss, who was afterwards

a Judge in the state ; both, in their younger years, were

much inclined to Deism, but afterwards were substantial'

members of this church) was their next pastor. He

was admitted a member of this church, June 21, 1764,

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and called to the work of the ministry, Oct. 30, 1773,

and was ordained an evangelist, at Hopkinton, Dec. 7,

1779, and was installed the pastor of this church, Dec.

25, 1780. He continued their pastor until hrs death,

May 4, 1808, ^t. 81 years. He was a man of solid pie-

ty? judgment and information — had a large library of

useful books, and made a good use of reading ; while he

much esteemed the soul-reviving influence of the spirit^

when corresponding with the written word. He careful-

ly avoided enthusiastic and superstitious notions ; and as^

a friend, in private conversation, I scarce ever knew his

equal. Mr. Backus, speaking of him, ia his history, says

<\* he was so well esteemed by the Congregational minis-

ters, that he was frequently called upon ta supply theic

place in their absence.\*' And I may add, it was also the

case with nearly all other denominations, as he was uni-

versally esteenied as a good preacher.

Arnold Bliss, son of the Elder, was admitted a mem-

ber of this church, July 22, 1786. He settled near Bed-

ford, (Mass.) and being zealous in the cause of religion,,

made improvement of his talents, and received ministe-

rial ordination, Feb. 22, 1803, by his father, Elder Bliss,,

and Elder Abraham Coon, Hopkinton, and still continues

his labours thereabouts. I expect he has a stated meet^

ing on the Sabbath, but what. numbers attend, is not as-

certained, as I have no account of late from them.

Henry Burdick, was admitted a member of this church

Jan. 30, 1802, and was called to the improvement of his

gift, Jan. 11, 1807, and received ministerial ordination,

Dec. 10, 1807, by Elders, William Bliss, Abram Coon,

and Arnold Bliss. He still continues their ministet\* — ar

jious, promising young man. Their present number,

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according to their church records, sent me, dated Dec,

1, 1809, is 87,

I do not learn that this church has any church cove-

nant, or articles of faith, or discipline, other than the

scripture. As I know of no material difference in the

doctrines of all the churches of this order, they will

come more immediately under the head of our general

observations on Tenets, &c.

Mr. Backus, speaking of this church in his History,

observes : Mr. Thomas.Ward, Esq. was a Baptist be-

fore he came out of Cromwell's army, and was early a

member of this church ; whose son, Richard Ward, was

governor of the state (or then, colony) in the years

1741 and 1742 ; and that his son, Samuel Ward, was

governor in the years 1762 and i765, and a member in

Congress in the years 1774 and 1775, where he died.—-

Both of them were members of this church.— [vo/. 3,

fiage 234.]

I was well acquainted with Gov. Samuel Ward and all

his family ; having boarded at his house while a boy, and

went to school\*— and think Mr, Backus is correct.

This church, previous to the Revolutionary war, had

a number of members, respectable for their talents, lear-

ning and abilities, and in eminent stations in the public

affairs of state. But the war scattered them, and death

has finally deprived her of them, for this church has not

yet recovered the splendour it had before the war. Not-

withstanding the long and fervent labours of Eld. Bliss,

there has been but small additions^ and no remarkable

revivals, since the troubles of the war. The family of

Eld. Bliss, like many others is much scattered, in differ-

ent states of the Union. Perhaps he has been long sdw-

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log the seed of the word^ for others to reap the fruits of

his labours.

And possibly, it may be owing to the spirit of infideli-

ty, that has appeared to gain so much in America, gene\*>

rally since the war : as it may be remarked both from

scripture and history, that those nations and cities, where

the glorious display of God's divine Revelation; an4

where eminent and numerous churches have been ded-

icated to the true God ; and where the gospel has had

great success-— are now very generally over-run with

Paganism, Mahometanism, or other false worship. And

if professed Christians, will neglect divine Revelation,

and introduce their imaginations, or will worship in place

of God's sacred truth ; may we not well expect, God

will leave them to believe a lie ■ » ■ ■ and so the dissolU'

tion of all thingS) or the end, of the worlds come when

they are not looking for such things. Such seems to

have been the case in the old world, before the deluge ;

as also when the blessed Saviour first came : and when

he comes again, shall he find true faith on the earth, all

will have their gospel day; and if they know not the

things that belong to their peace^ it may finally be hid

from their eyes.

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HOPKINTON (R. t) CHURCH.

IT is to be oHserved. that this church and the church

at Newport, were considered as but one church until the

year 1708, I shall, therefore, from the most correct ac-

count I have obtained, consider them to be regularly

constituted a distinct church, in sister relation with the

Sabbatarian church at Newport, in said year 1708 ; and

that elder John Maxson was their first minister, who

was ordained, Sept. 20, 1708. He died, Dec. 17, 1720,

in the 82d year of his age.

Elder Joseph ClarkCi jr. was ordsuned, Oct. 21,1712,

and died June 5, 1719. Elder John Maxson, jr. was or-

dained, July 5, 1719, and died July, 1747, in the 8 1st year

of his age. It appears, their numbers at this time were

172, aad not under hands, 34.^ Laying on of hands, is

practised generally, singing, in public worship j it is

commonly, and almost constantly practised.

Joseph Maxson, (as was related under the Newport

church) took the lead in this church, June 2S, 1733. —

Thomas Hiscox (who was baptized in i706, and fifteenth

year of his age) was chosen to the place of an evangel-

ist or travelling minister, at Westerly, June 23, 17 19.-^

And again the choice was renewed Sept. 17, 1732, and

referred to the church at Newport, who voted his ordi-

nation, Oct. 1st, and he was there ordained, Oct. 8, 1732

(as related under Newport church) and took the lead in

this church, Oct. 7, 1750. He died May 20, 1773, in the

77th year of his age. I remember him well. He was

called a man of gi^eat abilities as a preacher j and very^

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universally esteemed as a godly, able minister of the

gospel. I understand he sometimes made use of notes

in preaching.

Deacon Thomas Clarke, was chosen assistant elder,

Oct. 2, 1750, and died Nov. 20, 1767, aged 82 year. He

was a very worthy, pious man.

Joshua Clarke (his son) was called by the church to

the ofiice of an elder, April 10, 1767, and accepted the

call April 20 1768, and was ordained in May 1768. He

died March 8, 1793, in the 77th year of his age. It is

justly due to his memory, that in his earlier years, he

sustained several important offices in the town, and was

for a number of years a member of the Legislature of

the state ; as also a member of the corporation of the

college at Providence ; and while he was their minister,

the church had large additions to their numbers, and

were as united and orderly, as at any period of time.— -

He travelled many journeys, on church business. Sec. "

John Davis was called to the work of the ministry,,

Feb. 19, 1771, and ordained April 10, 1772. He after-

wards remaved to Bristol in the state of Connecticut,

?ind became the pastor of the church there, as will be

stated in itSi proper place.

Deacon John Burdick of this church, was chosen to

the oiTice of an elder, Dec. 22, 1772, and ordained, June

1774, and Sept 3, 1793 he was installed the pastor of

this cliurch, and continued his useful labours until his

death, Feb- ?8, 180^. I was very intimately acquainted

with him ; and it may truly be said, he was a pious, fer-

vent, faithful eloquent and argumentative preacher of

the gospel. This church had very great additions {I

think over J200 men^bers in one year) and prosperity un-

der his ministry. As a citizen, he was universally res-

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pected, and as a pastor to dilcipline the clvurch. If he

bad any failing, it was in bearing or forbearing too much.

He was incessant in his gospel labours, travelled much,

and assisted in organizing several churches, has visited

thisfplace once, and several times at Petersburgh in this

state, and in the Jerseys, and elsewhere. But whether

his flock has remunerated his services according to gos-

pel requirement, is for them to judge. He died in the

70th year of his age. He preached much among other

denominations, and I am ready to think, that if there

was any woe against him, it must be because all spoke

^ well of him. ^

I find by the church records of Hopkinton, that in

June 25, 1746, one John Davis was ordained at Wester-

ly by request of the brethren at Shrewsbury, East New-

Jersey ; and I have seen, and heard preach several times,

elder Jacob Davis — I expect of this church since the

late American war; and I understand, that church since

I saw elder Jacob Davis, generally removed into the re-

mote parts of the state of Virginia, where Eld. Davis

died. But what has become of that church, I am not a-

ble to ascertain with precision : as I have no correct ac-

count of them, I shall not give them a place distinctly

in this narrative.

Ebenezer David and William Bliss were ordained in

this church, as stated under Newport church. William

Coon was ordained at Hopkinton in this church May 20,

1 7S^, and afterwards took charge of the church at Pe-

tersburgh (or Berlin) as will be stated in its place.

Nathan Rogers was ordained at Hopkinton, by request

of the brethren at New-London \ieck, an evangelist,

March 12, 1786. He travelled much in several states of

the Union, preached some time in the church of Piscai-

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away, and in the year 17^9 commenced membership

with the church at Berlin, where he preached occasi^jn-

ally, and died June 30, 1806. He was a pious, exempla-

ry man, and of irrcproacliable character.

Deacon Henry Clarke and deacon Asa Coon, were

both ordained evangelists at Hopkinton, Sept 3, 17^3,

of which we shall say more in the proper place.

Elder Abraham Coon, their present leader, was cho-

sen by the church to the office of evangelist Aug. 17,

1798, accepted the call on the 24th, and was ordained on.

the 26th of the same month—- The charge given by the

Rev. William Bliss of Newport, and by vote of thi»

church, took the lead, March 23, 1802. He is a preach-

er very universally admired for soundness of ideas, and

for eloquence of delivery, as well as for force of argu-

ment. He preaches abundantly among different denom-

inations, to their great satisfaction ; and his worth as a

leader in discipline is manifest, in that he has uniformly

been chosen moderator, in our general conferences for a

number of years,

Matthew Stillman was ordained an associate with him

in the work of the ministry June 3, 1 804, and is much

esteemed as an ablfe, eloquent preacher of the gospel.

Their total number, as by the last correct return dated

Sept 1809, was 765, of which 171 were absent in different

states of the Union.-— Their ofliceM were, Abram Cooa

and Matthew Stillman, elders, Joseph Stillman, Daniel

Babcock, ZacchQus Maxson, William Stillman, Wait

Clarke and Alpheus Burdick, deacons, and Joseph Pot-

ter and Zdccheus Maxson, clerks : they have, also, two

or three^pproved <)r licensed brethreni who preach oc-

casionally.

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It ma\*y not be improper to observe that in the first di-

visions of this state, the western part was incorporated

into a town by the najne of Westerly, which then com-

prehended the towns of Hopkinton, Charlcatown, &c.

that the Sabbatarians of this church live within the

bounds of those towns, generally, and towns adjacent;

but in Hopkinton is their main residence. There arc

in this town three meeting-houses, (one of them the lar-

gest of this denomination) where they meet statedly for

public worship ; and their records and discipline is kept

at two of th%m. Query— In case they could be mutual-

ly agreed, would it not be far more convenient, for the

pastoral care and for discipline, fqr them to become two

distinct churches in sister relation? But such has been

the affection of the people, together with the modesty,

-charity and prudence of their leaders, that they have nev-

er consented to a divisiqn ; and it remarkable, that for

more than one hundred years, there has never been any

material schism in this church. About sixty years ago,

there was some appearance of a schism ; when one Jo-

seph Davis was the means of drawing off some few

members, and formed a church that goes by the nam^s

of Separates, New;tights, free or open Communicants, or

Catholic Baptists, &c. — and it might be well for all to see

if in such conduct, enthusiasm, superstition, fanaticism,

sor a zeal, not according to knowledge, had influence,

rather than solid judgment and the word of God.

Notwithstanding the above mentioned schism, and the

numerous amicable dismissions from this church to

form others, the numbers of this church is yet the most

numerous of any church, I believe, on this continent ;

and in the bosom of this church, have been raised ma-

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so

ny respectable characters : and almost all the first prea-

chers of the northern churches of this sect, had their

rise and ordination in this church, as will be seen, ajid

the genius and abilities of several of their preachers,

have evidently been such, that could they have had the

privilege of a liberal education, no doubt would havd

been some of the brightest luminaries in the christian

world.

There are, also, now in this church, a number of dis-

tinguishable characters that fill eminent offices in the

states— Their deacon, Daniel Babcock, has been, for the

last three years, chosen an assistant with the governor

of the state, in the upper house of their Legislature ;-\*

as also other members of this community, often sit in

the Legislature of the state, as well as fill offices of trust

in the militia, town, &c. Some have shown their genius

by being some of the most expert and forward work>

men in the machinery of our Manufactories, and some

have obtained patents, from Congress, for their inveft-

tions, &c.

As a community, if they are not noted for scientific

literaJture, they may be for useful arts, and for steady ha-

bits of industry, husbandry, and orderly citizens. And

all will do well to remember, that perseverance and in>-

provcment arc necessary : as also subjection to orde^,

and to God's government, if we would be happy here in

a state of society, or hereafter meet the divine approba-

tion : Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and

doth it not, to him it is sin^

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PISCATAWAY CHURCH.

THE third (or rather the second distinct) Sabbatari-

aa church in America, was formed at Piscataway, Mid-

dlesex county, state of New-Jersey, by the following

circumstance :

In the year of our Lord 1700 or 1701, Edmund Dun-

ham, a leader in the first-day Baptist church of that

place, as I think, admonished Hezekiah Bonham for do-

ing servile labour on the first day of the week. Mr.

Bonham requested Mr. Dunham, to prore from scrip-

ture, that the first day of the week was holy, by divine

institution. This set Mr. Dunham on examining the

point ; the consequence was, his rejecting the first day

of the week, and embracing the seventh day of the week

as the holy Sabbath, and receiving the fourth command-

ment as moral and unchangeable.

In a short time seventeen sided with Mr. Dunham ;•—

and at length on the 19th day of August 1705, they chose

Edmond Dunham to be their elder and overseer, accor-

ding to the will of God, and sent him to Westerly (R. I.)

to be ordained by prayer and laying on of hands of their

elder, William Gibson, which was done the 8th day of

Sept. 1705. On the 29th day of December, 1706, they

chose Benjamin Martin to be their deacon ; who was or-

dained by prayer and laying on of hands of their elder,

Edmond Dunham.

In April 1707, they introduced and signed a special

church covenant, or articles of faith; discipline, kc. (but

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as those articles are not materially different from others

of this sect, and we may consider them under our gene-

ral remarks, shall wave them for the present) signed by

about twenty p^#om^. Ruling e]4ier«> and christian

rites, are also admitted into this church. Eld. Dunhani

continued their leader until his\* death, IVfarph 7, 1734, in

the 73d year of his age.

Mr. Dunham was an Englishman, and one of the first

settlers in Piscataway, as his name is on the town record

date 1681, he is well spoken of, apd is considered as the

father of this church, which included all the seventh-

day Baptists i^ tjiis stat^ for thirty years— taken from

thoir church records, sent me. It is thought to be too

voluminous for the limits of this book to mention all the

deacons' name^, and several other matters contained in

their account.

They met for public worship in private houses, until

the year 1736 ; then they built a meeting house on a lot

of one acre of land, the donation of Jonath^m Fitz Ran-

dolph.

In 1737, a number of the members of this church

were amicably dismissed to iorm a church ii> sister rela-

tion, at Cohansey, as will be noticed. Other members

since, from time to timie, have been dismissed, and re-

moved into the interior of our western country, and for-

med churches there.

Jonathan Dunham, son of the Rev. Edmond Dunham,

succeeded his father in the ministry. He was first cho-

sen and ordained a deacon, Nov. 1734, and preached as a

licentiate for some years ; and was ordained pastor of

this church in 1745. He continued their pastor until

March 11, 1777, when he died of the small pox, in the

86th year of his age^-— having sustained a good charac-

ter.

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^ About 1770, Jonathan Jarman came to this church,

a licentiate from Cohansey church; and in 1772, he was

ordained an assistant to elder Jonathan Dunham ; but he

went from this place, in 1776, to French Creek in the

state of Pennsylvania.

This church, after the death of Elder Dunham, was a

number of years without a pastor; but was visited oc\*

casionajly by preachers, and some ot the first-day Bap-

tists preached statedly with them once in two weeks, fof

several years. This church, also, had sore troubles a-

bout this time, by being near the seat of war, and in the

vicinity of the ravages of the British army.

But, about the 1st of June, 1786, elder Nathan Rogers

came here from New-London, and in the course of that

summer and autumn, there was a remarkable revival in

religion in those parts, and sixty members were added

to their church under his ministry. In October of this

year, elders William Bliss and John Burdick, from the

state of Rhodeisland, visited this church ; when elder

ElishaGillet was ordained an evangelist preacher, bf

them and said Eld. Rogers.

On Nov. 4, 1787, elder Nathan Rogers brought a let-

ter of dismission and commendation from the Sabbatari-

an church at New-London, (Connecticut) and gave him-

self, a member of this church, and took the over-sight

thereof.

In January, 1788, this church and society, became in-

corporated a body politic, according to the law of the

state, and chose their trustees.

In the year 1789, said Eld. G'llet moved to Oyster-

Pond on Long-island ; aiid in i79l, he with others were

organized into a church in sister relation, but he soon

proceeded to receive in, first-day aieijibers which Uivi-

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ded his church— and I believe that church is now nearly

extinct.

In 1795 this church received elder Henry M'Lafferty

as a preacher, on equal footing with Eld. Rogers : anci

in June 1797 Eld. Ro^^ers obtained a letter of commen-

dation, to travel and join any church of the same faitli

and order of this church, or to keep his standing. He

finally died at Petersburgh, as is stated under Hopkintoor

church.

In 1802 the society built anew meeting-house on the

lot where the old one stood, (where I met with our last

general Conference) and it is a neat, well-finished meet-

ing-house, with a gallery, &c.

Elder M^Lafferty continues their minister, and is quite

an entertaining preacher. About thirty-five members

have been added under his ministry. Gideon Wooden

is licentiated to preach with him, and is a promising

young man of irreproachable character.

The times appointed to administer the Lord's supper,

is quarterly. The sixth day before communion, is set

apart as a day of fasting and prayer. The first day in

every month is a church conference, to adjust the affairs

of the church; where all questions requiring a

vote, are decided by a majoriiy ; excepting choosing

church officers, which is done by casting lots, in case all

the church are not agreed in one. They are in the prac-

tice of of having ruling elders and assistant deacons.

Their church officers, as stated in their return dated

1809, stand thus: —

HENRY M^L\FFERTY, Elder and Pastor,

^ GIDEON WOODEN, Licentiate.

DAVID DUNN, 1

LEWIS TITSWORTH, & iDeacons.

PHINEHAS DUNN, J

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LEWIS TITSWORTH, &?,.,. j,,.

JONATHAN MARTIN, 5 ^"''"S: EWers.

JOEL DUNN, Clerk. Total Numbers, 65.

The situation of this community, is truly pleasant—

An excellent soil, of level, fertile land, in a high state of

<mltivation ; about thirty miles from the city of N. York.

As\* a people, they appear to be much more wealthy than

their northern brethren. This church has produced sev-

eral eminent characters, that have filled respectable sta-

tions in the state\*— and still has a number of worthy and

respectable members ; with whom I have had some ac-

<juaintance. They have been the most liberal patrons

of THIS WORK, of any church in the Union, according to

their numbers : And, with the divine blessing and their

conformity to union and order, they may be a long and

lasting blessing in society, and a faithful witness to the

truth of the Loixl\*a Sabbath, as well as a light of the

world, and as the salt of the earth. But as opposition to

God\*3 government, has been the source of all the evils

in this world ; so the want of union, concord and chari-

ty, as well as want of order, and subjection to govem-

menty has proven the overthrow of many Eminent chur-

«hes«

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COHANSRY CHURCH.

THIS church, it appears, by their information or

church records sent to me, was constituted March 27th

17 37 J by about 20 members ; part of which had remov-

ed from Piscataway church. Previous to their forming

a Sabbatarian church here, and as early as 1 695 elder

Jonathan Davis (I do not learn from what church) mo-

ved from Long-Island, (N. Y ) into the Jersey state, near

to Trenton, and preached thereabouts to the day of his

death, Tn 1750; but it is not stated that any church gath\*

cred near Trenton.

Elder Davis occasionally visited Cohansey, and his

brother's sons moved to Cohansey ; one of them, Jona«

than Davis by name, was a preacher, and a pripc'pal a»

gent in leathering this church, and became their first set-

tled minister. He was called to the ministry in the year

1732, and ordained their pastor Nov. 26, 1738, and con-

tinued to take the care of said church, until his dcath^

Feb 2, 1769, in the 60th year of his age.

Mr. Caleb Ayers had given them a deed of one acre

of land, dated March, 1738, situated in the township of

Hopewell, in Cumberland county, near the village of

Shiloh, in said state. On this lot is their meeting-house

and burial ground, where their elders have been buried,

and handsome tombs erected to their memory.

His successor in the ministry, was Jonathan Davis,

not of the other's family, but of Welsh extraction. He

was born at Newark in the state of Delaware, July 7th,

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1734. He was called to the work of the ministry, and

ordained in this churqh Nov. 13, 1768, and took the o-

versight of this church, at the decease of the other, and

continued in his office as their pastor, much esteemed

by the church, until his death, July 23, 1785, Mi. 52. I

have heard him preach at Hopkinton, and he was ac-

counted a very able preacher, of a solemn deportment^

and unblemished character.

It appears that elder Jonathan Je'rman, wno was or-

dained at Piscataway, as stated under Piscataway church,

preached here some time, and then moved to Cape May,

where he died in January, 1808, and was brought to this

place for interment.

Deacon Philip Ayars, also, preached in this\* church

about the time said Jarman died, and was considered a

leader in this church, and an administrator of baptism.

He died in December, 1789.

Elder Nathan Ayars was bom at Cohansey, and was

. ordained in this church, Nov. 13, 1786. He has been an

administrator in this church ever since, and is esteemed

a pious, good man. I heard him preach> last October,

at Piscataway.

In the year 1790, Jan. 8th, this church was incorpora-

ted as a body politic, according to the law of the state.

John Davis, youngest son of the late elder Jonathan

Davis, was bom in this place. He was called by this

church, to the work of the ministry, and was ordained,

Sept. 14, 1807. He is esteemed as a pious, promising

young man ; and is their principal administrator at pres-

ent. I also heard him preach, last October, likewise at

Hopkinton in the year 1808.

There have been several revivals in this church : the

principal one took place in 1807 & 1808, when about 70

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persons were added to this church. There are several

other members of this churchy who are liberated to ex-

hort, &c. not yet ordained.

The covenant articles of this church appear the same

as the Piscataway church articles ; and their method of

discipline much the same. This church still practise

laying on of hands, and admit of washing feet, &c. .

Their church ofHcers, and numbers, in October^ 1810,

stand thus : —

Elder JOHN DAVIS, Teacher,

Elder NATHAN AYARS, EvangeUst.

JOSHUA AYARS, S

CALEB SHEPHERD, & J- Ruling Elders.

EVAN DAVIS, J

SAMUEL DAVIS, ")

LEVI HALL, & I Deacons.

JEDEDIAH DAVIS, J

JACOB WEST, Clerk. ToUl Number, 170.

I learn they are situated in a fertile part of the statCi

and have many wealthy and respectable members, for

talents and abilities, in church and state.

In case religious societies have power, and those in of-

fice or power, only exercise that power agreeable to di-

vine appointment, and those out of power, know their

station, and subject themselves to order,— all ^may be

happy in their stations, in cultivating benevolence, peace

and harmony : Whereas, opposite conduct, produces

opposite effects.

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BURLINGTON (Con.) CHURCH

TV AS constituted a distinct church, in fellowship with

the other Sabbatarian Babtists churches, on the 1 8th day

of September, 1T80, by the Rev. John Burdick and dea-

con Elisba Stillman, of Rhode- Island. This place was

then called Farmingt(Mi West Britain. Their first num\*

ber was 19.

Elder John Davis, who was ordained at Hopkinton (as

has been stated) March 10, 1771, had settled with them

at this place, and took the lead in the church. Benja^

min West was their deacon, and Elisha Covy, was their

clerk.

This church had sore difficulties for a number of

years ; and it appears, few or ho additions for ten years.

Deacon West left them— and on the 29th of September

1783, Amos Burdick was ordained a deacon, by the Rev.

John Burdick and deacon Joseph Stillman, of Rhode-Isl-

and. On the 29th of May 1785, elder John Davis was

regularly installed their pastor ; and in- the course of

the next year, they had a remarkable revival, and nine-

teen souls added to their numbers. Such, seems to be

tlie blessing of God, on their subjecting to an orderly

method of church government.

On the 29th of August, 1792, elder John Davis de-

parted this life, in tlie 69th year of his age-— after a long

illness, which he bore with much patience and resigna-

tioa to the divine will.

I was well acquainted with Elder Davis.— He was a

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very pleasant man, a tender-hearted and affectionate

preacher, of sound doctrine — and unblemished charac-

ter.

After the death of Elder Davis, deacpn Amos Bur-

dick preached the ivord among them, until his death,

Maixh 25, 1803, aged 64 years. There was a considera-

ble revival, and nine were added to the church under

his ministry. He was a pious, well-disposed man, and

sustained a good character^ as a citizen^ and as a preach\*

er of the gospel.

Amos Stillman had lived in this vicinity, for some

time previous to deacon Burdick's death, and vras an

approved preacher of the gospel, and preached with

deacon Burdick statedly for some time. After deacon

Burdick's decease, he took the lead in worship ; and on

January 27, 1 805, he was ordained as an evangelist, by-

elder Abram Coon and Matthew Stillman of Rhode-Isl-

and.

Ethan Stillman was also ordained a deacon among

them, Sept. Tj 1806.

In the fall of 1806, there was a revival in religion,

great love, and union in this church— -and i 6 were added

to their numbers.

Elder Amos Stillman, (with whom I was indmately

acquainted, from his youth) considering his education,

and the embrrassments of his worldly concerns, was '

quite an able preacher of the gospel, of sound doctrines^

bright ideas. Sec. He was very universally esteemed as a

preacher, at home and abroad. In the fall of the year

1 807, he went to our general Conference at Cohansey

(N. J.) where he presided in Conference, and preached

to great satisfaction. But, on his return home, he took

the yellow -fever, of which he died Oct. 7, 1807, in the

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45 th year of his age— lamented by all his acquaintance ;

and greatly to the loss of this church, as they have had

no stated preaching, weekly, among them since his de-

cease.

Their number, as stated in their return to general

Conference 1809, was 45.

Deacon Ethan Stillman, and their clerk, Elisha Covy,

are still living : and, I learn, the late deacon Burdick

has left a son, a member of this church, who has made

some public attempts to preach or exhort^ to general

satisfaction\*— And tliey have some other respectable

members yet among them. But why they remain with-

out a stated preacher, so long, is a question that might

seriously concern them ; and which is for them to an-

swer.

As man is formed for society, and as his Maker has

instituted social, public worship, as a means to cement

and perpetuate society, as well as to serve to declare

the glory of God on earth ; and has given the Sabbath,

and commanded the people to convene on that day as au

holy convocation, [see Levit. xxiii. 3.] — so it is evident,

that where people neglect the 'attendance of public wor-

ship, society declines\*— the youth contract vain habits—\*

break their sabbath, &c.— •and in an ordinary way, socie-^

ty becomes extinct, with regard to religion, or religious

worship. Therefore, parents should well consider their

accountability to God, and the consequences of not hav-

ing a meeting for thieir families to go to ; and not let pre-

judices or party animosities, or non-essential ideas, or an

illiberal heart or practice, to prevent so useful and com-

fortable a practice\*

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Surely, God is ready to bless his people, if they per\*

form their duty ;— but we are not to expect Miracles fix

the ordinary government of Divine Providence.— And

OS God gives gifts to men ; so, no doubt, there may be

preachers to supply all vacancies, if there is sufficient

encouragement for their support. There is a consist\*

cncy, propriety, and order, in the system of religion^ or

it will do mankind no real good\*

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BERLIN CHURCH.

THEsitufttion of thi& church, is in the north^eastetlf

parts of the &tate of New-YoTk> ailjaimng Mussachsctt\*,

fiU a place first called Little Hoosack ia the hill country.

The members of this church, principally reside in th«

towns of Petersburg, Berlin, and StephenDoivn. They

liave a decent meeting-house ia. fterlin^ where tiieir dist-

cipUne is held ; and a sxnaH but >iv«tH>finbhed meeting-

liouse in S;^hentown, where a stated nseettng is held

on the Sabbath.

Previous to the Anserieon Reirolution> anumhier of the

9^mbers of tike church or churches, of the Sahbabu\*^

m^a ixk Rhodie-tslfmdt kftd remfiveA here, and became

9pmG of ^ ft^st seulevs of this pai^ ef thft st^»i a-

Udong' whom w^re the families of the, Qoeenmans,. Cran-

^Isf Greenjs. Comis, Randalls, &e.

Abo:ut theyeac 17\*0^ elder John Burdiek, with Wil-

liam CQon> from Hopkinton, viMted them^ and arranged

th^m intdi a church, William Gojen was an apiproved

prQacher about this timis, and was regularly ordained, at

iiopkinton. May Si^th 17#3,. and took the lead in said

church (their then numbers about I'Sj) Aug^ r, I783t^

and w^sfr80:ble^t in his labours that,.dQring his mitiistry,

th^e; was added tio this phurch near l&f members H^

4Ue<^ of a cancer on im neck, Jan>. 13, l^l:, in the 5#tti

y^^ar of his age.

I was acquainted with Elder CjKA.from my youth, bo-

Amg bom in th& Ufei^hourh^od with him\* He waft an a«

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blC) impre88ive» a4\*gumeiitativ6 preacher af the gospel

as, perhapSf this denommaticm ever had. He was much

called to preach among other sects, and ver^r universally^

approved of— ^9 a leader in discipline^ he has few e«

quals—- and in him this church lost a faithful and mocH

esteemed leader. In hi» last, and extreme illness, he-

bore it with the utmost fortitude and patience, and re«

signation to the Divine will ; and\* died entirely compoa\*

ed in his mind, and universally lamented.

Mr. Van Rensselaer, the late deputy governor of tMd

state, who owned the patent where Elder Coon lrvcd,-set

so much by his worth, as to give him a clear deed of the

farm where he lived f as also, considerable towards

building their meeting-house.

His successor in the ministry, was bis nephew, Asa

Coon, ordained at Hopkinton (as has been stated) Sept\*

S, 1793, and at the request of this church, removed here

in June 180t, and took the lead in this church JutyS^

180l.-^But €rod, who is wise in council, saw fit to cut

his work shorts— as he died, of a fever, Oct» 22, 1S61, in

the 45th year of his age^ much lamented by all his ac«

quaintance — and especially by me, who was his intimate

associate both in youth and in the ministry. He ivas u-

niversally esteemed as a faithful, able, eloquent i^each-»

er of the gospel, and of correct ideas, as also of an ud-.

blemished chu^acter, as a good citizen.

William Satterlee joined this church in the year 1799,

and received ordination as an evangelist elder Jan. 13th

1805, by the Rev. Abram Coon and Eld. Matthew Still-

man, in the 37th year of his age, and immediately took

the lead in this church.

There were some members joined this church after

Elder Coon\*s death, previous to Elder Satterlee's taking

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the lead : But since his ministry (as by their records)

there have been added to this church, 160 fnembers.— -

Such has been the blessing of God on the labours of this

many who continues their present leader. He is also es-

teemed an able, eloquent preacher of the gospel— of

sound doctrines and morals, and well accepted by all de-

nominations. And, altho\* he has an impediment in his

speech, and has had but an ordinary education, yet few

men can demonstrate the main points of the christiaQ

religion, with equal clearness and impression.

Their present number, as by their statement sent me

the present ^nonth, is 335. Their officers are,

Elder WILLIAM SATTERLEE, Minister,

JOHN GREEN, 1

JABEZ BURDICK, & vDeacons.

JAMES GREENMANj

JOHN WHITFORD, Clerk.

Deaooiti Greenman preaches occasionally. Deacon

Green has been a member in this state legislature. They

hare other members who have filled various offices in

their towns^ counties, &c. They have a nxmiber of tes\*

pectable characters now in this church.

I understand this church have covenant articles rela\*

tive to discipline } bat no articles of faith oth^r than the

bible.

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WATERFORD CHURCH.

THE Sabbatarian church at Waterford (formerly cal-

led New-London Neck) in Connecticut, was formed prin-

cipally by removals from Hopkinton, together with seve-

ral families of the Rogerses, residents of this place, who

sent request to their brethren at Hopkinton, June 28tb)

1784, to be organized a church in sister relation.

Their request being granted in October of the same

year, they called a meeting Nov. 1 1, 1784, and became a

church, composed of about 1 6 members ; and Davis Ro-

gers, one of them, was chosen tor their elder, and was

ordained by the Rev. Joshua Clarke and Eld. John Bur-

dick, of Hopkinton, November 6, 1785, and took the

chai^ge of this church. William Wescot, a worthy

member, was ordained a deacon, at the same time.

J^be^ Beebe, jr. a worthy and faithful servant of Je-

sus Christ, in the ministry, was also ordained an evan-

gelist, Feb. 14, 1 796-— And Ephrium Rogers, a pious and

exemplary member, was ordained a deacon, the same

time.

Elder Davis Rogers, contemplating a removal into the

state of New- York, requested a dismission from the pas-

toral services of this church, but still to retain his mem-

bership : and Elder Jabez Beebe, with the approbation

of the church, received the pastoi'al charge — delivered

unto him by elder Davis Rogers, May 19, 1804— and re-

mains their pastor, and is esteemed by many, to be a ve-

ry able preacher of the gospel.

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Elder Rogers, is now living in the County of Che-

nango, (N. Y.) where there is a number of this or-

der, and a stated meeting kept up. He, also, is much

esteemed as a pious, able preacher.

I do not learn that this church has any covenant arti-

cles other than the bible.

Their present number is stated to be 46«— iall native

citizens of the United States.

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BROOKHELD CHURCH.

THIS church was constituted in the year 1797. Sev\*

eral of the members of the church at HopkintoH} hav-

ing previously purchased lands of this state, in the 19th

township of the Governor's Purchase, so called, began

settlements thereon, as early as 1 79 1 .

In May, 1795, Henry Clarke, who was one of said

purchasers, removed his family to his lot, where he now

lives— All was a wilderness, in its native state, when

first purchased at 50 cents per acre.«~He had received

ordination as an evangelist, at Hopkinton, as stated, in

the year 1793, by the Rev. William Bliss, John Burdick,

and William Coon. On his moving here, by the bles-

sing of God, and the consent of the people, he attended

a stated meeting, on the Seventh day, with his brethren ;

and often among other denominations— where he met

ijirith kind reception, and handsome offers.

In July 1/97, those Sabbatarian mfembers, having re-

ceived the advice and approbation of the churches to

which they belonged, entered into a solemn covenant

with God and each other, to keep the Commandments of

God and the faith of our Lord Jesus Qhrist, by maintain-

ing the public worship of God, and watching over each

other for mutual good, and bearing burdens, Sec. as may

be seen by their covenant articles of this date on re-

cord.

They also sent request to Hopkinton church, Berlin

Church, &c. for assistance of their elders, to organize

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them a distinct church, in sister relation and fellowship

mih those other Sabbatarian churches. Accordingly

they met at the school house ia said Brookfield, on the

3d day of October, 1797— .And as the constituting of this

church, was transacted tinder the superin tendance of

that worthy and eminent servant of the Lord, elder John

Burdick, I think proper to insert, substantially, the whole

proceedings as is on our church records.—

Present at said meeting, Rev. John Burdick pastor,

and Asa Coon evangelist, from the church at Hopkinton,

^R I.) and deacon William Greenman, and brother Na-

than Greenman, from the church at Berlin, (N. Y.) to-

gether witfi 13 brethren and 7 sisters, of this place ; who

chfose elder Henry Clarke and brother Joshua Maxson

to represent this society in council with said elders and

brethren. They then appointed elder John Burdick mo-

4erator, and Nathan Greenman clerk. And after

examining the covenant of said brethren and sisters

in this place, and finding them mutually agreed in faith

and gospel order—

WE, the representatives from the churches to which

we severally belong, in council with our said brethren

aforesaid, Do give unto them the right hand of fellow-

ship ; acknowledging them to be a distinct gospel

church, in fellowship with us, and the churches in our

fellowship — duly qualified to act for themselves, in choo-

sing their necessary officers for carrying on gospel' ad-

ministration, and gospel discipline.

And after taking the voice of said church individual-

ly, they all made choice of Henry Clarke, to be their pas-

tor, and William Davis to be their deacon. Then ad-

journed to the lOthinst. Met according to adjournment

Oct. 10, 1797, and after converse 6n tlie subject of El-

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^er Clarke's call to the pastoral ofEce. His answer isy

After weighing in his mind the various circumstances

manifest in God's Providence, and in the church, togeth-

er with the feelings of his own mind, he accepts their

call, and consents to receive the pastoral charge, or

watch-care of this church. Reserving to the liberty of

his own mind, to attend to the calls of funerals, and oc-

casional visits to other churches ; and to relinquish his

said charge, in case he should deem it consistent with

the word of God, and the dictates of his own mind, and

that without censure.

Which was conceded to by the church.

The deacon also accepted their call to him as their

deacon.

They appointed first-day, the 1 6th inst. for the instal\*

ment of said pastor. Met agreeable to appointment, (a

large concourse of people) when elder Asa Coon prea-

ched the sermon, and elder John Burdick made the or-

dination prayer ; and with deacon William Greenman

and Joshua Maxson laid on hands, and gave the charge

in writing, and elder Coon gave the right hand of fellow-

ship, &c. The instalment, charge, &c. as following ;

WHEREAS, it hath pleased God to move upon the

hearts of the people of this church to call upon this our

beloved and reverend Brother to take upon him the pas-

toral office, as their rightful elder and overseer ; and him

to accept their call ; and at their Kcqucst and desire, and

in their name and behalf, we do set apart this our said

Brother hereby, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Do appoint and ordain this our said Brother, to be your

pastor and elder ; duly authorizing you to exercise eve-

ry branch of said office — by prayer and laying on of

hands. — Dear Brother and Elder, as it hath pleased God

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to move tipon the hearts of this church, to call upon you

to take the pastoral office and charge over them, and

you to accept their call, and take upon you the watch

and care of this people. And as you have for several

years been set apart to the sacred work of the ministry,

as an evangelist, whereby you have been cloathed with

authority as a minister of Christ, to administer the or-

dinances of the^ospel, holy baptism and laying on of

hands on believing and professing penitents, and to ad-

minister the Lord's Supper when called thereto among

those of the same faith and order of the gospel, and to

consummate marriage, when requested, according to

to law— as a servant of God, and the people, and an

elder of Christ's church, at the desire and request of

this church, and in their name— and in the name of

our Lord Jesus Christ-- 1 commit the pastoral care and

charge of this flock unto thee : charging thee before

Crod, the holy angels, and this assembly, first to take

heed to thyself — and to all the flock over the which tho

Holy Ghost hath made thee overseer — to feed the church

' of God which he hath purchased with his own blood —

you are to preach the word of God to them, and admin-

ister the mdinances of the gospel among them. Sec-

ondly, you are to keep up holy discipline in the church,

according to the rule of Christ in his word, and to do all

things without partiality— -to reprove, rebuke, and ex-

hort, with all long suff\*erin^ and doctrine.\*— With gospel

authority, you are to feed them with knowledge and un-

derstanding, and study to shew thyself approved unto

God— a workman thatneedeth not to be ashamed, right-

ly dividing the word of truth, and not shun to declare

the whole counsel of God to them— and to watch for

their souls, as one tliat must give an account— you are to

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visit your flock occasionally, to know their state, and

warn the unruly, and comfort the feeble-minded, and

support the weak, and be patient towards all^ — and see

that nbne render evil for evil— and to be an example, ta .

the flock in word, in charity, in faith and purity— watcU

thou in all things, make full proof of thy ministry— Be

thou faithful until death, and God will give thee a crown

of life— Which may he grant you for Christ's sake. A-

MEN.

Beloved and reverend Brother, you having been cal-

led and chosen by this church, to be their pastor and el-

der\*^! do, in the namq and behalf of this church, at

their desire as representative from the sister church to

which we belong, give unto thee the right hand of fel-

lowship, hereby acknowledging you to be their rightful

and lawful elder, and pastor, lawfully authorized to ex-

ercise every branch of your sacred office, as thou may-

est be called thereunto — And may the Lord give thee

wisdom and understanding in all things to do his will,

working in you, that which is well pleasing in his sight|.

through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory in all the chur-

ches forever.\*— AMEN.

Thus this church was organized in October, 1797, of

about 25 members, and they had considerable additions

to their numbers soon after ; and in the year 1 800 they

were incorporated according to law ; and have since

built a decent meeting-house, in said town, well finished

off, on a good large lot of land purchased by said church

and society. Their lots and buildings cost near 3000^

dollars.

They have had several revivals, in which there have

been added to this church about 1 10 new converts, which

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together with some from other churches, make their pre-

sent numbers 160 — some of which are a distance off in

the nfewer settlements of this state, &c.

There is in this comnMnity, sundry persons of res\*

pectable standing in public' concerns.

The ordinary affairs of the discipline in the church,

is conducted by a church council, which acts in the name

and behalf the church, and is composed of the elder,

deacons and clerk, for the time being, and of six reputa-

ble male members to be annually chosen for that pur-

pose, by the church at large, in their annual church-

meeting. But any member has liberty to attend the

meetings of the council, and to debate and vote, (if a

male) on any question that concerns the church, final

excommunication of any member, as also, rules for the

church is only transacted by the church at large, in their

annual church-meetings.

Their method of supporting their minister, is by a

permanent subscription; in which each member of

church or society, signs lor that purpose, what he is wil-

ling to pay annually, so long as he is a member and pri-

vileged with the labours of the minister— only, they have

a right to alter the sum in the month of January, yearly,

if they choose.

The expences of the communion table, and church

messengers, is made out by the church at their annual

church-meeting. The other expences of the church

and society, are paid by way of tax, assessed by three

judicious members ; and if any refuse to pay, they for-

feit their membership in said society.

Their present officers are, Henry Clarke, pastor —

Joshua Maxson &nd Phinehas Burdick, deacons —

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Abel Burdick, clerk — Charles Babcock, Wm. Bas-

set, Augustus Kinyon, Silas Spencer, James C. Bur-

dock, and Samuel Babcqcr, jr. church's council—^

Ethan Clarke, Abel Burj^ice:, Benjamin Cole-

grove, Joseph Clarke^ Saunders Langwortht, and

William Whitford, trustees — Saunders Langwor-

thy, Abel Burdick, and Wm. Whitford, assessors.

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DERUYTER (N. Y.) CHURCH.

A number of the Sabbatarian brethren and sisters

that had removed from the state of Rhode-Island, and

from Berlin, state of New- York, and settled at Deruy-

ter, Cazenovia, &c and making application to the Sabba-

tarian general Conference, held at Berlin in Sept. 1806,

for assistance to organize them a sister church, aiid to

ordain David Davis an cider.

Accordingly Conference appointed Elder Henry

Clarke and William Satterly, together with two deacons

and some other brethren, to visit them, and ii thought

expedient, to grant their request.

Said elders and brethren met at said Deruyter with

those brethren there on the 26th day of Sept. 1806 — and

finding them mutually agreed, proceeded to constitute

them a distinct church, in sister relation with the other

churches of the Sabbatarian order^-their numbers male

and female then being 23 — ^who chose David Davis to be

ordained as an evangelist, and to preach to them, •r to

have the lead among them. — ^Which was accordingly

done at the same time.

Elder David Davis is also esteemed a man of irre-

proachable character, and resides among them now. By

the last correct return, their number was 35.

I expect this church have articles of covenant, rela-

tive to their meetings^ £(c. but the bible is their standard

of faith.

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They arc situated in a good country, and have some

prospect of being a numerous church, if God shall bless

them, and they faithfully strive to serve God| and keep

the unity of the spirit in tlie bond of peace.

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VIRGINIA CHXJUCHES.

AT the Sabbatarian general Conference, held at Hop«

kinton (R. I.) Sept. 1808, there were letters, sent by el-

der John Davis, from two churches in that quarter ; one

from Lost Creek, Virginia, then composed of 23 mem-

bers, and the other in Salem, Virginia, composed of 38

members, and said Davis had the oversight of both of

said churches. Their deacon was Abel Bond, and their

clerk was Moses Huffman.

The distance of those churches is so great (although

they were admitted into the Sabbatarian Conference) that

I have had no correct information from them since. And

although I saw elder John Davis, and heard him preach

(who is esteemed by many as an able, entertaining prea-

cher) yet as I had then no knowledge of my writing this

History, I took no memorandum of the date of their or-

ganization, or from what people they originated. I ra-

ther conclude they formerly went from the state of New

Jersey. There was a letter from them at our last Con-

ference, in Oct. 1810. But as I took no minutes from it

then, and the Conference Minutes have not got to me

jet, I must omit giving further account of them.

There is a number of societies or sections of church\*

es, of this order, in several other places, as a church on

the West Fork of the Monongahela river, in the state

of Virginia, who also sent a letter to be admitted into

the Sabbatarian general Conference. But as they ad-

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initted communion with first-day members^ they were

not admitted into Conference.

I learn there is a society of this sect^ at Red Stone^ in

Virginia. And I hare heard something of one or two

other societies of this order in our South-Western Ter-

ritories, but am not able to give correct information a-

bout them.

There is a stated meeting kept up among a number of

this order, living in the vicinity of Rome, or Verona, in

the state of New -York ; and also at the town of Rod-

man, in the county of Jefferson : besides a number of

smaller branches, and scattering members, in different

parts of this state, and other states of the Union.

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RECAPITULATION.

BY recapitulating the numbers that observe the sey-

enth day of the week as the sabbath of the Lord our

God^ we find thus, as to total numbers ; viz. —

MEMBERS.

The Church of Newport, R. I. - - B7

The Church of Hopkinton, R. I. - - 765

The Church of Piscataway, N. J. - - 65

The Church of Cohan sey, N.J. . - 170

The Church of Burlington, Con. - - 45

The Church of Berlin, N. Y. ... 355

The Church of Waterford, Con. - - 46

The Church of Brookfield, N. Y. - - 160

The Church of Derwyter, N. Y. - - 35

The Church of Lost Creek, Va. - - 23

The Church of Salem, Va. - - - 38

Sum total in Fellowship - - 1769

Add to this, the families of members and o-

ther respectable families that are members of

society, or that observe that day, and attend that

meeting, as I conclude a fair computation

would be four to one of the professors,— which

will make ------ 707^

And as there is in other churches that hold to open

communion, and some that are more close in their com-

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munion, a large number of souls that observe the sev-

enth day of the week as the sabbath of the Lord, I

should think, from ray best information, that those with

their families, See. upon a modest calculation, will a-

mount to 6155 within the bounds of the United States;

\vhich will make the sum of FIFTEEN THOUSAND

SOULS, that observe the seventh-day sabbath, witliin

the limits of the United States of 'America — A number

too respectable to be despised by their fellow-citizens,

or to be oppressed or persecuted for their conscience

sake, by human laws.

As, by close investigation, it will be found, that more

useful citizens, as to support of government, defenders

of our nation, and subjection to the laws (where those

laws are not in opposition to the laws of God) as also,

peaceable and industrious, as well as enterprising—- can-

not be found among any other sect of christians or citi-

zens, according to their numbers , as will fUUy appear

by our General Observations.

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GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AS TO

TENETS AND MORALS.

AS this denomination universally hold the bible to

contain God's holy will revealed to man, wherein are ex-

hibited the objects of faith, and the rules of life ; and

that all doctrines of men, which are repugnant to that

sacred oracle of perfect and divine truth, is to be tried

by that sacred standard, and carefully avoided ; and as

the bible is explicit, to direct in every station of life, the

duty we owe to God, ourselves and our fellow-mortals-—

so they generally esteem, any prescriptions of man, in

those latter ages of the world, as to rules of faith and

morals, not only useless, but nearly presumptuous.

And notwithstanding they are harmoniously agreed in

the important, fundamental, and essential points, of the

Christian Religion ; yet as to smaller matters, and mere

circumstantial points, there may be a great variety of

sentiments. — Hence it is evident, that nearly all their

leaders and preachers, have some tenet, on some ab-

struse or doubtful point of divinity, peculiar to them-

selves.

And as to modern popular doctrines, they generally,

are between the Calvinist and Armenian ; as few are

willing to own that God governs by absolute fate, or that

he has ordained whatsoever comes to pass, by an immu-

table decree— or that he has elected a certain few to e-

ternal felicity, and the rest of mankind he has reproba-

ted, and consigned to eternal woe, without any regard to

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man's actions— So, on the other hand, I know of none

that hold, man can merit his own salvation, at the hand

of God, by his works — But rather, as a general idea,

they hold with the prophet Ezekiel, that God delighteth

not in the death of him that dieth, (or the wicked) but

that they turn and live : or with St. Paul, that God will

have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of

the truth, Sec.\*— In other words, that God deals with his

creature, man, as a rational being, that God has endow-

ed them with a degree of moral agency by which they

are accountable, as accountability is lost where agency is

denied, and that God has made provision in the gift of

his Son, for their happiness ; and gives them the free-

dom of volition and choice ; and that those who attend

to God\*s appointed ways, of faith and submission to his

will or laws, and continue therein faithful until death,

God will give such a crown of life. Whereas, the im-

penitent, unbelieving, immoral and rebellious, must take

their part in everlasting misery ; and that God will judge

all men according to their works—- to be more particu-

lar.

I conclude they all believe in one God, the Father and

Maker of all things, sin excepted, and in one Lord Je-

sus Christ, or that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and

also in the Holy Ghost, as the operative power or spirit

of God. But there are few if any, of this denomination,

as I conceive, who believe that the Father, Son, and Ho-

ly Ghost, are three absolute distinct persons, coequal,

cocssential, and coeternal Gods, and yet but one God ; as

such an idea would be in the face of scripture, and re-

pugnant to right reason.

Therefore, there is a variety of sentiments in this

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sect, in explaining the doctrine of the Trinity, so called:

as also that of Original Sin — Both which, perhaps, are

inexplicable by finite mortals ; as also the foreknowledge

of God— such things being reserved as secret, belong-

ing to God : And altho' many may attempt to explain

tliem, will still be obscure.

They all, also, hold the moral, or royaf, law of God, or

the Ten Precepts given to Moses by God at Mount Si-

nai, to be, like his own character, immutable ; or that as

God is perfect, his law is perfect ; and the only rule of

xMral actions for man to live by, or the only criterion to

define sin and right, and that mankind have gone out of

God\*s way, and merited God's displeasure, or are all

poor lost sinners, that by the deeds of the law no flesh

can be justified in his sight : that it is needful for man,

in order for his happiness, to have a due sense of the

purity of God's law, and their lost situation set home on

their consciences by the spirit of God, and for them to

repent and renounce their sins, as also any dependance

on their performances, and believe in the Lord Jesus

Christ, as the only name under heaven whereby they can

or must be saved : and so to apply to the Lord for mer-

cy until they find by happy experience, that he saveth

them by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of

the Holy Ghost — ^^vhereby they become new creatures:?

disposed in heart, lip and life, to walk in all the com-

mandments and ordinances of God; (not anew creature

to break God\*s commandments, like the old man which

is corrupt) consequenlty they believe in the seventh-day j

to be the Sabbath, of the Lord — and in water-baptism, by i

way of immersion, and, generally, in the laying on of I

handa, as also the resurrection of the dead and the etcr- ]

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nal judgment ; likewise in the sacrament of the Lord':?

Supper: and as to their faith or tenets, in a minute de-

tail as they hold to bible doctrines, much like other sects

of christians.

Some sections of several of those churches, believe

in the washing orte another's feet, at appointed times^

8c c. — But as the Sabbath and Baptism arc their distin-

f^uishing tenets, of which I shall say more in its proper

place, if the Lord will, it is needlesS' to be more particu-

lar as to their doctrines ; for tliose smaller matters are

left to each one's conscience,, and do not affect christiaa

charity or fellowship, in case they do not break one of

the least of those Ten solemn Precepts, and teach mea

so, 8cc.

As a people they have ever conducted as good citi-

zens, by habits of industry, and bearing their part of the

public burdens of the States. They have ever manifes-

ted a cheerful compliance with the laws of our country ;

as it is not known, that ever an individual member of

those churches ever bore arms against their country ia

the American Revolution, or has ever been concerned

in any rebellion in any state, but have bpen forward in

supporting the constituted authorities of government in

all lawful ways (unless human laws interfered with CJod's

divine laws) and it is quite remarkable that among all

the Elders, that have been ordained among this people^

from their rise to the present time, which is near one

hundred and forty years, there is not an instance of one \j

of them being guilty of any scandalous immorality ; but

their lives have been marked by purity of morals, and

exemplary piety and virtue.—

And altho' none among them have had human titles,''

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as, Doctors of Divinity, or been pr ivilegecl, generally,

witTi any thing more than an ordinary education, and

have been, mostly, hard labouring men for the support

of their families ; and consequently have had no leisure

to study abstruse points of divinity, &c. yet it is belie v-

ed that they have generally been sound in the fai th, and

able ministers of the new Testament — Rightly dividing

the word of truth, and giving the different characters

their portion in due season, as any preachers, of the va-

rious christian sects ; and in point of example in piety

and morality, inferior to none.

With regard to church government, this people pro-

fess to be governed by the rules of Christ, or the meth-

od that God has ordained in his word of Divine Revela-

tion, and consequently they are very much opposed to

man's prescriptions when they are opposed to Divine Re-

velation. And as there is diversity of sentiment among

christians, on this subject, it may not be improper to

make some remarks.—

We find when God introduced Religion by Moses, he

fixed the order and government of his church in an ab-

solute and hereditary order, as God waa their king\*—

and Moses too, is said to be king in Jeshurun Deut.

xxxiii. 5. But kings govern by laws, and officers to ad-

minister them. So sdso, the priesthood in that dispen-

sation, was confined to Aaron's family ; and the stran-

ger that came nigh, was to be put to death, &c. Now

as God's church then was a national church, and nearly-

all the ordinances of worship, were carnal or external,

and those ordinances so exactly fixed, by divine appoint-

ment, they might use the secular force to oblige them

to conform to those institutions\*— (and here we may ob-

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serve that the law of sacrifices and tythes, &c. by which

the priests had their support, as to temporal living, was

never to be taken by force of the civil law, but those

that neglected or refused to bring their offering, re-

mained unclean, and were excluded the fellowship of Is\*

rael or the sanctuary: so that they excluded themselves,

as the Lord ever delighted in the free-will offering of

his people, which matter of free-will, is an article be-

tween God and every soul) — but the civil force, or the

force of man, never did, nor never can oblige a man to

do a real pious, virtuous and devout act to God, and to

God's acceptance of the soul ; as that must be freely-

devoted, and God has not given one man such controul

over anotlier man's conscience— Hence when Christ ap-

pears as a Son over his own house, and being that pro-

phet that God's Israel was to hear in all things, there

was a change of priesthood, and consequently of that

external law. But observe, he never changed the natu-

ral and moral obligations among man'kind. So long as

man is in a state of probation, and visible order and

worship is continued ; so long tnere is an unavoidable

necessity of government ; at least while man is imper-

fect : and there can be no government, unless some sub-

ject or obey.

So the divine Saviour was very explicit, in distin-

guishing the things that belong to Caesar, (or civil gov-

ernors) and the things that belong to God, and directs

us to give both their due, and also set the example by

being conformed to all the laws of the nation that were

not repugnant to the laws of God. So also his apostles

arc particular in their directions, to render to all men

their due, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom and

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fear, 8cc. and to fear God and honour the king, or su-

preme magistrate, &c. and not even to speak evil of

dignities, (or officers of church or state) and to be fol-

lowers of them as they followed Christ— who was holy

and harmless, and separated from sinners.

See further on this subject^ under next head.

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THEIR GENERAL CONFERENCE.

THIS denomination of christians have been in the

practice of holding yearly meetings, and of visiting sis-

ter churches, from early times. But in or about the

time of the American Revolution, the practice was

somewhat impeded : and as the youth and others, out of

the pales of the church, imbibed bad habits, of horse-

racing, Sec. at such times ; and the laws of the state

then were somewhat slack, to punish such disorders ;

their yearly meetings were given up for a time ; and I

conclude their cause suffered much by it.

As there was, in some churches, evident signs of dis-

cord and separations. Sec.-— and it seems morally impos-

sible, long to maintain union and consistency of order

and fellowship, in so many remote branches of a com-

munity ; unless some such intercourse is kept up, in

order for all to understand the rules of fellowship ; as

also thereby is the most ready way to root out those nat-

ural prejudices, and selfish partialities so common to all

frail mortals : and as travelling into distant parts, and

learning the habits and customs of different people ;

(provided we carefully avoid the evil and treasure up

the good) tends greatly to enlarge our stock of useful

knowledge ; so mutual visits, and intercourse by ac-

qusdntance, enlarges our charity, and strengthens the

bonds of union and fellowship ; as well as greatly as-

sists a preacher, to present his apples of gold, in pic-

tures of silver; and to consolidate his judgment| and

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make him more usefal in his day and calling ; as well

as refreshing the spirits of all, like cold water to a thirs-

ty soul— Therefore, those kind of yearly meetings were

renewed ; and an attempt made to make them more use-

ful and methodical, by giving them a degree of order

and consistency ; and after several years of trial, and

many objections, and propositions, and modifications,

from different persons, and churches of this sect,— they

finally all, I believe, consented to the following Articles

or Constitution, or rather, the Report of a committee

chosen at Hopkinton, at a general Meeting, A. D. 1805,

and composed of a member from eight sister churches ;

and is as followeth : viz.—

THE Committee appointed to revise the several pro-

positions heretofore proposed as the rules of fellowship,

among the churches of our order, report ; that as last

year's recommendations have generally met the appro-

bation of our churches: Therefore we beg leave to lay

before you a transcript, of the Articles recommended to

churches by the general Meeting or Conference, held at

Piscataway the 1 9th of October 1804— with some alter-

ations, and a few Articles in addition to the former.

ARTICLE I.

Whereas there has been different names given to

the general Meetings or Conferences, and as the differ-

ent churches have general or annual meetings, and as

the name of the meeting does not at all affect the na-

ture of the business, and that we may clearly under-

stand each other, it is thought most advisable to give

" this meeting the name of General Conference ; and

that in future, all letters from the churches be directed,

\*■ To the Sabbatarian General Conference.'

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ART. IL

We think it advisable for the churches of our fellow-

ship and profession, to hold a circular general conference

yearly ; at such times and places as may seem conven-

ient to be agreed upon, and appointed annually for the

ensuing year, by the elders, messengers and members,

who compose the General Conference for the time being\*

ART. III.

It is to be understood, that all things transacted in

such General Conference, be done by way of advice,

council or recommendation, and by no means to affect or

alter the government or discipline of the churches, in

their individual capacity : But that each church enjoy

their own mode of discipline, as to them may seem most

agreeable to the word of God ; and that each churchy

desirous of holding annual meetings, will always ap-

point their time and place for such meetings as they

think proper.

ART. IV.

Whenever the General Conference is holden at any

church where there is an annual appointment, it is tho't

to be the most proper for both to be holden at the same

time.

ART. V.

It is thought proper that such General Conference be

conducted by a moderator, clerk or clerks, and such oth-

er officers as from time to time may appear needful (said

officers) to be appointed by the free vote of the elders,

messengers and members then present.

ART. VI.

And in all cases that require a vote, it is meant, that

each church have one vote only, in deciding any ques-

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tion ; which vote shall be a majority of the church, or

messenger representing any church.— »And it is con-

sidered incumbent on such General Conference to hear

and attend to all questions that concern the welfare of

the churches, and give counsel and advice, as times and

circumstances may require.

ART. VII.

It is understood, in cases of controversy between sis-

ter churches, that the General Conference, made up of

the messengers from the sister churches, be the council

or judges to determine said conti'oversy.

ART. VIII.

In case where members move at a distance from the

•church they first covenanted with, and do not put them-

selves under the watch-care of a sister church, nearest

to their residence ; in case such member walk disorder-

ly, it is understood the right and duty of the clerk of a-

ny church, having knowledge of such disorderly mem-

ber, to certify the same to the church to which they res-

pectively belong, as soon as may be.

ART. IX.

It is understood, that no church in our union, can re-

ceive into their fellowship a person, except they observe

the seventh day for a Sabbath : neither such as have not

been .baptized by immersion.

ART. X.

It is understood, that when alterations or amendments

in our rules of fellowship or constitution, is wished for

by any church, such alteration be proposed to the Gene-

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ml Conference ; and by their recommending such altera-

tion to the several churches in our order, and said chur-

ches agreeing to the same, shall be considered as part

of the rules of our fellowship.

The above Articles are humbly submitted to the Gen-

eral Conference, by your Committee, for your approba-

tion, £cc.-— Signed by

HENRY CLARKE,

AMOS STIJLLMAN,

JABEZ BEEBE,

MATTHEW STILLMAN,

CLARKE BURDICK,

ABRAHAM DUNHAM,

JEDEDIAH DAVIS, and

STEPHEN MAXSON,

AtHopKiNTON, Sept. 15, 1805.

[Taken from our Chuixh Records.]

I conclude no church of this order has made any ma-

terial objection to receive them as rules of fellowship ;

they may therefore be considered as the articles of con-

stitution for the Sabbatarians, if they have any. "

No doubt those are, like other productions and expla-

nations of man, imperfect, and may admit of great al-

terations and improvement. And as the bible is to all

sects of christians, somewhat like those maxims of com-

mon law, in use by all civilized nations, and yet form no

express constitution for any one nation. So it appears

very needful for every denomination of christians, if not

every church, to have some rules of fellowship, that arc

so plain that all may understand when they break this

compact, or covenant.

Now, if neither Christ nor his apostles gave any par-

ticular direction for the method of proceeding in such

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cases, or with regard to church government generally.

It was evidently left to the prudence and judgment of

his church or churches to order those matters as the ex-

igences and circumstances of cases requires: and it is

evident that such modes as contribute to the union and

consistency of order, is not only warrantable, but best :

even such as the people are most generally agreed in,

in case they answer the purposes of governmenVj and

are not contrary to God's word ; for if there is no ex-

press rule prescribed in the New Testament, with re-

gard to the order of God's house, or kingdom, it must

be looked for in the Old Dispensation ; as I have no o-

pinion of looking on Jesus Christ as a new God, or in

any moral perfection, any ways altered from what he

was when the law was given by Moses : neither did he

come to give a new law, as touching man's moral obli-

gations to God or each other, either in church or state.

Now we haye express command, Deut. xvi. 18. "Jud-

ges and officers shalt thou make thee in all > thy gates

•which the Lord thy God giveth thee," &c. So also Ti-

tus i. 5. " and ordain ciders in every city," Sec. Certain\*

ly cities do not need elders more than churches, as God's

house is , a house of order ; and order cannot obtain

without rules, in t^his imperfect state. So also, at the

great feasts, all Israel was to attend and bring their of-

ferings, as also the sanhedruns set for the good and weU

ordering the affairs of the people of Israel. Likewise,

we have account in Acts xv. of the controversy that a-

rose about the dpctrine of circumcision ; the church at

Antioch sent messengers, or some of their elders, to

Jerusalem about this matter : and Mark, verse 6, « and

the Apostles and Elders came together for to consider

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of this matter.\*\* It appears the multitude of believers

were not called together ; neither was it practicable ;

but they acquiesced in the decision of their rulers, and

harmony was restored in the churches.

So we find in the early ages of the christian church,

(by history) that the christians found the necessity of

calling councils or synods, to determine those new con-

trove.fies that sprang up, and to give order and consist-

ency to the churches, &c. And unless we depend on

divine interposition, in a miraculous manner, without

the aid of man to quell such disorders, it is morally im-

possible that churches can long hold consistency and or-

der in fellowship, without such meetings.

Again ; when we consider that the chief end in

Christ's coming on earth, his doings, sufferings, &c. was

to save poor, lost, sinful man, by making a suitable a-

tonement to God\*s holy law, and providing means to re-

new or renovate the souls of mankind, and thereby

bring them into a real subjection to his divine govern-

ment, from pure motives of love and obedience to God,

and justice and benevolence'to their fellow creatures, and

compassion towards their enemies, and thereby fit them

in this state of probation to loveaiid adore God's amia-

ble nature, and holy character, (and the only way for

man to manifest, or prove his love to God, is by keeping

his commandments, as saith the Saviour, « If ye love

me, keep ray commandments- — He that loveth me not

keepeth not my sayings." John, U. 15,24.) in order to

their being happy in the enjoyment of God hereafter—

or to save them from their sins here (as sin is the trans-

gression of the law) and to save them from suffering

hereafter, 8cc.

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We may rationally conclude, that v^n and delusirc

tnuii be the hopes of souls, let their professions be

vrhfitt they may, who wantonly and wilfully contemn

God's holy moral requirements, and despise his gov-

ernment. See. Therefore, as God has given us his law,

to direct and govern us in a state of society, which law

is to be exercised in a civil way for the protection and

security of our persons and property, and given the civ-

il magistrate power to compel a conformity thereto, or

to punish offenders in a corporal manner, even to death,

in cases of great crimes— and that each member of

society must, according their stations, sphere and abili-

ties, contribute to the maintainance of that government,

or lose the benefits of it — So also, his gospel is design-

ed to save the soul of man from allowed sin here, and

make them happy hereafter : and as all visible orders,

whether civil or ecclesiastical, unavoidably incur ex-

pense; so he has made it incumbent on all the parts in

proportion to their respective abilities, to subject to,

and support such ecclesiastical government, or forfeit

their membership: for deprive a church of the right of

•excommunicating unruly or vicious members; and how

would Christ's kingdom appear in the world! And this I

conceive, is the main odds between civil and ecclesiasti-

cal, or church government; viz. the civil may enforce

compulsion to just laws, by the arm of flesh; but the on-

ly punishment in church governmant, is exclusion from

fellowship; and such a right all christian churches have,

to judge who and what they will fellowship, or they have

no tights at all. And was that right only exercised in

real meekness and love; happy would it have been for

the christian part of the world: but by connecting ec-

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clesiastical and civil government together, and using the

sword of civil power, instead of the sword of the spirit

which is the word of God, to reclaim or punish the

mind, is the source of all persecution; and the means of

rivers of blood being shed for conscience sake. The

sword of the civil magistrate, doubtless, has made nnany

hypocrites, but never a true christian; and as the nature

of agency or power given to any man or body of men,

necessarily admit of their doing evil, as well as good; so

it is conceived that the main danger that may arise from

those meetings or councils, lays in admitting them to

prescribe laAVs for the church; or in taking their decis-

ions for perfect truth; even when those decisions are

not conformable to the laws of God. From this error

arose the power of the popes, and the tyranny, oppi\*ess-

ion, persecutions and wars, that have deluged the chris-

tian church; as is abundantly evident by all ecclesiasti-

cal history.

When we rightly contemplate devotion, or the spirit-

ual worship of God; it is a thing, between God and the

soul, as unseen, by mortals, as God; or the soul is, con-

sequently, utterly out of the province of man, to judge

with perfection or any degree of certainty, when, or how

far, his fellow-mortal is devout, or a real spiritual wor-

shipper of God; and it is a nice point (when we consid-

er the operations of nature, the influence of customs

fashions, laws of men, and the various arts and passions

of men, in our world and even in ourselves) to ascer-

tain when our o^n souls are really devout to God: there-

fore the Saviour saith: \*^ Judge not, that ye be not judg-

ed;\*\* hence, as pure devotion is simply between God and

the soul, man cannot make it in another man, nor pre-

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TCtit it in his fellow creature: all the grounds we have to

judge upon, with regard to another's devotion, is from

our own natures; the Being and Revelation of God; and

the appearances we see in our fellow -mortal's counte-

nance, words and actions. And as it is evident from

scripture, as well as history and our own observations,

that mankind may appear as devout in the worship of an

idol or false god> as the true God: sa we have no stand-

ard in this case, but the Bible or divine Revelation; as

that detemunes the difference, and shews when men are

under the guidance of the spitit of God, or the spirit of

erroTf Cor enthusiasm and fanaticism, mankind has ever

been subject to: hence all those laws and punishments^

made by popes, kings or legislators, to compel men to

be religious^ or to conform to their ideas orteaeta; I coiv-

aider prejudicial to true devotion: for one man, even a

^sktve^ has as good right to direct the exercise of his

Aoul to God, as a king has; and. if kings^ or learned men

have more knowledge of the truth of things, and the

true worship of God, than the ignorant slave; let themi

remember, the only way to make the ignorant learn

truth, is by example and instruction or advice— but not

by compulsion^ or force\* Great men may have know-

ledge, that is apt to puff up; when the ignorant may

have charity,, that edifieth — Therefore all acts of civil

rulers or uninspired legislators, tx> tolerate or establish

any religion, or to punish men for their acts of devotion,

(when those aetd dd- net infringe on their neighbours' li-^

berties, persons,, or property) are absurds

As the chief end of civil govwnment,. is,> to protect,

defend and scr^e men's persons and property, that they

m^y foe secure and enjoy ciyll liberty; and cannot possi-

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bly controul the soul: it is quite out of the province of

man, to direct hisfellow man, what and how, and when^

he ^hall worship his God. The great Maker and Judge

of soujs, has given direction in his sacred word, as to

the dedication or worship of the soul; and to him all

souls must account. And such seems to be the nature

of the soul, that it abhors being controuled by creature

man — Hence it is evident, that the more a person is per-

secuted for conscience sake, the stronger he growsj and

perhaps the christian religion in general has :been the

most pure and increased when the liottest persecutions

have pl'evaiicd: as when (me is burnt for his religion, ten

Kvill arise, as it were, out of his ashes»^But if any man^

under a notion of devotion or religion, wijl commit a

trespass against bis neighbour's person, or propertjs or

destroy his family or property, &c.; in «uch <;a»^s, the

civil power has right, and it is their duty, to kiterlere,

and punish men for their crimes-^but not for their oon-

science. But, perhaps, the reader ms^ sayithatthe-con- \*

science was the cause of the cpime:~I ansfrer the evil

conscience, God may judge; the ciime, man may judges

for how many persons have suffered, for the aet of mtir-

der, when they had no murder in theirliearts; while n^a-

ny that have hated their neighbour i^ heart,.and. yet have

not committed the act of murder, and cannot be punish-

ed in this world; but which is the murderer in 4hc. sight

of God.

But posBibly, the reader may fiay:^ What thfcii' shall

we do with all those diHWent aectsj and those pretended

prophets, enthusiasts, fanaticks, lunaticks, and preach-

ers, tlMit go about our world, cryingj Lol here, or Lo!

there?' 8uj. Answer. In<the' ftrst place, be attentive to

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your bible, and deyout in your soul to God; and in cast

-they prophecy directly in contradiction to your biblei

you are not to fear them; if they preach another Christ,

or God, than your bible tells of, you are not to go after

jthem, nor follow them> and so in less errors, " to the

l^w and to the testimony, if thej speak not according to

this word, they have not the true light/' hi them alone,

they be blind leaders of the blind: but do not be fount)

fighting against God. No^v^ if preachers have no hear-

ers, they will soon. stop preaching; and if enthusiasts an^

fanatics, have none to hear th^ir dreams, and countenr

ance ph^m^ they will sp<>ner forbear, than if you fqllo^

and persecute them«i

Secondly: learn to distinguish between essential, ^xi^

mere circumstantial points of religion^ and in circum-

stantial points, put. on charity; as ^U mortis ^ar^ imper-

fect in knowledge and practice, fill your covenant wit^

ryour brethren; and in case jttiey are in an error,, if capi-

tal, make it appear by scHp^re testimony, and convince

them: but not jset up your judgment, or your reveja^ons

or conception of things>. in, place of God\*s , standard of

truth. As to different ,^ects, t^ey &prve to keep tl\e

fscriptur^es pure from corrupt interpolations sfnd errone-

ous ediiLioiis, as well a^ for men to ezamii^e for them-

.selve$r

Thirdly: examine ii^e charac^t^r, and employn^nt, as

well as the compariy, of such preachers. It is. easier

.for peop\c. to say well, than to, dp w^\h W^ ^^^ of i^o

true prophet, preacher, or servant of thc^jL»ord>but what

. sustaintd a fair moral character; and w^s in some lawful

enipioymeat: "For if a man provide npt for his own, aud

especif-ily for thepa of jiiis QYfn housc; he has denied tl^\*

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ftdth, and is worse than an infidel." It is truly lamcntfti-^

We to see and hear of the nimnbers of would-be prcach\*-

crs, that pretend to a special call of God to preacti, &c.;

and some of infEimous characters, having no> regular

standing in anj church; no licence from zny to preachy

and neither learning to know what they affirm^ nor abil-

ity to make a rational man think they are called of God

or his people to that sacred work:— and yet, however

strange it may aj^ear, they find hearers; and some too>

that are professed christians, in standing in respectable

churches; and some too, that perhaps contribute more

for the support of such preachers in a short dme, tban

they are willing to give their regular and respectable

ordained preacher and their pastor, all his life time. It

is a serious and important questionr Which do the most

Buschief to society, such preachers, or those that run af»

ter them and support them in their errors? It is evident

that mankind have pursued alf manner of ways to gain a

temporary support; and although we ' must be cautious

llow we judge of motives; yet, we have reason to fear,

some men have attempted the sniost sacred callings, widi

Ao better motive than the horse^jockey—- And if men

will encourage by going to hear and supporting such

characters, that are hardly^ entitled to common hospital-

ity and men of no standing in any church and of no pro-

bity, to^ the neglect of their covenant obligations with

their brethren and minister; how can they expect any

thing else, but to be left to believe aHe> and to be in a

strong delusion.

I once knew an instance m one of the eastern states:

a young man, a stranger in that quarter, without any

cred^|ttials whatever; yet he could preach to suit alniost

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tny liearers — So great was the anxiety of the people, to

hear the New Preacher, that the meeting-houses were

thronged, and he extolled — And I even heard a venera-

ble old Elder (not of the Sabbatarian order) in his own

pulpit, and at the time said stranger had been preaching

there, not only fellowship his doctrine, but compared

him to the great Whitfield; and so much was made of

the poor stroller, that he was carried about (on horses—

as he had none of his own) from one house to another,,

and preached almost every day and night, for a while—\*

And had it not been for his character getting about, he

might have done great harm to settled churches— But

soon his character comes forward; and he perhaps aware.

of it, borrows cloathes and an horse, and puts off. How-

ever the horse and cloathes were recovered; and the last

I heard of said young man, he went off with a compa-

ny of fiddlers, Sec— Some thought him love-crack'd — as

he was fond of women— But, be that as it may, such

seems to be the weakness of human nature.

I knew another instance in the same quarter, of a Ne-

gro preacher, a stranger: he was so extolled by some,

(not of the Sabbatarian order) that meetings were attcn-.

ded from place to place, by night and by day; and great

appearances of devotion and power of religion, &c. so^

called; and married women of weak constitutions, and

not the best characters, who were professors of religion,

would, by way of eminence, call him Father, 8cc. But

the poor Negro was then living iii the state of adultery;.

and when he was accused of the crime, would answer?

« it was not possible, as God assisted him to do so much

good in preaching,' &c.— However, he had to own the

fact, and suffer the consequence.

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1 might mention a number more of similar instanCe^i

■which I have been knowing to in the course of my life,

that I omit: but for the sake of the cause of truth, and

the peace of society, 1 think expedient to mention one

more circumstance of recent date:—

A man had joined a church of repute in the ehristiaii

world, and appeared to be zealous and steady for a year

or two: but the church or the leader of the church did

not suit him; he grew uneasy, and said he could not en-

joy religion with them; yet he disclaimed the idea of

wanting the lead in the church; he wished for perfect e-

quality; and insisted, the youngest or weakest members

had as good right to speak, exhort, or govern, &c. as their

minister — He finally withdraws from his brethren, and

he M ith a few more of like minds, set up a meeting in

the woods, for a time; and at length find doors opened

for them; and lately 6 or 7 sign articles of faith and cov-

enant, too inconsistent to relate: and one of the male

members (as there were 4 male, and 3 female members)

and one or two female members, proceed to ordain the

two leading members — and those ordained members pro-

ceed to administer the Lord's supper; and have since

baptized a number; and appear, by what I learn, (as I

have not been to their meetings) to be very devout and

zealous, and have a number to hear and follow them. I

forbear to relate the manner, in which I understand their

meetings are conducted— ^But would observe, that, if

man is a reasonable being, and we have a just idea of

God, as the source of order, wisdom and reason; the re-

ligion he has designed for his reasonable creature must

be a system of reason and order — ^For although he may

see fit to reveal some things^ far beyond the reach of

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the reason of human or finite creatures; yet what man

can comprehend, is perfectly consistent with right rea-

son; and I consider the christian system the most rea-

sonable and orderly, of any in the universe, if rightly

understood.

But such proceeding, as above related, must originate

from the spirit or word of God, or from human invention;

alias, fanaticism, superstition, &c. — and I conclude the

candid, well-informed, will be at no loss to judge which.

But what ground does such proceedings give to the A-

theist, Deist and Infidels? Surely it is lamentable, and

must be for a lamentation to sober christians. But some

may ask. Is there no way to remedy those evils? I know

of no better way than for churches to keep a close gos-

pel discipline, and each member fill his place, and live

according to God's word; and let such stand or fall to

their own master (unless they commit acts against the

peace of civil society, or neglect their families, as ha»

been observed) for we are advertised, II. Tim. iii. 13;

"But evil men and seducers, shall wax worse and worsc^

deceiving and being deceived.\*\* Let us see to it, that

we are not of that class.

It is evident, that the prophecies of the scriptures are

fulfilling; and that time hastens to a close— when every

man shall give account of himself to God. If all pro-«

fessed christians would learn to govern their own evil

passions, it would be easy for churches — But such is our

\* unruly members, that they cause our own souls trouble;

and sometimes injure the cause of God. « Let him that

thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."— It may be

they are sincere; what then? Was not Paul sincere when

he was persecuting Christ, and verily thought he was

doing God service? or, Are not the Mahometans, and o-

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ther people, sincere in their religion? It would be ab-

surd to say they were not: consequently, if sincerity is

the rule that God, or men, will judge men's actions by,

solely, I see not but that one man's religion and actions

are as good as another's; and so we shall confound right

with wrong, and truth with error.

But sincerity, or common conscience, being the result

of our own judgment; now if our judgment is biassed

in favour of ourselves, even our conceited inspiration,

or by any other man's, or woman's revelation, it is of

the creature, and not of the Creator — and there is noth-

ing more common in our world, than for mankind to

have partialities for themselves and their connexions.—

Now if God has given us his Divine Revelation, even

his law and gospel, as a standard of faith and practice—

and by which he will judge mankind in the great day of-

account; or, \*\* in the day when God shall judge the se-

crets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel."

Rom. ii. 1 6.— or as saith the Saviour: " The word I have

spoken, the same shall judge you, in the last day; and if

as many as sin without law, shall also perish without law;

and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged

by the law:" and if St. Paul was under the law to Christ,

(I. Cor. ix. 21.) we may depend, that unless our notions

of things, and the feeling of our minds, and our actions,

do not in some good degree correspond with that sacred

rule; vain will be our pretended revelations, and devo-

tions, See—

Hence, if all professed christians would come to that

sacred rule^there might be, " one Lord, one Faith, one

Baptism,\*' one Church, one Fellowship, &c. But since

every one must have -a doctrine, a revelation, an inter-

pretation, &c. to suit their own fancies, or selfish ima-

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ginations, there evidently will be a great variety of o-

pinions and sects in the christian, part of the world; and

there is no way to remedy those evils arising from fana-

ticism and vain enthusiasm, as it arises from the nature

of man in his fallen situation, that I know of, unless we

closely adhere to the written word of Divine Revelation

and allow it the plain obvious meaning of the sacred

text; and always keep in view the character of God, and

tKe accountability of man: for if we destroy either, we

make religion a -mere piece of priestcraft— Hence those

doctrines of men, that hold out the idea of Fate, or un-

conditional Election, as also Uaiversallsm, or the idea of

annihilation, it is conceived, never did any good to the

cause of God or the souls of men-— Such notions being

contrary to the main scope of scripttire, our own true

conscience, and the nature of things: for it is absui^ to

conceive of punishment, after death, where there is no

crime; and to constitue a crime, there must be a degree

of agency; which implies light, knowledge and ability to

do otherwise than we do; hence saith the Saviour, " If

ye were blind, ye should have no sin (Johnix, 41.) and to

him that knoweth to good, and doth it not, to him it is

sin; again, for sin is the transgression of the law; for I

bad not known sin but by the law; and without law, sin

is dead." All must allow this to have reference to

God\*& law;—- and if all christians would really live and

act in life, as Christ lived, or accoidirig to their abili-

ty, would live so; there would be little cause of stum-

bling at their walk as he walked in God's laws.

But this antinomian notion of no law, no sin, and

what not, will do souls no good.

Some tell of disinterested benevolence, and a law

of love, &c\* Mere chimerasl— For how can a being

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that is interested in all its actions, act disinterest-'

edly? And if we are to give account to God, of all

our thoughts, idle words, and vain actions; surely,

we cannot act disinterestedly: and yet we may act

from a sordid, selfish motive, to so great a degree,

as to make our act criminal in the sight of God, because

our act is not in faith and submission to the will of God,

but rather in.the will of the creature. So also, Love, as it

is the noblest faculty of the soul, is the best motive to

influence our actions. But where do we get scripture

or logic, to call it a law? any more than fear, >hope, or o-

ther faculties of the soul. Therefore, mankind as mor-

al agents, are influenced or governed in their actions,

by the hope of reward, or the fear of punishment; which

is the only way to govern accountable beings; for, "if

thou doest well, shalt not thou be accepted? and if thou

doest not well, sin lieth at the door.\*\* [Gen. iv. 7.] Hence

the misery of men arises from their own presuming to

judge what is well, or ill, instead of attending to God's

word for a determination of right and wrong— Hence

their choosing to act that which gratifies the idol self^

for the present, without regarding the future, or God

and their neighbour; brings them into the greatest mis-

eries in this life, and that which is to come.

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EXTERNAL FELLOWSHIP.

ANOTHER source of disorder and confusion in chur-

ches, it is conceived, is christians not well understand-

ing, or considering the rule and meaning of External

fellowship.

Let us then learn to distinguish between internal and ex-

ternal fellowship, Sc between heaven born & heaven bound

souls: and if our judgment is imperfect in one of the ca-

ses, we shall find we are entirely incompetent to judge

the other, and must leave it for God to judge. Internal

union or fellowship, is gained or felt by that charitable

disposition wc entertain of another's sincerity and true

devotion to God; thinking such is born of the spirit of

God, and is a true worshipper of God; and while we are

conscious to ourselves that we aPre born of God, and sin-

cerely aim to worship him, our internal fellowship is as

natural, as two drops of water are to unite and make one.

It must be acknowledged that such feelings are very

grateful, and some term it the life of religion; and sure-

ly if we had no sense of feeling, we should not retain

fill the faculdes God has given us as creatures.

But let us remember, " the Heart is deceitful above

all things, and desperately wicked." None knows an-

other's heart but God; man acts from various motives,

and assumes a variety of appearances utterly out of the

knowledge of his fellow creature: and if those that are

born of the Spirit, or heaven-born, are as unseen to man

as the wind is, (and I think the Saviour gave us that i-

dea, John, iii. 8.) all we can judge of in the case, is the

effect; the wind causes the trees to bend or bow, and

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there arc other causes that may make them bend or bow»

Now if the soul of the rebellious sinner really bows to

God, and we can see it, we shall see such souls disposed

to submit to God's word of revelation, and yield obedi-

ence to God\*s law and gospel, and walk in God's com-

mands and ordinances, as did Zechariah and Elizabeth of

old— and then we may, with the utmost propriety, not

only have internal, but external fellowship with such.

I am far from thinking God will justify all the scpara\*

tions and different sects of communion that have taken

place in the christian church: the fact is, I have no right

to judge the state of another's soul, as I dont know what

allowance God may make for human frailty, and errors

@f the head, &c.— and it might be a great want of char-

ity in me, and criminal presumption, to say such an one

ns does not follow with me, is an enemy to God, &c.\*^

Nay, let me rather charitably hope they may be accept-

ed of God, and leave them to stand or fall to their own

master.

But, as man is a visible being, and his Maker has giv-

en him some ability to judge of visible things; and as

the external things of religion, or the visible appearance

of the kingdom of God, or church of Christ, is to be

seen; so he has given us a visible rule to judge by, even

his law and gospel, as the test to try doctrines and ac-

tions by; and has warned us, " to have no fellowship

with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather re-

prove them." Now what is works ol darkness, unless

it be sin, or the transgression of God's law? — And, saith

the beloved disciple (I. John, i. 7.) "But if we walk in

the light as he is in thd light, we have fellowship one

with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son

cleanseih us from all sin:" and chap. ii. 4. "He that

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saith) I know him, and keepeth not iris commandments,

is a liar, and the truth is not in him:" and saith, Prov. vi.

23,v" For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is

light, and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.— -

Consequently, the rule of external fellowship must be

something certain and visible; and such is the written

word of God, or the scriptures of the Old and New Tes-

taments'—wherein we are directed who and what to fel-

lowship: " And as many as walk according to this rule,

peace be on them and mercy, and oiy the Israel of God.

—If there come any and bring not this doctrine, receive

hiTH not; neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth

him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds/\* " Now

we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord

Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every

brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradi-

tion he received of us.\*' II. Thes. iii. 6 Sc 11. "For

we hear that there are some which walk among you dis-

orderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies." Rom.

16. 17. " Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that

cause divisions and offence^ contrary to the doctrine

which ye have learned and avoid thetn, [18] for they

that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their

own belly: and by good words and fair speeches, deceive

the heart of the simple.\*' Observe, good words and

fair speeches, or pretended sincerity will not do, with-

out conformity to the word: I. Cor. v. 11. "If any man

that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or

an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner}

with such an one, no not to eat.

Again: as the meaning or marks of External Fellow-

ship, is in eating the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to-

gether; so in the old dispensation, the Passover supper

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was the token of fellowship and what was then requi-

site or preparatory for eatings that supper, was circum-

cision and being clean according to the letter or exter- •

nal directions of the law, and visible order of God's

house: so, methinks, the prerequisites for the Lord's sup-

per are circumcision of the heart, or a new creature

that is conformed to the commandments and ordinances

of the Lord, inan external order, is necessary: for St.

Paul gives the idea of a new creature, and faith that

works by love, and keeping the commandments of God,

as synonymous ideas; (see L Cor. vii. 19, compared with

Gal. V. 6 8c 6 15.) and it appears that there was a yarietjr

of sects and sentiments as to- doctrines in the old Dis-

pensation, as the Sadducees, the Pharisees, Essens, &c.

and yet, being conformed to the law, kept the Passover

together. So also it appears that our Saviour eat with

Judas as well as the rest of the twelve\*— And I see no

room to doubt but that the apostles admitted Ananias

and Saphira to the communion table until their hypocri-

sy was apparent, and perhaps Simon the sorcerer, &c.— \*

and it is worthy of notice that so long as members con-

tented themselves to remain in the primitive church as

private hearers, and conformed to the external order of

the church we read of none that was excluded from the

mark of external fellowship — But when they became so

fond of their own attainments and knowledge that they

must be teachers, aii4 brought forward absurd doctrines

that led to evil practices; then they were excluded: how-

ever it appears that generally in the first centuries the

false teachers withdrew first from the apostoJic church, '

before they were excluded the external fellowship of

the church: hence saith the text; ^< these be they that

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separate themselves; sensual having not the spiiitr ^tt

would be absurd to suppose such were actuated by no

spirit] that is not the true spirit of God: and even those

teachers that held circumcision and keeping the cere\*

xnonial law, as essential to salvation^ we have no account

that the apostles debarred them of the communion or

fellowship until they first separated— True, they let the

church know that they gave them no such command-

ment to preach such doctrine, &c. — Hence saith the a-

postle John, I. Epi. ii. 1^, " They went out from us, but

they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they

would no doubt have continued with us," 8cc»

So we find, in process of time, men became sa very

wise above what was written, in piling into- mysterious

points, that led some to deny that Jesus Christ was com«

in the flesh, or to deny the real bo<ly of Ghrkt, and some

to deny his divinity, while others were corrupting the

pure and simple doctrines and ceremonies of the church

with heathenish ideas and idolatrous practices; while o-

thers, from vain enthusiasm or pretended revelation',

brought forward absurd doctrines and practices, that

bave rent the christian church kito several hundred di6-

ferent sects and communion of fellowship;^ and all for

not receiving and obeying the plain written word of di«-

vine Revelation: and it has generally been the case, that

a bare inference drawn from scripture that is different

from the common acceptation, if not essential, has not

produced a separation, so long^ as bi^thren would let

each meifiber think for themselves, and so long as aU

acted conformable to God's law and gospel require-

ments— -But when men would insist on otbersf adopting

their sentiments, or exclude them, or separate from

them^ then the fellowship is broken mi n^w aects arisen

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What if A. tells his brother B. (and they are both

private brethren) he thinks that the bread in the com«

inunion after consecration is transubstantiated or turned '

into the real body of Christ. B. says, No brother, it is .

bread still, and only a representation of Christ's body.—

Now if each enjoy their own thoughts, and charitably

fill their covenant obligations in the church— .-who "wiD '

be harmed? But if A. still persists and calls that bread

a God, and requires B. to worship it, or he will part with

him, or either attempts force to compel a different sen-,

timent, we may see the consequence. So where a pri-

vate brother attempts to improve his gift, if on trial it

should appear that he is unsound in the faith, or his im-

provement not edifying, his brethren should labour with

him in love and faithfulness, ajid he ought to hold his

peace; and if he will persist to tlie grief of his brethren,

they should admonish him, and not hear himi and he

will desist or leave the church: and thus troubles may

be avoided without force, or even the sharpness of ex-

communication.

When we consider the importance and responsibility

of an acknowledged leader or an ordained minister of

the word— \*a <^urch and the eldership should be ex-

ceeding careful to know well his character and tenets;

for in case any church call forward a worthless charac-

ter, or one of known errors in sentiment, they must in

some degree be accountable for his errors — But where

the character is fair, and the error in his sentiment not

known, the nature of their call and his charge being to

preach the gospel or word, as revealed in the scriptures

in case he afterwards broaches those corrupt doctrines

that are in the world, he does it at his own risk or res-

ponsibility, and the chmxh is clear of it> yet should la-

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bour to reclaim him, and if he still persist to force hia

errors on his brethren, they may be justified in refusing

to hear him, and in using gospel means to silence his

preaching. But all should be careful how they mistake

truth for error — for error, let it be of ever so long stand-

ings and reputed for orthodoxy, will never make a truth;

and it is evident, by Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History,

as also by other historians, that quite opposite ideas have

been held for truth, in different periods of time, even

by the leading members and majority of churches; and

even now among the learned as well as the illiterate, we

find great contradiction as to what ift truth in certain

doctrines. All cannot be right; as truth is, like God,

unchangeable — Man's believing or disbelieving it, will

not alter it in the least; that is, those fundamental truths

contained in our bible. Therefore, if we let go bible re-

ligion, or revealed truth therein contained, or receive a-

ny thing from any source that contradicts or is opposed

to that sure word of prophecy, ai^ Peter calls it, "to

which we do well to give heed as unto a light that shin-

eth in a dark place," &c. we have no standard at all— •

but must forever, while in this world, be in a maze of

uncertainty in our minds.

' But, says friend Q. is not the Spirit that dictated that

word of Divme Revelation, as you call it, greater and

surer than the written word, which some call a dead let-

ter? I answer: Can a being be greater or less than him-

self: now admitting that the bible is in fact [i. e. the law

and gospel or revealed religion] the pure work or pro-

mise of God, and that God is perfect and immutable;

where can there be any odds as to possession or certain-

ty of fact. In case I hold a bank bill, and it is a true

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6ne, and on an able and punctual bank; is it net Worth

just what it promises, vThen all allow it will be paid on

sight? Surely, unless I am a miser, and love hard moD«

ey> I am just as happy and as safe, if not more so, than

If I had the hard cash by me, and the person of the sign-

er is my confidence. But, it is true, there are manj

banking houses that fail, and also many counterfeit bills

in circulation, and the signer will not pay counterfeit

bills— So we read there are many false spirits as well as

false prophets gone out into the world. Now if a . true

bill is greater than a counterfeit, so revealed religion is

surer than any man's pretended inspiration that is oppo-

sed to it J for it, both agree they are the same in suW\*

stance; but that which is the standard to try the true bill

by, must be the greatest of the two—And if mankind

take away revealed religion, or the bible, there is no

standard: for, separate from that, man knoweth no mors

about God and Eternity than the wild savages of the

wilderness, and his notion of something somewhers

that tells him to smoke it, and use his tommahawk,, Sec.

may be as sure as friend Q's notions that are contrary to

the bible. As to the bible, as being a dead letter, we all

know a genuine note or bill is good until it is paid; so

the promises of God in the bible, as relates to the pres-

ent state, have been made goodj or paid to every charac-

ter they were made to; but the main part relates to an-

other world, Or state of things; and I doubt not but will

also answer the full demand or promises to characters^

there and then. Sec. — But. all counterfeit bills, and false

lights or spirits, must be turned aside.

The notion of an invisible church or worship, in this

visible world) is as vain as to call a departed spirit^ qf

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the soul, a man: for it tt^.kes a spirit or soul, ahd a hbdy]

to make what we call, a man. When the soul has flcd>

the man is dead — the body is still visible; (before it is

decayed, or put out of oui' sight) — we call it a corpse—\*

the spirit or soul in the separate state, is called (if any

visibility to it) a ghost: and the idea of resurrection will

not apply to that which does not die.

It is evident that friend Q. is as precise and as formal

in his way as friend P. and as he has generally much

the same morals, he may be a good citizen. But whe-

ther his notion of discarding or neglecting the external

ordinances of the gospel, that the divine Saviour and

his apostles commanded and practised, is from God of

men, is for him seriously to consider. I am not dispo-

sed to question his sincerity; but remember, sincerity

does not make truth.

I hope I shall not offend my readers by relating a sto-

ry I lately heard. It was represented as matter of fact:

A certain Baptist Preacher, who had preached some

time in a neighbourhood where friend Q. lived. He no-

ticed that friend Q. never came to his meeting; and that

when any of Q's sect came along to preach, said friend

was forward to notify, Sec. his meeting. One day B. as-

ked Q. what was the reason he never came to hear him

preach, when he had opened his meeting-house doors

and attended to hear his friends preach, 8cc. Says Q.

you study your sermons, and preach the letter: — my

friends preach by the spirit, &c. Says B. how do you

know I don't preach by the spirit as much as they, see-

ing you don\*t come to hear me? Says Q. will you preach

from a text I shall give you? B. answered, he thought

Jie would. Well, s^ys Q. if you will> I will come to

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licar you; and if you do preach by the spirit, I will give

you th€ choice of my cows, atid 1 have a Dumber. Well

says B. let me see your text. Nay, says Q. you will have

time to study out something: such a day I will go to

your meeting, and hand you a text, just as you are about

to preach.

The day comes, and Q. appears and takes his seat. B.

beg^ins his meeting as usual, and after prayer and sing-

ing, no text presented. At length Q puts a small piece

of paper on the pulpit, (or in B's hand) with these words

written thereon: \* Old cast clouts and rotten rags\* B. was

quite surprized, anti at fir&t was at some loss if such

words wcr€ in the scripture; but recollecting, he soon

found them, in Jer XXX viii. 12. and went on to preach

from them: and finally made a pathetic discourse from

them. Q. appeared much movtdi and after meeting,

took B. by the hand, and said; Well, you have preached

by the spirit, and the best cow is at your service. So af-

ter a while, B. visits him; and Q. orders up his cows, and

tells B. to take his choice. B. thought if he picked on

the largest, Q. might think him avaricious — ^So he cast

his eye on a middling sized, trim built cow, and says, I

choose this. Ahl says Q. you preached by the spirit,

and have chosen by the spirit— for she is the best cow I

have!

But to return. Mankind are very apt to set too much

or too little by the ordinances of the gospel; or to over-

rate external fellowship. Some having a notion that

partaking of the elements confers grace on the receiver

&c. I do not learn from scripture or reason, that the

partaking of any external or visible elements, or the

performance of any command, or the doing of any duty,

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confers graces, or justifies the soul in any other mannet

than, as God has made the soul a reasonable and accoun-

table being, and has in his word directed the rules and

motives to govern the soul's actions towards him and all

ether beings, and has also promised to reward the obe-

dient doer, and to punish the disobedient, the neglector

and transgressors of his law, &c.: so his promises are

sure; even " heaven and earth may pass away, but his

word will not fail," saith Samuel to Saul, I. Sam. xv. 22,

\*^ Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and

sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold!

to obey is better than sacrifices; and to hearken, than the

fat of rams.\*' And the whole tenor of the scriptures,

carries the same idea: see, in particular, John xiv. chap,

generally, verse 23; " Jesus answered, and said unto

him, If a man love me he will keep my word, and my

father will love him, and we will come unto him, and

make our abode with him.'\*

The idea conveyed by the word graccj is either a free

unmerited gift, or enjoyment; and comprehends eternal

life, as, " the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus

Christ our Lord." And saith the apostle to the Heb-

rews, speaking of Christ, (Heb. v. 9.) \*'and being made

perfect, he became the author of etenial salvation untd

all them that obey him." Now if any souls think they

are in the possession and enjoyment of grace, when

their allowed conduct is in direct opposition to the char-

acter and requirements of God, as revealed in his word

«— .it is to be feared such souls are under a most fatal de-

ception; " for not the hearers of the law are just before

God, but the doers of the law shall be justified; [Rom.

ii. 13. compared with Mat. vii. 21. and James, i. 22, 25:

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See also Luke vi. 46 to 49.— where our Lord and Judg<^^

compares the doer to the man thkt built his house on a

rock, and th^ not doer to the man that built on the sand;

ficc.

And as the doer is blest in the deed, as saith James, I

would ask an^ sincere, candid soul, if when they had

performed any known duty or positive command of God

or Christ, from a pure motive of obedience to God and

subjection to his will, they did then enjoy that satisfac-

tion that their sotil wanted, or not: and so in proportion

as we conform in heart, lip and life, to all his require-

ments, of doing and suffering the will of God, our com\*

forts in this life ariseth, and the well-grounded hope, of

life eternal through our Lord Jesus Christ in tjie next

world.

Thus it is God that gives or confers grace, and to such

characters as his word has promised it to: so also ht

provides food for the ravens; but what good will that

food do them if they do not eat it? Is it merely eating or

iswallowing that nourishes the body? or is it the food that

after eaten, in a way consistent with the order of nature

that God has placed in all creatures, digests and nour-

ishes the body? — and as God has given to all creatures

a mouth, and faculty to receive food for their nourish-

ment; so he has made the soul capable of receiving by

faith (as a mouth to the soul) spiritual food to nourish

and strengthen, and invigorate the soul. To this idea,

see John vi. 57. " As the living Father hath sent mr^

and I live by the Father, [he did always those things

that were pleasing to the Father] so he that eateth me,

even he shall live by me." Verse 63. «• It is the spirit

that qnickenethj the flesh profiteth nothing, [or Utttel

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the words that I speak unto you, ikty are spirit^ and

they are life.\*\* Intimating^ as I conclude, that as the na\*-

tural body is nourished by the mouth's receiving Sec na\*-

tural food; so by the soul's receiving, by faith, his words

of promise, (which, observe, is made to characters, or

the doers of the work) they shall be nourished and live;

<' for as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith with\*

put works is dead also."

But some may say I admit a condition on the crea-

tures\* part, to be fulfilled in order for their happiness

here and hereafter: I readily grant, if there is no condi-

tion in the syste.m of man's salvation; agency and ac-

countability are quite out of the question; and absolute

^te must govern, and I am as much justified in writing

as I do, as St. Paul was for writing as he did\*— Surely

such must be the consequence, in case we suppose that

iGod absolutely £ore-ordains whatsoever comes to pass —

•For if there is no liberty in man's will, (as the will gov\*

ems the man) there can be no accountability: conse-

quently, such an idea must confound virtue with vice,

and destroy jthe Idea of a Judgment, and, virtually, all

religion. But there is a material difference between

supposing that man has all liberty or power to will at

his own option, and at any, time he may choose; and that

of a certain degree of liberty to will and choose at cer-

tain times. Now Time, as well as Man and man's pow-

er or. liberty to will, &c. are the property of God, and not

of the creature— and he gives, <a time and a season to

every purpose under the sun.'

Therefore, real chnstians should have their fellowship

in the truth, built on some known, stable, sure rules; and

6uch is the revealed word of God, that it is a lamp to

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our feet, and a light to our path, and so plain that he that

runs may read. But if we will not run in that straight

way to lif«, but will choose our own crooked ways, and

will follow the lights of the creature, (or man's enthu-

siastic notions that lead away from that sure word of

prophecy) and must fellowship, externally, all those

that tell of good feelings, Sec. Hear what the Lord says

by his prophet, Isa. 50. U. "Behold all ye that kindle a

fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in

the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have

kindled; this shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie

down in sorrow." Also, Mai. ii. 13. "And this have ye

done again, covering the altar of the Lord with tears^

with weeping, and with crying out; insomuch that he re-

garde th not the offering any more, or receiveth it with

good will at your hand.'\*

Paul tells Timothy, II. Epi. i. 13. "Hold fast the form

of sound words," &c. Now if the scripture does not

.contain those sound words, where shall we find them?

,and if we have not got them, how can we hold them

fast? &c. If the words, God, Christ, Law, Gospel, and

Gospel Institutions, or scripture forms of performing

them or acknowledging and doing them, are not sounds

I know of none.

So also St. Paul tells pf some < having a form of jgod-

liness, but denying the power thereof; from such, tntk

away.\* II. Tim. iii. 5. Observe, it was a form— ^No#

all things that are visible, have some form: and it is

evident that the idolatrous worshippers we read of,' had

a form, and perhaps as much apparent zeal; nay niord,

even to sacrifice their children to their God — But let us

remember it was not the form that God's word directed

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\*We may, by reading the context, see those charactcvb

that St. Paul had reference to, who he says denies the

power of godliness, and to sum it up they were not con-

formed to the directions of God's written word. Now

if the pow^ that may appear in a form of godliness,

does not iodibe people to he conformed to God'« reveal\*

ed wi>rd, may we iwA easily se^ from whence the appear-

ance Cometh, and jndg\* in our^elvea what U right?— —

Hence, if we compare maj;i\*s conduct l>y that sacred

standard, we m^ twe eat^bli^hed m the truth. But if we

compare ourselves ai^ong ourselves, and measure our-

s.elyes by ourselves,, we are not wise: ox iu ,case we fel-

lowship externally upon so. ui^certain a thing as man's

feelings, inventions, or pretended revelatios^s, we may

as well pursue a Jack-with-a-lantern.

No doubt, when our SaVibuf came upon earth, the

profest people of God were as zealous, and had a form

of godliness, as well as profest christians npw have; and

were fond of making proselytes to their order: for it

seems, \* they would compass sea and land to make one.\*

But let us remember, their doings were to be seen of

men; and they would make void Ood\*s law by their tra-

ditions: and consequently the Saviour says; \*\* In vain do

they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commwid-

ment of men."

If we would have any sure rule of fellowship, or act

4o please God, and for our souls' benefit, for the honour

of God's cause, and the peace and happiness of society,

we must believe and act as the bible or God's , revealed

word directs us, have that for our standard of faith and

practice; then let us carefully search Uiat sacred volume

t9Lch one for ourselves, with fervent prayers to God, and

li devout disposition to serye him; at the event of all

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things of a worldly nature, and we shall easily see what

is of God, and what is of men or other beings.

But alas I how close do long traditions stick; and how

pleasing to nature is worldly profit, convenience, and

the applause of mankind! as also our own internal feel-

ings that may arise from our sincerity in an error. But

as the poet has it, speaking of God's revealed word:\*—

Thy word is everlasting Truth;

How pure is every page!

That holy book shall guide our youth,

And well support our age.

This then is a sufficient standard for our external fel-

lowship; and by attending to it, we may know who, when

and what, to admit to our external communion—But a-

Hide of that| all is uncertainty and confusion.

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ARGUMENTS ON BAPTISM.

THERE are few people in our part of the world, bat

are sensible that the article of Baptism, has been for a

long time, and still is, much controverted. No doubtf

many pious and learned men, have been engaged in the

contest, and possibly with too much warmth of zeal.

The most conclusive arguments on that subject, that

I have seen, are found in the writings of Messrs. Bald^

win, and Merrills; to whose writings on that subject, I

would refer my readers, in case they want a learned and

elaborate discussion of the subject.

As I have noticed, that in case we leave the plain 6b«

vious meaning of scripture, on any point of the christ-^

ian's faith or practice, we shall be in a state of uncer«

tainty in our minds; as nearly all the scriptures have

been more or less disputed or controverted by mankind^

at one time or another. Therefore, the most I propose

in the present case, on this subject, is to give some plain

scriptural and reasonable ideas, concerning the institu-

tion or ordinance of Baptism, its designs, the virtue and

efficacy of it, the mode of performing it, and the candi-

date that may receive it. Sec— and would wish to do it

without any reference to pai^y sects in religion; and by

no means to prejudice any soul.

The words, Baptism, Baptist, and Baptize, all deriva-

tives of one idea, occur many times in our scripture.— 4.

But we may ooUce i| is not found^I think; m ftU the^ld

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Testament: and perhaps there was not a word, hi all the

languages in the world, that communicated just the same

idea, until the mission of John the Baptist, (or dipper}

was manifested to the world— And perhaps we may as

well unjiertake to go to the land of Jud«a» aad a^ek for

John the Baptist's bones, as to obtain a satisfactory mean-

ing of that word, ^ide from our h!ible^-n^^ad heve our

Staviour\*8 %ueatioQ, he asked the Jews, is pertkkeitt: ^ the

Bs^am of Jolifi, was it from heaven or of saen?^ Lake

%x. 4. If we admk John's mission, or Baptism, to be

from, hcAven; we may conclude be knew the import i^

meonuig of th£ word, as well as the mode to peffonn it;

an also the suitable candidate fov it. See Mat. iii. from

1 to 13. ^ He preached iTcpentance, and baptised those

llM confejsaed their sins; and they were baptized oi him

in Jordan, confessing their sins," &c.

. Btttaaojur Saviour and his apostles, both commsoMied

aod practised the io^thute of Baptism, I conclude no so^

berchriaiiaii is disposed to dispute, but that the ordin-

»nee of water Baptism wa^, and is of divine authority—

and I am not able as y«t to learn any material distmetioa

in the nature of things, between the words, comn^nd,

erdinance, of i^sdtution: if k is of €od, it is te semain;

for what the Lord doeth he doth it forever, tnr as long as

tiie state of ^ings remain as when he gave die com-

mand, ordinance or institution. So saith our Saviour:

^ Go ye therefore, and teach aU nations^ baptizing thena

in the name of the Fathor, ^i of the Son, and of the

Holy Ghost; teaching the«n, to observe all things what-

ftoev!er I have commanded yctu, and lot i asi with you al-

ways even unto the end of tjM world. Amen.'\* Mattft.

sniii. 19>2Q. ^Heacc; waih the concuppence of many

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other texts, I conclude for one, that we are not to expect

another Dispensation, neither another ordinance in the

()lace of this; or an alteration in the mode of performing

it, of divine authority, so long as this world lasts; for

heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word shall not

pass away.

But some are pleased to say, the Baptism Christ com-

jnanded his apostles to administer, was the baptism of

the spirit, and not of water, save for a temporary time—

A few thoughts may correct that idea.

Do we ever read, hear or know of God\*s (or Christ)

commanding his servants to perform impossibilities?—

Now the baptism of the spirit is as unseen as the soul

is, and is as much out of the power of men as creatures

to perform, as it is to mako a soul — therefore the bap-

tism of the spirit is God's prerogative and his act, and

no mere creature ever had that power to baptize in any

other sense than as instruments, or by their teaching

and acting in faith, as Christ commanded, God or Christ

verified his promise to them, in a miraculous way to

confirm and witness their mission: hence we find when

Peter was come to Cornelius and preached to him and

those with him as recorded Acts 10. \*\* the Holy Ghost

fell on them as on the apostles at the day of Pentecost.\*\*

What was this but spiritual baptism? and still Peter says

in the close, " Can any man forbid water, that these

should not be baptized, which have received the Holy

Ghost as well as we? and he commanded them to be

baptized in the name of the Lord," &c.

I presume to think, that no rational creature in his

sober sense's, (unless he be carried away with enthusias-

tic or fanatical notions) will say, that the baptism St. Pe-»

ter in the naiae of the Lord, commanded Cornelias and

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those with him after they had recciycd the Holy GhosU

was any other than water baptism. St. Peter could not

be so ignorant of his mission or his Master's will, as ta

think because Cornelius and those with him had receiv-

ed the baptism of the Holy Ghost, there was no need of

their submitting to water baptism. Now the ordinary

abilities of man, may enable him to perform water bap-

tism; whereas spiritual baptism is utterly out of his pow-;

er to perform or communicate: therefore as a Tisible

ordinance in the visible church of Christ, Water Bap-

tism was, and is, the baptism that Christ commanded

his servants to teach and administer; and this will more

foully appear, if we consider the manifest design of the

institution: — And in case I bring forward any idea tlial

may be new to any one, I beg them to thoroughly com-t

pare scripture, and the nature of tilings, bpfore they a-\*

dopt or reject those i^eas, &c.

AJtho\* God has a right to command, or institute ordi-

nances for his creatures to subject to, and it may be suf-

ficient for man to know that thus, God has commanded,

and our duty is to obey yet; ip most, if not all tds re-

quirements, we may discover his design, and the ponsi^^

iency and reasonableness of the requirement — Ai)dsiix%

is evidently the design of all t^e vbible instituti;0|>s ^nif

commstnds or ordinances of God, that they connect tl^c

declarative glory pf God, with the happiness of the wil-

ling and obedient soul.

What were the modes of worship for Adam, in his

state of innocency, is not ascertained clearly in scripturci

and is out of the power of man now to ascertain. We

have no reason to doubt, but that, as he wa^ God's crea-

ture and made good, altho\* a natural man, and in the na-

tural world, he might live in open yisipjQ with his JVf\*r

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ker.— Be that as it may, it is evident, that when he sin\*

lied, he could only hear the voice of the Lord God, in

the garden: and hence, to hear and obey the voice of the

Lord, constitutes the principal external happiness of

creatures, as they cahnot see God, only by an eye ot

faith, and live, in this earthly tabernacle. Therefore, as

visible religion or external worship, wias, and still is ne-

cessary iti this temporal state of things; in order that

man may s^rve to declare the glory of God his Makei^,

tod act for the benefit and instruction of his posterity;

us also for the edification of his equals. So God, in

mercy to his creature man, has not only given him his

law as a rule of life, but also external forms or institu-

tions for him to manifest his love, faith and duty in, to

his God. Now the most of christians suppose that the

ordi^an6es and ceremonies of worship, in the old or for-

mer Dispensation wias typical, and no doubt the taberna-

cle and its yesselii and even the land of Canaan, all were

in a certain degree typical — And in case we can happily

see the end and design of those types and shadows, ' and

rightly apply them to the gospel Dispensation, it may

afford us great consolation, and stability of mind: where-

as a misapplication of those ceremonies or ordinances

may hunns. The question then is, if water Baptism is

ah ordinance of God, and to be perpetuated in his milli-

tent church; and if it was not instituted in the former

Dispensation; and some of those former ordinances are

d?me away, as to form: Which of the former institu-

tions does baptism succeed in the place of ? &c.

(I shall give my judgment, only as a man, who trusts

i he has obtained grace to be found faithful; but not pre-

tending to any inmiediate revelation, save what is reveal-

ed in the scriptures )

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1 answer. Not in the place of circumcisionj but, il

In the place of any former ordinance, it is in tlie place

of Sacrifices.

As I profess to be a reasonable creature, and as the a-

postles tell us " to give a reason," See, I will iirst shew,

how it could not come in place of circumcision, and

then the propriety of it\*s coming in the plac€ of the

law of sacrifices; and leave it for men to judge.

God had servants that no doubt understood the meth-

od God had ordained as an external mode of worship

and dedicating themselves to God in an acceptible order,

long before circumcision was introduced into the world;

and if circumcision was essential to salvation, those that

did without it, must be lost, or God has altered his terms

of acceptance. The scriptures give us two ideas as to

the design or meaning of circumcision; viz. " they aft

debtors to do the whole law;" Gal. v. 3. « and a seal of

the righteousness of faith." Rom. iv. 11.

It will not be disputed but that those who are bapti-

zed are debtors to do God's will, even in the gospel Dis-

pensation, as all mankind that hear of the gospel have

an evident duty to perform; i. e, to obey it. Not that do-

ing duty, or the law, can justify a soul at the bar of God,

(as the nature of law is to condemn the sinner; and duty

we owe to God as being his creatures, owing 9\\ wc

have and are to him: and where is the mortal that ever

and always did his duty? for in many things we all offend,

and verily are unprofitable servants wlicn we have done

that which was our duty to do— Therefore duty can ne-

ver merit.) but the least omission or transgression of

God's holy law, brings condemnation or death.

Heoce, if mankind are justified at the bar of God, it

must be by faith in the atonement Christ has made, iov

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the believing soul— -Hence, the just live by Faith. 5< But

without Faith, it is impossible to please him;\*\* Heb. xu

6. " And Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a

seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet

being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all

them that believe though they be not circumcised," 8cc.

Now the covenant that God made with Abraham, to

which the seal of circumcision was affixed, as in Gen.

xvii. 10, had a reference to temporal good, and greatness,

i. e. the land of Canaan and also of the seed of Jesus

Christ who was made of Abraham's lineage, according

to the flesh; hence the seal was to be in their flesh. Sec.

Observe, a seal is something visible, that the man-child

carried with him through life: and as that covenant, on

^od\*s part, was fully completed and fulfilled when he

had brought Abraham's posterity into the enjoyment of

the land of Canaan; and after Christ was brought forward

and commenced a new Dispensation, and new modes,

signs, &c. that seal was at an end — as abundant texts

plainly manifest— -And as the natural heirs of Abraharat

received that temporal good and land of Canaan, which

was a type no doubt of Heaven, so the true spiritual heirs

of Abraham's faith, or those that are the children of

God by faith, unto whom the better promise is made, and

spiritual and eternal good is promised in the covenant —

are sealed in another way, as saith the apostle, Epi. i^

13. " After that ye believed ye were scaled with that

holy spirit of promise which is the earnest of our in-

heritance," &c. And iv. SO. " And grieve not the holy

spirit of promise whereby ye are scaled unto the day of

redemption;\*' compared with II. Cor. i. 22. -and Rom. viii.

16, with many other texts — Implying, not only a real

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satisfaction to the soul, that has the seal, of the new cov-

enant; but likewise a visible appearance to our fellow

mortals, that we are heaven-bound, by our deportment

and daily conduct, and are sealed in their forehead as

the servants of God. " Now if any man have not the

spirit of Christ) he is none of his," &c. But water bap-

tism confers no grace, and is no visible mark on the

creature: therefore it could not be designed to take

place in the new Dispensation instead of circumcision

by any means, as Faith ever was a prerequisite for Bap-

tism — But circumcision was ordered to be forced on all

males of Abraham's household, and even on the child

eight days old, who is utterly incapable of acting in faith;

and I know of none, even the least colour x)f a command

in all the bible, to administer water baptism before there

is a manifestation of faith; consequently could not suc-

ceed in the gospel dispensation in place of circumcis-

ion.

Now, that water baptism succeeded in the church,

in place of sacrifices, I think is evident, if we consider

their designs and the candidates. Sacrifices were as

early as Adam's time; and we are informed in scripture

who was to bring their offering, and what they were to

bring, and how, &c.— and it is worthy of notice, that A-

bel brought the firstling of his flock, and was accepted,

in preference to Cain, who brought the fruit of his own

labour, or of the earth, &c.

Now as blood is the life of the flesh, so we are told,

'^ It i« the Wood that maketh atonement, and without the

shedding of blood there is no remissions of sins," Scc.^—

And, it appears to me that the great Jehovah informed

Adam and his, sons, after the fall, something like this;

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«Adam, you, by your transgression of my holy and

righteous law, have forfeited your life, your all; and the

law calls life for life; your God has found out a way; the

seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head; mine

anointed shall come in the fulness of time, in a visH>le bo-

dy, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and rise

victorious over death, hell or the grave, in order for

your relief. Now, Adam, if you believe my promise of

grace, and t^ish to be saved from everlasting destruc-

tion, do you renounce the dictates of that serpent that

has deceived your wife; and also all dependance on any

thing you can do, to merit my favour, and as a testimony

that you confide in my graciousf promise of salvation, &c.>

do you take that innocent lamb, and offer it up, thUs and

so, as an emblem of my promised Saviour, and as a man-

ifestation of your faiths in my salvation, &c. and thereby

you will prove that you resolve to accept of my offered

grace, and also teach your posterity the way of accept^

ance before your God."

Thus, it seems that^acrifices was introduced into the

oM world. And it is worthy of notice that nearly all na-

tions of the earth, have from the earliest times we hava

account of them, had a notion of appeasing their dei-^

ties with vicarious sacrifices; and by the way, it is a good

argument for the truth and validity of our scriptures;—

and here we might notice the price cf our redemption^

and the malignant nature of sin, as it «eems to require

the Creator to humble himself as it were to save the

poor lost creature; as is abundantly evident by our ac-

count of the humiliation and sufferings oS Christ.

Again, when God introduced the law of sacrifices by

Moses, we may observe it is entirely distinct from the

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moral law of God, or the ten Precepts in the dccalogtic,

—not a word of sacriftces in that law. Therefore, the

law of sacrifices had the nature of a standing ordinance

in the visible worship of God, and was attached to the

service of the sanctuary or tabernacle of the congrega-

tion. Now as all those sacrifices were emblematical or

typical of the great sacrifice of Christ's body, which a-

lonc could take away sin, so it was to continue in God's

\'isible worship until the antitype came and took it out

of the way, nailing it to the cross, 8cc. And we should

ever I'emember, that there is no requirements in all the

law of sacrifices, for any person to offer such sacrifices

only as^n evidence of iheir faith, and a manifestation

of their obedience to God.

The sacrifice of the Passover had reference to Israel

as ?L nation's deliverance out of E^ptian bondage; and

all the first-bom males were sanctified or set apart to

God, and waato be redeemed by a Lamb, &c. and as all

the visible Israelites eat that sacrifice, so, I conceive, the .

Lord's Supper succedcd in place of that sacrifice, and

3S designed for all professors or the true spiritual Israel-

ites to partake of, as emblematical of their deliverance

from sin, or that worse than Egyptian bondage, by the

sacrifice of the only begotten Son of God, &c. — But ob-

serve, the infant did not offer that sacrifice, nor the par-

ent for the child in particular, (for it would be absurd to

suppose the first child of a parent, and a male only, was

to be favoured of God to the exclusion of all others) but

rather as a general idea; as all the first-born in Egypt

were slain in the nation, so the first-born of Israel were

wct apart to God.

All the other sacrifices, had reference to national sins,

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©f^ to indlvidiEial pollutions, and were brought at the cost

of the nation, or the individual, that was capable of act-

ing m fidth; and I conclude no rational mind can sup«

pose that all or any of the sacrifices offered by any in

the former dispensation, had any virtue or did any good

to those that offered then», other than continuing their

risible standing in the church, unless offered in faith.~

Kow as true justifying faith, or spiritual devotion is as

unseen to mortitls, as the soul is, in ease there then wag

a propriety of men's external actions, to manifest to God

and their fblfow mortals and the rising generations their

faith; so it still remains consistent and necessary in the

gospel dispensation, that mankind should manifest their

^th by external acts of devotion, or dedicating of them-

selves to God; as man is still in the flesh, and the state

of things in the visible world, are not materially altered

£rom what they were in the legjil dispensation.

Now as aU those saci\*ifices were to be living creatures^-

^ose offerings, eonsecradens, &c. that had not life,,

were not caUed sacrifix:es) and were to be perfect or

jM>und without blembh, and brought to the door of the

tabernacle of the congregation, and Uiere offered to the

Lord, and must be slain,, and the blood sptinkled on the

altar and whhin the veil, t« atone for sin, (for although

we read of animals being o&red aHve, and remaining

my for ^e service of t^e priests and Levites, 8cc. yet

lliey we»e not called sacrificea^ but oj^ring^g, J How for\*

dibly did they represent the offering of Jesus Christy\*

once for alli^— And assail those sacrifices thus slain, pre«

figured the great antitjrpe in his death, &c. untilhe mad^

kis offering of his own body, once in the world to put a-^

way sin by the sacrifice of himself— So, when he had

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risen from the dead, and all power in heaven and in

earth committed to him, and another dispensation ancK

order of worship commences, he tells his disciples: "Go

ye into all the world and preach the gospel to eveiy

creature; [I conclude all men must understand those^.

cifery creatures here spoken of, is, rational intelligences

capable of hearing, understan<ttng and believing as the^

gospel wiis to be preached among all nations for the o-

bedience of faith, Rom. i. 5, & xvi. 26.] he that believ-

cth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth

not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16. with Matth. Luke^

&c.

Now as the Israelites were to bring their sacrifices to

the door of the tabernacle of the congregation alive, for

God's priest to slay, and offer and make an atonement

for the soul according to the law, which could not be ef-

ficacious to the soul, unlCl^s offered in faith, as before

stated — So the believing penitent soul, that receiveth

the glad tidings of the gospel, may with propriety come

to the 9ongregation of God's people, and there profess

their faith before God, and to his people, and present

their body as a living sacrifice, for God's authorized min\*.

i^ter of the gospel to do with it according to the ordi»-

nance of the gospel by baptising such according to the «

commission Christ has given.

Hence we find Ananias ssk^h to Paul, Acts xxii. I6v

\*^ And now why tarriest thou? arbe and be baptized^

and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord\*\*

©r as Peter preached. Acts ii, 3ii \*< Repent and be bap-

^ed every one of you, in the. name of Jesus Christ, for '

tke remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the

lioly <lhtte^> Ice i . .

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Now Baptism, by immer$ion, perhaps is as emblemati-

cal of Christ's death and resurrection, as killing the

living sacrifice of old, and more so, as that only shewed

his death and sufferings; but this, as the body cannot

live under water, shews his dying and ri«ng again.— —•

Hence saith the apostle: " Therefore we are burie<l

with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was

raised from the dead by the glory of the Father; even so

we also should walk in newness of lif^\*\* Rom. vi. 4—

and, << Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized

into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?" &c.—

^^ For as many of you as have been baptized into Christy

have put on Christ." Gal. iii. 2I^ Therefore, as here is

a lively representation of the death and resurrection of^

Christ, in this ordinance by way of plunging, I conclude

that Baptism succeeded in place of Sacrifices, and both

as a manifestation of the {aith> in the candidate. More

scriptures might be cited, and much more said, but our

limits will not admit of it at present.

But let none be so ignorant, as to think baptism by waK

ter is the putting away of the filth of the fiesh, or atones

for sin. St. Peter informs us, in his first Epistle, iii. 2 h

to the contrary; it saves the believing soul the guilt of

conscience for the neglect; hut, only being a figure of

the resurrection of Jesus Christ, it is still Jesus Christ

only can take away our sins, by his power and the Virtue

of his doings: or as ssdth John; ^ The blood of Jesus

Christ eleanseth us from all sin, while we wal^ in the'

light (of his word) as he is in the light/\* So he net

only gave his commsmi for water baptism, but also'gdfve

us the precedent by subjecting himself to it, to fulfil

all rrghteousnesSf and- we shall have na cause of shame

when we hare a due respect to all his oonunaudiueiitS;

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The virtue and efficacy of water baptism) thefeibver,is

like the virtue and efficacy of keeping the othei\* posi-\*

tive commanda and instttotions of the great Jehovah, op

Head of his church.

As he has promised to rewaj\*d the evil doer, so there

is a reward for the righteous and in keeping of his di\*

rections there is great reward, Psalms xix« VV.

As to the mode of perfbttmng Baptism, scripture iiw

forms us of but one mode\* John baptized where there

was nmcA water. Jesus Christ,- it appears by eomparmgt

the Evangelists together, was baptized in the river o^

Jordan— And we read, Acts viisi. 38, of Philip bapti^ingf

the Ettnuch in a certaia wateir, that they, << went down

into the water, ai>d thetttfiey came up out of the water;\*\*

and as the act of haptisinig is compared to buTyin^, id

several i^aces, it is evident that the mode was by laying

the body under water^ as near in the position we bury

them,, as may be» Now the method of burying is famiU

iar; I know of no people tl»at bury with the face down\*

wards} much less to sprinkle a little earth on the facCf

or pour it on while the body i^ standings and call such a

pfrocedure burying the dead^— And is is thought thai

were it not for the inventions aiid> s^btEe argui^ftents^ and

selfish interest of uninspired men, mankind would now

be at no- more loss i& tkeir mkids respecting the mode of

baptishn, than they' are as to tto ni4de of burying thei^

fellow mortals.\*^ An^ the only sdte way that I know of^

fsr man now ta attain the^ truth, in this particiiiaf\*, is, t<^

la^' aside creaturesV direction, and attend- tb divine Rev

elation as recorded in our bible. ^By attending to that

with, fervent prayer^ and a <Uspositi6n tb obey the truth^,

ktk cost US: what; it mayi w& maf see the fitiiess of

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things, and be established in this as well as all otLer

points of religion.

Now, as to the suitable Candidate for this ordinance —

We know that also is a matter much controverted. But

let us still adhere to scripture, and keep in virew the

character of God and the accountability of his creature

man. If it has pleased God through the foolishness of

preaching, to save them that believe; and if the gospel

was preached among all nations, for the obedience of

faith; and if, " with the heart man believeth unto right-

eousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto

salvation, and so faith comcth by hearing, and hearings

by the word of God;" (Rom. x. 17.) and if the word of

faith which we preach, is nigh thee, that thou shalt con-

fess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in '

thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead thou

shalt be saved— I say, if the apostle was correct in such

like ideas, and that without faith it is impossible to please

him:— then certainly a fair inference must suppose that

a suitable candidate for baptism, must be an adult per-

son; one capable of hearing and understanding the doc-

trine taught; and also of speaking to confess the Lord

Jesus; and consequently, that has a firm belief in God,

Christ, &c. or they are not candidates for baptism accor-

ding to God's appointment: and if we peruse the doc->

trines and practice of Christ and his apostles, we cannot

find the least intimation or practice otherwise. Repent-\*

ance and faith, ever were first called for by John, by Je-

sus Christ, and by all his disciples that scripture gives

us any account of: as John baptized them that confessed

their sins; so when the Samaritans believed Philip prea-

ching the things concerning the kingdom of God and

the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptised, both men

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and women—- But we read of no children or infants be\*

ing admitted.

So also, Philip to tlie Eunuch: (< If thou believest with

all thine heart thou mayest." So when Lydia\*s heart

was opened, and she attended to the doctrine preachedf

she was baptieed.

As to Lydia's household it is no more likely that she

had any in her family but adults, than it is for merchants

that go abroad for the purpose of trade and commerce,

and only have a family of servants. So also as" to the

Jailor's family; the apostles spake unto him the word of

the Lord, and to all that were in his house, &c.

Now, can any candid mind think, that had q^if Lord

designed that baptism should be performed against any

one's will, or to infants, that both he and his apostles

should never give us such an idea in command, nor leave -

us any account of such a practice in all the Book of

God?

As to the degree of Faith, previously requisite to the

ordinance of baptism; I conclude, the scriptures leave

that to the conscience of the candidate. The Eunuch

professed to bdieve that Jesus Christ was the Son of

God. Peter preached baptism to them that were prick-

ed in their hearts, and enquired what they must do— -

(Acts,ii. 38, 8cc.) — as well as to Cornelius, who had re-

ceived the Holy Ghost. So also Paul at Ephesus, (Acts

xix. 1, 2, and on) to those that had been baptized unto

John's baptism, and had not heard of the Holy Ghost;

as they were baptized again in the name of the Lord Je-

sus, and Paul laid hands on tliem and they received the

Holy Ghost; that scripture requires an acknowledgment

of faith in Christ, previous to their subjecting to

baptUok^-^AU whUh evidee^y proves thaJt those in the

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primitive days of the gospel, acted in that ordinance to

manifest their faith in the divine Saviour, and thereby

visibly to put on Christ; and thereby, in the appointed

way and order of the great Shepherd of his sheep, en-

ter into the visible church or kingdom of God, to be

yoked under his government, and to be disciplined by

his laws, and learn of him by precept and precedent,

that their yoke might be easy, and their burthen light.

But, perhaps, some enquiring mind may ask if bap-

tism was designed only for believers, and si|ch as volun-

tarily professed their faith in the divine Saviour, from

whence came the practice so familiar and so general in

the christian part of the world, of sprinkling infants and

calling it Baptism? while charily must allow that many

pious souls are in the practice of no other mode, Sec.-—

I will try to inform such minds, how I understand, Pedo-

baptism was introduced into the church of Christ; and I

hope no one will be offended at the truth:—

When God gave his law by his faithful servant Mo-

ses, and also the form of the tabernacle, and also the

mode of his worship, he charged him to see that he

made all tilings according to the pattern shewji him iu

the mount: [Heb. viii. 5, compared with Exod. xxv. 40,

& xxvi. 30, 8c xxvii. 8. and Numb. viii. 4, and Acts, vii.

44.] and Moses was very cautious to charge the people

of God, not to add, alter or diminish from God's com-

mandments and institutions. So also in the close of di-

vine Revelation, as also in many places in our new Tes-

tament, we have the most solemn and awful warnings,

about adding or taking away any part contained in the

sacred word; and yet we can read but small portions of

the scriptures without complaints of man's assuming to

alter or take awav, &c. God's precepts. Even when our

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Lord came on earth, there were many zealous people,

and some that seemed to trust in themselves that they

were righteous and despised others, 8cc. But how did

the divine Sayiour reprove and warn them, \*\* that they

made void God's law by their tradition; but in vain do

they worship me, teaching for doctrines the^ command.-

mcnts of men.'\* Mat. xv. 9.

It seems that man has ever been fond and full of in-

ventions, and in almost every age of the world have un-

dertaken, from some motive or other, to make innova-

tions on God's laws, and his institutions or ordinances:

hence the real cause of all the errors in the world is in

the devil, or man\*s propensity to evil, or adhering to the

devil's insinuations, (or mistaking the devil's suggest-

ions, or their own fancy or selfish interest, for the light

of God's spirit or word) and many times, I conclude,

innovations are made in God's established order of

things from good motives, in the inventor of such inno-

vations.

Now as Pedobaptism is not found in divine Revelation

we must look for its source elsewhere; and a slight ac-

quaintance with ancient Ecclesiastical history, will in-

form us of its introduction

It is plain in scripture, that in the apostles days, there

were teachers in the church that taught a different doc-

trine from that the apostles taught; and who held that

circumcision was essential to salvation;— and Moshcim

and other historians inform us, that after the apostles'

days, many absurd doctrines and practices were soon in-

troduced into the christian church; and that as the chris-

tian religion became established into a systematical

form as to order and government, &c. real miracles, to-

gether with immediate inspiration ceased. And such

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mn account seemi^ reasonable; for after God had estab\*

Hahed his law and the order of worship in a miraculous

manner by Moses, the affairs of religion were carried

^n in an ordinary way and without miracles^ as the peo-

ple had that system to inform them in Riost, if not all

important affairs of life, so likewise as to the gospel dis-

pensation: but saith St. Peter; " there were false proph-

ets also among the people, even as there shall be false

teachers among you,\*\* &c.

Man from some motive, is apt to set himself up— and

when Jerusalem was destroyed, and the priesthood ceas-

ed, the bishops in the christian church it seems trans-

ferred the priest's office to themselves; and by continu-

ed innovations in power, finally produced a pope,— who

claims a right to infallibility, and to make and alter laws

&c, for the church. Man, from ignorance or selfishness

is capable of doing much evil.

Now when the idea of circumcision is allowed as es-

sential to salvation; and when we admit that water bap-

tism succeeded in tlie christian church, in place of cir-

cumcision in the old church; it is but natural to infer,

that water baptism also is essential to salvation— Which

doctrine, it is evident, by history, was absolutely admit-

ted in the church as a scripture doctrine— (and it is ev-

ident by history that many ideak or doctrines on many

points of the christian religion have at one time been

voted out as Heresy, when at other periods such doc-

trines were allowed as orthodox, or true— Such was the

case of the idea of Predestination; when first introdu-

ced, it was called Heresy; but now it is popular; as also

the doctrine or v/ord Trinity: Mosheim informs tius, that

Theophilus of Antiochf^Vas the first inventor of that

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word, about 161 years after Christ.)— and was a very ti-

niversal idea in what was then called the orthodox or

true christian church. About the same time, which was

near the end of the second century, the notion of pray-\*

ing towards the east, and using the sign of the cross,

was introduced in the christian church; and superstition\*

was apparent then in many particulars. — from the idea

that water baptism was essei^tial to salvation.

Natural affections would wish to procure happiness

Jbr our children: and if they were circumcised of old,

and baptism by water, succeeded in the new covenant

as a seal, to their eternal felicity, by all means baptize

them, and save a multitude of souls. But to plunge a

weak, sickly infant, all over in water, might not be con-

venient, if not endanger its life: hence to sprinkle the

face and say the words, may do as well; only have a vote

of the church or the pope, to sanction it for baptism;-—

and let such child have godfather and godmother, that

shall promise it shall be a christian — and all is safe.

Such in short appears to be the source of Pedobaptism,

towards the last of the second century — And we may

here notice at least two benevolent purposes that the in-

ventor might have in view; viz. the salvation of the in-

fant, and the increase of the church. Whether such

were the motives of the introducers of Pedobaptism, or

ratlier lucre, (as I expect they then received a fee for

baptizing infants, and in case they lived, would naturally

add to.the incomes of the bishops\* salary,) is a matter

out of my province to judge. But as use, or custom and

habit, becomes second nature, " as their fathers did, so

do they to this day."

No doubt the Protestant sects had just cause of sepa-

rating from the Romish church; but what a pity it is that

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they still retain so many errors, practised by them; and

perhaps no one sect is entirely clear of some error irt

faith or practice. — Now, a little reason, with attendin,^

to the scriptures, may free us from such absurdities, if

we will let the cunning and sophistical writings of man

alone. In the first place, it is as much out of the pow-

er of man or any body of men, as creatures, to confer

grace or salvation on the soul of the infant, by all they

can do to it, as it is for them to make a soul; and as all

acts of creatures, in order to please God, must be done

in faith, (as "whatsoever is not of faith, is sin," Rom.

xiv. 23.) the infant nor ideot, in the nature of things,

cannot act in faith: and as to parents acting in faith, in

such cases, for their children; faith cannot be transfer-

red, any more than joy or sorrow, pain or misery; such,

being mere personal things, must be borne or suffered

by the single individual.

V Again, the promise made by the sponsors, or god-par-

ents so called, is such as is utterly out of their power to

fulfil; as young people, when come to adult years, may

commit thousands of sins, entirely beyond the reach of

their guardians' care and knowledge; as, " he that look-

eth on a woman to lust after her, commits adultery\*\* &cc.

All such proceedings may, possibly, be thought of by

sober Deists, as impositions on the human understand-

ing, and no advantage to the cause of true Christianity;

for, as man is a reasonable being, he must have some

colour of reason in the proposition proposed to him, or

he is not bound either to believe or obey.

Thus I have given my ideas of the source of Pedo-

baptism, briefly, and as modestly or charitably us the na-

ture of tlie subject would admit of.

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I have been a :tinking mortal, over fifty fcard; and

have read raany histories, ancient and modern; and have

seen and heard, perhaps, in substance, all that can be

said on the subject; and if I could find it in my bible, I

think I should be glad to embrace the idea. — ^Hut, < what

that is wantinjj, cannot be numbered?\* I freely own I

am personally acquainted with many that lK>ld to Pedo-

baptism; and greatly respect them, as christians in er-

ror; and it is not for me to judge how many and how

j^reat errors a person may hold, and yet meet the appro-

bation of God — as all mankind are failable. But if the

Pedobaptists would lay aside all they cannot bring a-

Thus saith the Lord for, and unite with their fellow-

christians in the plain obvious meaning of the writteni

scriptures; wiiat a happiness it would be to the chns^iail-

cause, and the aouU and bodies of men.

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ARGUMENTS ON TfiE SABBATH.

THE article of thfe Sabbath, has been less controver-

ted, in late pubHcatiotis, than that of Baptism. Not be-

cause it is less essential to the happiness of mankind;

but raither because professors of Christianity have by

some means or other, more generally neglected attend-

ing to this solemn command of God: yet there has becii

advocates for the Sabbath of the Lord, perhaps, in every

age — I have seen the witings of several authors on that

subject; as Batniield, vrho wrote several hundred years

ago— His books are very ^scarce: I know of only one or

two now extant. He was particular as to the time and

means used to introduce the change of the Sabbath: and

it may suffice to say, that it consisted in artifice and

man's inventions;\*— not the least colour of arty divine au-

thority for it.

Also, George Carlow, who wrote about -200 years ago

—his book was^ re-pi'inted in 1802— some of those I

have by me to dispose of;— in which he writes in answer

to Mr. Ward, who had written for the first-day sabbath:

and it is thought, that any serious person who is willing

the bible should be the standard of truth, nxust confess,

when he has read Carlow, that he has not only entirely

refuted Mr, Ward, but also answered all objections

commonly brought against the seventh- day sabbath, so

fully that there can be no hesitation in 8«iy mind, that is

really disposed to practise truth in that case, what day of

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the week is the christian sabbath. I could wish eveij

real christian^ would read his book) as it is neither large

nor costly,

I have also seen some of the writings of several oth-

ers, on that subject, both for and against the seventh -day-

sabbath: — andif the reader pleases, he may judge, that

it is not merely tradition, or worldly interest, that dispo\*

ses me to make some observations on the Sabbath: how-

ever, as I have often observed in other cases, so also ia

this, if our bible does not plainly point out the day, it ia

iu vain for us to look for stability of mind from any oth-

er source.

But, says one, my Catechism teaches me that the sev-

enth day was the sabbath of the Lord from the begin-

ning of the world, until the resurrection of Christ, and

from that time, the first day is the christian sabbath— or

words to that effect.

But pray, dear friend, who made your Catechism? I

answer: The Assembly of Divines, or Synod, or Coun-

cil, or Pope; no matter whoi if it is not of God, it will

not stand, in the burning Day.

Now if all assemblies of divines, were actuated pure-

ly by the divine Spirit of God, they .would act agreeable

to the divine command of God; or we may conclude

that God is altered in his nature or moral character; or

else the law of the sabbath was only given for a fiart of

time; which we will consider more of by and by. But,

perhaps, the dear child may ask in what verse in the bi-

ble, may I find the command for the first-day sabbath? I

would answer: in the very next verse to where you

have a command for infant baptism. But> alasl neither

are to be found in all tlie book of God.

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12?

But did not our glorious Saviour rise on the first day

<>f the week? and are not the works of Redemption

greater than the works of Creation? Dear child, and

■what old mother learned you to reason so? Observe, if

you would seek for truth in this case, that God has not

seen fit to leave on record in our bible, the precise time

the divine Saviour did arise from the dead; as you may

see in all the Evangelists: — for when they came to the

sepulchre early, even as it began to dawn towards the

first of the week, or while it was yet dark, (observe, the

word day is supplied in every case where the first day

of the week is spoken of, as all our learned men say

those words in Italica in our bible, ai'e not found in the

original, and it is doubtful.) and he was then risen and

gone\*— -But bow long he had been risen and gone, is not

left on record. Some have stated, that he was crucified

on the sixth day of the week, laid in the sepulchre that

evening, and rose first-day morning. But what will man

try to do, to make out his own fancy or tenet!

The prophet Daniel speaks, or rather the angel to

Daniel, ix. 26, 27, about the Messiah being cut off, and

the sacrifice and oblation, to cease in the midst of the

week. And our Lord said, Mat. xii. 40, in answer to

those that wanted a sign; " For as Jonas was three days

and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of

Man, be three days and three nights in the heart of the

earth." Now any person may know, that the middle of

the week is fourth-day; and we have scripture that tells

us, he was put into the sepulchre in the evening, (Mat.

xxvii. 57.) and would it not be more agreeable to those

scriptures, to conclude he arose from the dead in the e-

yening?

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12S

And as for the works of Redemption being gte^kr

than the works of Creation; all reason teachesi that if

takes more wisdom, and generally iMre co^sti to invent

or construct and build a fabrick or any machinery at

first, than to repair such building when out 6f order.—

But why sliould the daf the Saviour arose, be set apart'

as a weekly Sabbath, any more thah the day of his birthy

when the glad tidings of great joy to all people was pro-

claimed? or the day of his death, when the great atone-

ment for sin was 'made, [and on the day of atonement in

the old dispensation, no work was to be done, Lev. xvi.

29,30 3 by the express command of God? or any more

than the day of his ascension? for the Holy Ghost, it

seems, was not given in the same degree, until after his

ascension, and he told his disciples that it Was expedient

lor them that he should go away^ in order that he might

send them the Comforter, &c.

I hope I as mueh value the doings and sufferings, reS«

urrcction, ascension and intercession of the glorious

Saviour, as any man. But let us have his or God\*s com-

mand, for observing either of them as a Sabbath, and

then we may be warranted iii so doing.

Now, it is a universal maxim, that a law mtist be pub«

lished or known^ or it cannot be binding; for where there

is no law, there is no transgression, Sec. Again, it takesi

the same power or authority to alter, Or abrogate a law,

as it does to make it, and the same publicity. Thescf

maxims are so universal, thai ineed not dwell on the

idea.

As the seventh ddiy of ^he week (not a seventh day}

was ordained and constituted by God hiimself, at creation

(Gen. ii. 3.) blessed and sanctified of God, or hallowed ^

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I2«S

^ a sabbath of rest: as^aUo it ife evident, be(brd the giv-

iffg the ten Precepts, it was called the Lord's Sabbath,

:^d observed as such by the willing and kh#wing and

obedient people of God. See £xod. xvL 22 to 30.——

Hence, in the Decalog^ue it is commanded, by way of

remembrance, as a thing that had ever been enjoined on

man. Therefore, when a whole nation of six or sevea

hundred thousand grown men, shall be arraigned before

God, and shall hear his awful voice, and he write, him-

self, even on stone that cannot rot or be burnt, that it is

his holy will that the first day of the week should be ob-

served as an holy Sabbath, in place of the seventh, man

may be wai^ranted in observing it as such^

It is needless, in the pre^nt age of the worlds to cite

the numerous scriptures that enjoin the- observation of

the seventh day as a holy Sicbbath, commanded and set

^art to holy uses by God himself: Neither is it neces-

sary to cite all the blessings God has promised to those

who duly observe it\* All I shall here observe on that

ptfint, is, that there is no one comrtand in all the scrip-

tut\*e», it is thought, has so rej^eated and- great and uni'

irersftl pt^misesof blessings annexed to the true obser

vation of it, as the command for the seventh-day Sabbath

has. See Isaiah, 56th chapter in particular. And per-

hs^s no one comrtiand, in ^11 the bible, is more com-

plained of, or heaTter punishments inflicted on the trans-'

gressor, than that on the seventh-day sabbath-breaker-

hath. Death was the portion of the wilful breaker of

the seventh-day sabbath, as well as for the idolater, or

the adultei^er; and I Would here ask all candid readers,

if in case polygamy or adultery,'had been as long and as

\iniversally practised and encouraged and commanded,

V P>^fc»\*cd kings> emperors, pbpei^ and professed

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ministers of the gospel, as the first day for a sdbbatli

has been; would it now be called a less crime? I have

no hesitatidH in my mind, in such a case, to suppose

some people would be so far from calling it a crime, that

it would be considered a virtuous act, to have a number

of wives. \*

Again; admit the most barbarous savage, that never

heard of our bible, or of Christ and Divine Revelation,

could be learned the English language, and let him read

our bible all thro', and he shall never hear a word of

man\*s comment on it, and let him admit it to be of di-

vine authority; would'he be at any, even the least doubt

in his mind which day of the week the Lord had ap-

pointed as a Sabbath for his people? Surely he could

not. And it seems evident from a number of scriptures,

that the law of the Sabbath, was ever considered as the

criterion to distinguish between the worshippers of God

and idolaters. See Exod. xxxi. 12 to 17. and Ezek. xx.

13 to 20. It is called a sign between the Lord and his

people forever, and commanded to be kept throughout

their generations for a perpetual covenant. And it is

observable, that breaking the Sabbath seems an outlet

to all other sins and vices; as most of the criminals that

have been put to death, who have given a confession, . or

recounted how they were led astray, begin with noticing

the brpach or neglect of the Sabbath as the first cause of

their going astray.

Now as relates to crimmals, in case they knew of no

other Sabbath than the first day, the idea will equally

hold good. What the Sabbath is a sign of, I purpose to.

consider farther on, by and by.

Now, can any christian person even think, that in case

of such importance, had God or Christ, or any of his.

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Kvine missionaries, contemplated a change or the lea^

sdteration in the observation of the Sabbath, or fourth

Command in the Decalogue, that some one of theto

would not have given and at least left on record som6

posidve and plsdn account of the same? Surely it would

be uncharitable if not impious to tax any of them with

such indifference and neglect. But, sa)rs one, example

speaks louder than words; and have we no example of

the practice of good servants of God, as changing the

observation of the seventh to the first day of the week

as a sabbath, or of their neglect in observing the sev-

enth day of the week as a sacred day of rest, &c.? I an-

swer positively; no' such example is to be foi^nd in our

bible. All account of good servants of God, aside of

that, is uncertain. As to example, I conclude all good

servants of God, will have their example, so far as their

weak nature admits, correspond with their faith, and the

commandments of God. L6t us see the example of the

good ones of old, in this case, as recorded in our bible:

And first, see the example of God himself. Gen. ii. 2 8c

S, compared with other texts, where a reason is given

for the fourth Command. He rested and was refreshed.

Exod. xxxi. 17. He also blessed the seventh day, and

sanctified it, or inade it holy to the Lord. (Now let us

always remember, it is God that sanctifies, and he alone

his a right to say what is holy, or unholy, clean, common

or unclean, and not man.) And I conclude, no christian

will doubt, but that all saints of God, before 'the coming

of Christ, did mean to observe the seventh day as the

sabbath of the Lord; as is sufiiclently evident from scrip-

ture. And if our Lord Christ, is to be followed in ex-

ample or command, let us see clearly that he has given.

>ny toleration to neglect the sabbath: and as he was

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made under the U1W9 ai^d came to fulfil the law^ let us

^e careful how we, as chrUtianS) admit the idea of his

jbreaking the law, even of the sahh^th. (For altho' he

.^as accused of so doings rememher it was the supepsd-

^ious bypQcritos that accused hiiP) and bad no ibunda\*

lion in the. command of God, or right reason for auch

an accusation,\* as it ever was lawful to do well on the

sabbath day, and as mercy is before judgment, so acts of

mercy and of real necessity, as real necessity knows no

law, was consistent with the command of God and all

reason: — hence the incest of Lot with his daughters, is

not complained of) The idea of Christ's breaking any

part of God's law, woUld spoil the atonement he came

to make. Therefore he came not to destroy or dissolve

the law, but to fulfil; and the- fulfilling of a typical law

by the antitype's appearance, naturally dissolves such a

law, but not of a moral law, as has been observed. »

Therefore I need not be particular as to all the exam-

ples of Jesus Christ: it may be sufficient to observe, that

he was subject to his parents until of age; and when he

entered on his ministry, we read repeatedly of his going

into the synagogue on the sabbath, and attending the

public worship on God's stated day of worship; that this

was his manner of example-— and we have no account of

tis doing or allowing any act of labour on the sabbath,

but acts of mercy or real necessity, in all the course of

his ministry, so far as scripture gives us account of hi\*

example; and he rested in his tomb on the seventh-day

sabbath, as is evident. And although he did cures, and

no doubt preaciied as occasion served, every day in the

week; wehave no account of his calling an assembly for

mere-public w»r^p, or of his at<:ending any assemblf

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merely for worship, on any other day of the week, th«a

the Lord's seyenth-day Sabbath.

As to Christ's doctrines or commands, of a moral na-

ture, it would be absurd to siuppose he ever taught any

thing contrary to what, of that nature in substance, had

been commanded before; for if he and his Father were

and are one, (not two) and if he was the giver of the

law, as is evident by various scriptures (as he was the

Hock that followed Israel, 1 Cor. x. 4.) and God created

all things by Jesus Christ: and he is before all things,

and by him all things exist, &c. We must suppose him

imperfect, or the natural moral obligation of man alter-

ed, to admit of any need of any new moral precepts: he

therefore taught, in his sermon on the mount, and else-

where, like this: " Whosoever shall break one of the

least Commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be

called least in the kingdom of heaven,\*\* &c. (I con-

clude all sober christians will allow, he here had refer-

ence to the moral law, or ten Precepts.) And he goes

on to explain the true force and spiritual meaning of that

' law, in order that mankind might not be ignorant of it,

or try to evade God\*s law; and closes that discourse, with

likening the hearer and doer of his doctrine, to a wise

man that built his house on a rock, &c. But they that

heard and did not do, to the foolish man that built on the

sand, (of creature doctrines perhaps) whose house fell

and great was the fall of it, &c.

As Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners

to repentance, and as righteousness is, in keeping God's

law, and sin the transgression of that law, s^ he had no

occasion to reprove Ae people of Israel for not observ-

ing the law of the Sabbath^ as they kept that, even to a

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superstition; which I conceive is, the only case a man

can be superstitious in keeping Crod's law, i. e. lyhen he

pays so great stress and attention to some one precept,

as to overlook or neglect some other of equal import-

ance, which was then evidently the case with the S cribes

and Pharisees, in the article .of the sabbath:— and he

tells the multitude as well as his disciples, Mat. xxiii. 3,

3. " The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all

therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe

and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and

do not." — Intimating as Moses a faithful servant of God,

gave them God's law, and they, the Scribes, taught a-

greeable to Moses' doctrine, so the people should do. I

presume no one will think that the Scribes or Pharisees

neglected teaching the seventh day as the Sabbath of

the Lord: it fairly results then, that Christ did command

or teach as well as practise the seventh-day Sabbath;\*—

and when all power in heaven and earth was his, and he

ivas about to withdraw his bodily presence from his dis-

ciples, he tells the apostles to go and preach, Sec. thro\*-

out the world, and to teach the people to observe al-

things whatsoever he had commanded them, " and lo! I

am with you alway, even to the end of the world. A-

ir.en."

Consequently, they must teach God's law and the sev-

ciuh-day sabbath; fgr he commanded them so to do, as

before stated: and as it is inconsistent to expect that the

divh^ely inspii^d apostles of our Lord, should teach any

thing they had not received in command from Christ—

So we, in perusing their writings, can find no shadow of

a command for any other sabbath than the seventh day

in all their writings in our bibles, and there could be- oo^

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^opri«ty in their commanding the observation of the

seventh- daf sabbath, as God himself had so expressly-

commanded that, from the beginning of time, and in

giving his law, as before stated; which law, as God is one

perfept beuig, is one perfect system of morality, and

was equally given to, and tending on, all mankind as the

acriptures testify. The stranger or heathen in caso

they would become God's people (and all had that privi-

lege who heard of God's law) were equally held to the

observation of the Lord's holy sabbath, and had equal

privileges with the home-bom Israelite, in case they

were proselytes of the covenant, or really wholly gave

themselves to serve the true God. And here I may ob-

serve that the epithet of the Jews\* Sabbath, or Jewish

Sabbath is not found in all the bible: it is of much later

date. The seventh-day Sabbath, is ever in the biblej

called the Lord's Sabbath, tlie Lord's day of rest, holy

to the Lord, &c. — ^but man has undertaken to change

names, as well as laws and times. How such con-

duct will stand at God's bar of account, is for those

to see to it, who practise so to do.

If therefore the immediate disciples and apostles of

our Lord, never taught any other sabbath by word, let

us see if we can find any example of theirs that may

look like their practising the observation of any other

day as a sabbath.-—

It is noted of them when our Saviour lay in his tomb;

" they rested the Sabbath day, according to the Com-

mandment." Luke xxiii. 56. -It is also noted that they

attended meetings with the congregations, wherever

they went to preach, on the Sabbath day: (and we have

not the least idea, in all the scripture, of any other day

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of the week as bein^ called a Sabbath, or weekly Sab^

bath, by any people that professed God or Christ, ex-

cept the seventh day) as Christ's manner was. So it is

recorded of Paul, who travelled and preached most of

all the apostles — [See Acts xvii. 2. compared with Acts

ix. 20. and 13th chapter generally.]— and indeed the

whole account we have of their example; as it is not

found on record, that they any of them, met on any oth-

er day of the week statedly for worship, than on the

I^ord's seventh-day sabbath — Time, as they made prea-

ch! nj^ their business every day, (where circumstances

admitted, no doubt there were assemblies convened ou

other days of the week occasionally, even as it is com-

mon now for the circuit preachers to attend lectures

when and where they can find hearers;) we have account

of their assembling once at Troas on the first of the

week [observe the word day is in Italics, and supplied]

to break bread, where Paul preached. I think we find

no other place in all the account of the apostles' exara.-

plc, of preaching being attended to on the first of the

week; as the meeting <>f the disciples, as recorded in

John XX. 19, compared with Luke xxiv. 36, &c. was not

an ordinary assembly of the people to worship, and hear

preaching; but rather a few of the leading characters

had got together, it appears, for fear of the Jews, in a

private order to consult on the aftairs then passing rela-

tive to the rising of the Saviour and the cause of Chris-

tianity, and Jesus appeared among them. So again af-

ter eight days they were assembled in like manner, and

no doubt for like purposes, when our Lord again met

with them. Now some people insist this jmeeting was

on the first day of the week, and infer it was to intimate

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it should be kept as a sabbath — when nothing is more

absurd: for observe, it was after eight days from the

first meeting, and could not be on the first day of the

week, unless it was fourteen days after the first meeting:

that if our Saviour's being seen or meeting with a por-

tion of his disciples after his resurrection, cpuld consti-

tute a sabbath, without any command of his, they then

liad a sabbath forty days together, as he was seen of

them that space of time^ Acts i. 3. So in like manner,

when they were a fishing, John xxi. 4. All such preten-

sions to fix a sabbath, on account of such meetings, ap-

pear futile and absurd.

But as to Paul's preaching at Troas on the first of the

week) we may observe, that Paul had been there seven

days, and as his manner was to attend the public >Vor-

ship on the Lord's seventh-da^ sabbath, as has been

made to appear from scripture, arid there was no other

day of public worship as a weekly sabbath among all

that professed the true God; I think a fair inference on

that occasion, will allow, that as the disciples had atten-

ded the public worship of God on his holy seventh-day

Babbath, according to his command, Ley. xxiii. 3, and as

Paul was about to leave them, never more to see them

&gain in time, they concluded to have an evening meet-

ing on the evening after the Lord's sabbath, for that is.

In scripture, called the first of the week; for from even

tmto even God commanded his people to celebrate their

isabbath, Lev. xxiii. 32. — So they might have an evening

meeting on that occasion, and a supper for St. Paul and

llis companions; or it might be in way of the Lord's sup-

Jjer: however, it is not so recorded. Be that as \ .ay,

there is not the least intimation in this text of a first-day;

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sabbath, that I can find. So then, in case we look for a,

sabbath from the example of Christ and his disciples,

and indeed all his disciples from scripture account, we

shall see their uniform example, as to a sabbath, was, by

attending to the Lord's commanded seventh-day sabbath,

and no intimation of any other in scripture. I shall,

by and by, shew where a first-day Sabbath came from.

But, says the enquiring mind, was not St. John, (Rev-

i. 10.) in the spirit on the Lord's day? and was not that

day the first day of the week? I answer: No doubt St.

John was in the spirit in the isle of Patmos, and on the

Lord's day; and if we attend to scripture, we shall find

that no definite day of the week has any thing like the

appellation of the Lord's day, save the seventh-day sab-

buth, which is called the Lord's sabbath day, 8cc. in nu-

merous places, but no such idea is given of any other

day of the week. The Lord's day, or day of the Lord,

in scripture sometimes, has reference to some extraor-

dinary manifestation of the. divine agency, of judgment,

or of mercy. See Isa. xiii. 6. Joel ii. I. Zech. xiv. 1.—

And such an idea is so often in scripture, that I need

not quote them.

As for the Lord's day, as being applied to the first day

of the week, no such intimation is found in scripture.— •

But admitting St John was in the spirit on the first day

of the week, and saw a great vision, &c. will that con-

j stitute a sabbath to be observed weekly, without a divine

command, any more than Ezekiel's visions on the fifth

day of the month; (Ezek. i. I.) or Isaiah or other of the

prophets, that tell us of the time and manner of their

visions, Sec? Surely it cannot: Therefore Ml preten-

sions to fix a sabbath on such pretexts, are at best but

pegging the question, and yain^

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But perhaps the antinotnian disposed tnind may sayj

Does not St. Paul, in several of his epistles, intimate

that there is no weekly sabbath, for christians to observe

as holy time? I would observe: In case St. Paul meant

to inculcate the idea that christians were not held to mo-

ral obligations and the observation of God's law as a

rule of life, he must be very inconsistent with himself, \*

and consequently, prove he had not a divine mission to

preach; for he tells us, Rom. iii. 31. <\* Do we then make

void the law thro' faith? God forbid: yea we establish

the law." And vii. 12. "Wherefore the law is holy and

just and good." And altho' he became all things, to all

men, that by all means he might save some; yet he tells

us, 1 Cor. ix. 21. " being not without law to God; but

under the law to Christ.'\* As to his observing, Rom. 14.

5. " One man esteemeth one day above another; anoth-

er esteemeth every day alike." If we consider the con-

text, it is evident he had no reference to the sabbath, but

rather to those days the heathen or superstitious Jews

esteemed lucky or unlucky days, or some of the feasts

of the heathen on days dedicated to their idols, Sec .

The same will apply to his observations in Gal. iv. 10\*

\*' Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years,"

&c. So again in Col. ii. 16. " Let no man, therefore,

Judge you, in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy

day, or of the new moons, or of the sabbath days; [^IT.J

ivhich are a shadow of good things to come," &c.

Now it is evident, from numerous texts of scripture,

that at the time the apostle wrote those epistles, there

vras a number of pretended teachers of religion, who

still insisted on circumcision and the observation of all

the ceremonial l^w of Moses^ notwithstanding the de^

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ci»ion of tie scpostles and elders, as in Acts xv. 28. and

we may observe, in thkt controversy and decision of the

i^ostles, there was not one article in dispute, that is

contained in t^e ten Precepts: and the result' of their

judgment, directs the christians to abstsun from mcatd

offered to idols, Und &om blood, and from things stran-

gled, and from fomication^-^what a pity it is that chris-

tians, now-a-days, do not more attend to that advice.^— ^

not the least di&pute about the sabbath, or the moral ob-

ligations of God's holy law. But the apostle iseems to

exhort his brethren at Coloss, who doubless were Gren^

tiles, to give no occasion for any to judge them; or givt

no offense to Jew or Gentile or the church of Gt>d, tn

those things that were shadowy or ceremonial, &c.\*m-

which brings us to consider the nature of shadows or

signs, for as has been observed, the Lord's sal^ath h

called a sign, in Exod. xxxi. 13, 17. and Ease. xx. <S.-A-it^

Now, the word sigtiy often occurs in our blhle, and ap^

pears to signify or mean a mark or tokens footstep or

representation, or a miracle or wonder, &c. Hence th«

miracles that Moses did in Egypt are sometimes called

signs; and the people asked our SaviTour to shew a sign,

no doubt meaning a miracle Again it imports a mark^

or token that by one certain thing or appearances^ som^

other thing or event, will surely eome to pass or fi^i

been done heretofore, as the feast of the Passover was a

sign to Israel, not only of the glorious Saviour proifti&eift

that should come, but also of their deliverance out of

Egypt, as m£^ be seen Exod. xiii. 9. So the censors of

the rebels was ordered to be made into broad {^ates fot

the altar for a sign. Numb. xvi. 38. So the angel telll

the shepherds of a sign^ that they should find the fil^

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irrapped in swaddling clothes, laying in a manger, Luke

ii. 12.

However marvellous it may be, that our kind Maker

saw fit to give mankind his sabbath; it appears to me,

the principal end of the sabbath as a sign, was and is,

tnuch similar to the sign in the Passover of the Paschal

Lamb, that served to bring to their remembrance, the

bondage and servitude and deliverance from Egypt; as

also the assurance that Christ should come to atone for

the sin of their souls, and deliver them from death, and

bring them to glory, 8cc.— Hence the Lord\*^s supper has

succeeded in the christian church, as a sign or memori-

al of Christ's death,— that has passed, and all that ob-

serve it in faith, manifest their faith in that grand sacri-

fice, as well as their hope of deliverance from wrath;

and this is to' be done until he comes again, " for as oft

as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the

Lord's death till he come.\*' 1 Cor. xi. 26. So the sev-

enth day in case it be kept according to the command-

ment, is a sign that we believe in the true God, that made

the world and all things therein (or man) and gave him

his law, and tlie law of the sabbath, that he might re-

member that God rested from his works at creation and

blessed and sanctified that holy day for his use, that man

abstaining from his worldly labours and occupations,

might contemplate God and their divine original} as al-

so adore and worship that God, who gives them all things

to enjoy— -Hence it wa? the sabbath that was'the criteri-

on to distinguisl) those people and nations that owned

and served the true God, from those other nations that

worshipped false deities: as we find by all account we

have, both sacred and profane, that the original cause

\* that the first day of tlie week was called Sunday, was,

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lis

for that the heathen dedicated that day to the worship of

the sun; and so of the other names of the days of the

week that differ from the order of scripture— And it ap-

pears that the observation of the dayS) distinguished

mankind as much^ in former days, as the name of Christ

and Mahomet does now-a-day8.-^(f his idea will more

fully appear, when we consider how the first-day sab-

bath was introduced into the christian church)— And

God's law was to be written on the posts of their door,

and gates, and to be talked of when they went out and

came, and when they sat in their houses, and diligently

to be tapght to their children, and to be bound for a sign

upon their hands, and as frontlets between their eyes>

[see Deut. vi. 8.] that they might not forget to serve the

true and living Godi and turn to idols.

And here we may notice that the law of the seventh^

day sabbath, appertained to the first table; and is certain^\*

ly, as much of a moral precept as any in that table\* Now

the word moral being derived Trom naanners op the miad

that directs the manners of a person, (as it is not found

in scripture) in case the mind cannot be exercised, so

as to affect our manners towards God, in the transgres-

sion of his law\* as relates to the first t<ible or himeelf, sb

well as towards our neighbour, we might do^bt of the

morality of the sabbath-\*-But such an idea is so far from

being correct, that it is evident from all scripture that

we cannot injure our neighbour, with design^ without

displeasing God: hence, '^ he that transgresseth in one

point, is guilty of all." James ii. 10.-— so perfect and en^

tire is the sacred law of God. But some modern chris«

tians pretend to a moral law of love: (vain hypothesis!)

but it is to be feared when they closely examine that law

of love, it will be found to consist in self| or creature

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Iove««-As they choose their own way, let them see to it

that God does not choose their delusion, as in threaten-

ed, Isa. Ixvi. 4. If we love Crod, we shall manifest it by

keeping his commandments; if we love ourseWes, we

shall also manifest it, by following our own way.

But to return to our Sign. We have considered the

Lord's sabbath as a sign, to remind us, of things past, or

the beginning:— Let us now consider it as a sign of some

good to come; and if the land of Canaan was a sign, type

or shadow of the world to come, or the state of the

blessed, where there will be no sorrow or affliction, e-

ven a new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth

righteousness; as saith Peter, in his 2d £pi. 3. 13. which

is promised by the divine Saviour; then surely the right

observation of the Lord's sabbath, is a sign, or type, of

that rest that remaineth to the people of God; as Paul

saith, Heb. iv. 9. some have vainly attempted to con-

strue the rest that the soul obtains by £aith in Christ, as

the antitype of the sabbath.\* But if we attend to the

drift of the apostle's argument, in this whole Epistle,

we may easily correct that error. Now the rest obtain-

ed by faith, is only a rest of the soul, and that by times,

and chiefly by way of anticipation, of what shall be

hereafter— Therefore, the apostle exhorts to labour to

enter into that rest that is to come, or shall be hereafter

in a future state. Now, if future glory is to consist of

ceasing from hard service and tumultuous noise and bus-

tle, and. to be in repose and quiet, and in the pure and

perfect devotion of God; how lively does the true ob-

servation of the Lord's sabbath, represent such a state!

\* See a 6ooky by ^ne Crandally /lutlisAcd some ycar9

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Much more might be said on this idea> but the liniits o{

this book will not admit of it.

Now if we consider the Lord's sabbath as a sign oP

Vhat is pasty it is to be kept perpetually or to the end oF^

time; as it began with time, so it was evidently designed

of Gody to continue through all time, as God was and is

perfect so his law is perfect, will not admit of any alter-

ation, &c. if we consider it as a sign or type of some-

thing yet to come. All allow, that types should be kept,

or shadows attended to, until the antitype comes, or the

substance of the shadow comes to our possession. Con-

sequently, Paul's observation was not at all designed to

lessen man's obligation to keep the Lord's sabbath. But

saith another, does not St. Paul, in his second Epistle to

the Corinthians, chap. 3, tell us something about that

which was written and engraven on tables of stone, al-

though glorious, was to be done away? in the 13th verse

about something which is abolished, &c.? Very true—

and we should be very careful lest we wrest some of his

writings to our own destruction.

Now if St. Paul designed by this passage, to invali-

date the holy moral law of God, contrary to the general

drift of his doctrines and his manner of practice, as has

been stated, he would prove himself a false apostle, sure-

ly. But this is not the case, my friend, by any m^eans; —

Paul never designed to invalidate that which was holy,

just and good. If we attend to St. Paul's Epistles to

th^ Corinthians, we shall find that they, as a church, had

got into many and great improprieties, and, as well as

the Galatians, had received or admitted teachers among

them of the same kind, that taught the necessity of cir-

cumcision and keeping the ceremonial law; and to build

themselves up as leaders, had tried to invalidate Paul's

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ehatacler, trhieh brought Paul to the necessity of speak-

ing in his own commendation, as well as that of the dis-

jfrensation of the gospel— Therefore, when he is bring-

itrg the conti'ast between Moses and Christ, or between

ttte former dispensation and the present, he considers

justly, thfat Christ and the gospel dispensation, far cx-

<5te{ied, in glory, the former, or Moses and the law dis-

pensation.— And as to that which is abolished, if we at-

tend to the same apostle, (Rom. x. 4. and Gal. iii. 24.

"t^rith Heb. x. 1.) we may see the apostle had an allusion

to the law of worship or ceremonial institutions, which

were done away in Christ; or if we consider it more

largely, and take in liis text, Rom. vii. 6, where he saith

««\*" But now we are delivered from the law, that being

dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in

newness of spirit, atid not in the oldness of the letter."

We shall see, that he had reference to the deliverance

©f the soul thro' faith in Christ, from that state of death

and condemnation their sins (which by the righteous

hiw of Obd, being set home on their conscience) had

brought them into-\*-But not that the moral law as a rule

of life was dead, or abolished: Paul might as well turn

antinomiaii at once; or, as the nature of law is to kill

tod destroy the transgressor; and as life only can come

tfe poor sintjers, thro' Christ, and the glorious display of

the gospel — So the christian, being killed by his sins, as

made exceeding Binfbl by Gt)d's holy law, flying to Christ

for life, with a disposition to believe, love, and obey God

in keeping his commandments, has life from the dead,

and by their repentance and faith, and renewed obedi-

ence to God, they are dead unto sin, but alive unto God,

not living unfder the condeinnation of the law, because

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they keep it) as much as in them lies, and the law ^m ft

certain sense not being made for a righteous person, the

force and nature of it is gone, and they draw no hope

from the flesh, but their confidence is in the glorious

Saviour. And I would seriously ask any real christians,

if they ever obtained a full deliverapce in their mind,

tliro\* faith in Christ, unless they had a disposition to ob-

serve and do, what they understood W£^ God's will, or

his moral law— For Christ came not to save people in

their sins, but from their sins, and to cleanse them from

unrighteousness; and sin is the transgression of the law;

Hence there is still need of the law as a rule of life, al-

tho' the law cannot give life; and as Paul tells us, <\* there

is a glory of the stars, and a glory of the moon, and a

glory of the sun.\*' 1 Cor. xv. 41. So I may say. There

is a glory of the law, and Moses; and another glory of

tlie gospel, and Christ: and another glory in the future

world of glory; for now we see thro' a glass, darkly; but

then, face to face. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. And I would farther

observe, that in searching the bible from Genesis to the

end of the Revelations, (aside from man's traditions 6r

doctrines) there can be none, not the least idea, gather-

ed, of any servant of God, or of Christ, who was sent

to prophesy, or to preach the truths of God; but they u^

niformly taught, and observed the Lord's seventh-day

sabbath. —

And as to the morality of the fourth command, can a-

ny sober, real servant of God, that has common sense,

think, on due reflection, that God did not esteem the

fourth command as much a moral precept as any of the

ten, when he placed it in the middle of his law, and

commanded those ten precepts to be kept in the ark in

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the IttOst hdly place, where no ceremonial law Was kcptj

and annexed the same punishment to the breach of that

us the others; and when we find the prophets reprove the

neglect and breach of that, as severely as any one pre-

cept, and give as great promises to the due observance

of it as to any command? and add to this, that all chris-

tians, until of late, have considered the breach of the

sabbath as a breach of a moral precept, &c. as well as

all codes of laws made by christian rulers have consid-

ered it as such. But vain man would be more wise than.

his Maker; and wise above that which is written. So

also, some have objected to the holiness of the sabbath,

or of time, as if man's actions constituted holiness. IS

we reason fairly, we shall remember, that it is God, and

not man, that made or constituted all time; and God on-

ly, has a right to say what is holy and clean, and Fhat is

unholy and unclean. It is not man^s devout or holy ex\*

ercises, that makes time holy. Surely such thing are

defined by God's law; and I see no scripture or fair rea-

son but teaches that time is or may be holy, as much as

names. Now, God has said his name is holy, [but the

name of false gods is not so, even if poor superstitious

men should so think] and they that take his name in

vain are guilty. So also, God has said. The seventh day

isth e Sabbath of the Lord thy God, 8cc. holy to the

Lord, — and that the profaner of it is guilty and shall be

punished. But he has not said so of the first-day or of

any other day of the week: neither has he left it for man

to reckon as he sees fit, and say, a seventh day, or the

seventh part of time, by houi\*s, days, months or years,

&c. Nay, verily, God has reckoned the order of tims

from the first day of creation, and the evening and the

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morning coouitutcd oac djjy— [The evenings reckoned

befoi\*€ thfi morning, as all was darkness uwtU God said

Let there be light, and there was light. j — so of every

day of the week; and the seventh day he Hlessed, sanc-

tified, hallowed, or made holy to himself. Man should

have holy exercises on that day, surely; but his exerci-

ses do not make the time holy in God\*s account — for

if man's exercises makes time sacred or holy to God,

>vhy was Jeroboam's altering the day of the feast of the

Passover, (1 Kings xii. 33.) and making the calves, Sec.

[now it is absurd to suppose that Israel at that time, hact

any more faith in those calves as the true God, any more

than the Romish church now have in their images, ohly

as representations of the true God, See.] ahvays termed

so great a sin to Jeroboam and all Israel.

And here we may notice ike futile objec^ns soni\*

make ^specting the uncertainty of the order of time

since the creation\* As the re volition of the earth rouaA

the sun (or the s^a reond the earth if feu pVease) ia a;\*

bout 24 hours, constituted or determined, this space of

one day; so in that period of time, it iv^a one definite day

tliroughout the whole globe of the earth— And so.it h«f

ever been reckoned by all nations of the eaith; aa therf

is no dispute as to the order of the days of the week;\*^

those that keep the seventh day, observing it as God's

command; and those that observe the ftrst day as: a si^b-

bath in the christian church, do it as the first day of the

week, (not the seventh) on which thiey suppose the Sav-

iour arose; and the Mahometans observe the sixth day

of the week as such, in obedience to their pretended

prophet Mahomet, in distinction from Jews or Christians

— and not because there is any dispute about the order

of time, or of reckoning the days of the week.

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But, says another, if the law of the scventh-day sab-

bath k still binding'on christians according to God's sol-

emn commandment, then the man that gathers sticks or

kindles any fire, even for to keep him from freezing or

starving, must be stoned to death, &c. And why may

we not as well complain of God, because he has, and

may ag^in, call his servants to lay down their Fives for

his cause, or rather than disown the name of Jesus, or

sacrifice to heathen gods, give up their life. The Sav-

iour saith, if we love father or mother, or wife or child-

rcnyorour own life, more than him, we are not worthy

of hinv— cannot be his disciples — and if we seek to save

ourKves, we shall lose them, &c. But don't let us run

wild, and pervert the scriptures, merely to please our

own fancies.

Now the case of the man that was found gathering

sticks — (Numb. xv. 32, 33, as also Exod. xxxv. 3.) " Ye

shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the

sabbath day." I think any sober man of common capa-

city, in case hh is disposed to obey God, in his command-

ments, and will take the trouble to search and com\)are

the scriptures, will find, that the man stoned for gather-

ing sticks upon the sabbath, was not gathering them for

necessity's sake, but rather by way of clearing land, as

it was a long time they dwelt in the wilderness, and

more particularly in presumptious rebellion against the

positive commands of God, — like him that cursed: for

we find in this same chapter, there were ofi\*( rings to be

brought for those that sinned ignorantly in any of the

commands: but the soul that did aught presumptuously^

or in despite to the command of God, was to be utit:rly

cut off. The same idea is brought forward by St. Paul,.

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Jleb. vi. 9. and x. 28, &c.— It could not have been a mere

transgression thro' ignorance or even frailty . of nature^

but rather a wilful setting himself against God.

Again; if we consider the nature of things and cir-

cumstances, there is no such idea in all the scriptures^

as a man\*3 being guilty in matters of real necessity.-^—

Witness the case of David, in eating the shew-bread; as.

also the priests that offered on the sabbath day, and were

blameless — They could not offer sacrifice without fire«.

and some labour. And if we take the idea of keeping

a sabbath of rest, it will not admit of extreme hunger

or thirst, or of being extremely cold, or of great fear^

&c. Hence the people of God have been justified in.

defending themselves from their enemies on the Lord'a

sabbath in some circumstances, that such an absurd idea,

as is started in the case beiore, cannot comport with the

good character of God, and the real necessities of his:

poor creature man; and no such idea is couched in the

comnicind, or found in all the practice of Gwi's people^

who have observed his sabbath these five thousand yeara.

But let none takp a liberty from hence, to do, on God\*s^

sabbath, what their vain fancies may think ai:e works o£

necessity or mercy, when God's word will not warrant

them so to do: nay, <' Bake that ye will bake, and sethe

that ye witl sethe, to- day; for to-morrow is the Lord's

sabbath.\*\* Ejiod. xvi. 28. We may make preparation,

on the day before the sabbath, for things comfortable on

the sabbath, without having much labour to do on God'a

holy day: and where real necessity intervenes, we may:

labour and not be guilty before God.^as real necessity

1 knows no law. Men and bodies of men have in various

' ages of the world, undertaken to define for others, what

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those works of necessity and mercy, that is warrantable

to be done on the sabbath, are— >But I conclude it is a ve-

ry nice pdinty as much depends on circumstances, mo-

tives. Sec. what may be lawful in one circumstance, is

unlawful in another circumstance: and as we cannot

know the motive of another, and are imperfect judges

of another's circumstances; and as every one must give

account of himself to God — charity would incline us to

let every one answer their own mind in such cases: pro-

vided their actions do not injure their neighbour, or the

cause of God, And on a general scale, it is possible

that God's law is as often broken by people in the exer-

cise of their mind, as it is in their actions and words;

for God's law is spiritual, but man is carnal.

Let us next consider, so far as we are able, the mani-

fest causes that produced the command for the sabbath.

The first cause rendered in scripture is, that when it had

taken the work of a God six days, to make this world

with its appendages9 and numerous and various in-

habitants, and man in the image of God, for the top

piece or ruler of this world, under God\*— God ended

Ids work on the seventh day, (not on first-day, nor

on the sixth day) and he rested on the seventh day

(not a seventh day accorning to man's reckoning or plea-

sure, but the seventh day in God's order of time) frora

all his works which he had made; and God blessed

the seventh day, and sanctified it, because m it he

had rested from all his work, which God created and

made. (Gen. ii. 2, 3.) And this is the first cause ren-

dered in the fourth command in the decalogue. Ex\*

XX. U. The question then is, Has man any right

without an express command from God, to set apart

another day in Ueu of the day God set apart?

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Another obviotts cause for the sabbath, is, as maflf

had labour or work to do, especially after his fallen

state, of a worldly nature to proTide for his susten-

ance, and could not in his nature endure incessant

labour, neither apply his mind with equal force, to

two distinct objects at one and the same time: so ha

i^ight have that day on which his God had rested^

and set apart for rest, and to holy exercises, to rest

and refresh hi» body, and to turn his mind from his;,

worldly concerns, to meditate and to worship his Sod.

(Hence eren cattle were to rest.)— And as man wa»

made £ar society^ and capable of instructing' their

children^ servants^ and others, in the things that con-

cerned their souls and the cause of God—- so it wa»^

needful that a set tim« should be prefixj&d &r the

congregation to get together and unitedly acknowl-

edge their God m public and external devotion, and

thereby not only manifest their ftdth in the being that

made them, but ako inculcate the system of religion

•n the rising generation- and their fellow mortals^

and hence we see the express command of God fbxv

gathering the congregation on the Lord's holy sabbath.

(Lev. xxiii. 2) And it is observable, that no other day

of the week in all the scriptures (except when feast»

came on other day) have we a command of God' for ga-

thering the congregation for neligious services— in or-

der that mankind, old and )w>ung, masters and servant,,

might have a day of rest from their worldly concei-ns,

and devoutly meditate on the affairs of their souls, their

God, and things that concern their future state.— Hence

the propriety of preaching, praying and singing, in pub-

Uc worship: and how inexcusable will parents, masters.

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9nd guat'diatvs of chUdren be^ at t,h^ afwfut bar of €bd)r

i^ case they refuse, or ueg^Iect leading those under theiv-

care, to the public worship of (lod, on hia appointed

^me: and w^ may here renaark that no nation or cverv

sections of the cojpr^tiaunUx (ia ordinary castes and times)

\yho entirely neglect attendance on public worship, let

their religion be what it may, but sooa lose their seas©

of divine thin-gs, a^ their morals, as by all account we

bave in hiistory, sacred or profane, ancient or modern^ a»

-well as our own knowledge ia this cage> so necessary is

9. standiBgy stated ministry ia religion, not only for tha

^uls of mankind, but the peace and good order of soci^

c^ty. MuQh more migbt be said on this idea, as a cause»

^ th^t of witne^itxg^ ll»%t the Lord iathe true God^ and

in respect oC future rest and feUcity^ S«c. 86C.-«4)ut out

lAlBiH wlU not sAtak of b.

. Now Ifias any of those peasoii9 eeased, by the gospel

^pei^9atiou.^ is not Ciod the same^ and his authority the

«ame? is h^ l^sft worAy lo he ceAlempdated on, obeyed^

a^d worshiped, than wbea he fett made nmn? is maa

^ nUll ia a, state of labour? doe9 he sttU need rest and rev

fresKmenl, and iA4(r«etipQ9 fee? can he now apply hit

naixHl wijbbi equal force, to tinio distinct objects at the same

^e^^ is the peace smd oirder of society^ and the worth

^f the sou},u of l€9a yatoe tha^ of old? S.t«drely^ no. If

t^ the. causes of tke sabbat\* has net ceased; cy^ of con^\*

aequenjG^^ we^ a]\*e e<|UA]ty holden to it as a Baoralandpex^

petual law.

Tbus, then we may' plainly see, if we will not shut

our eyes and turn away our ears, that the seveath, day of

^© week (not a seventh day, or tiiQ first day, or no day)

is positively, the sabbath of the Lord thy (iod; has evec

be^n since time begaa> and ever will be until tkxok shalk

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€hd, in theaccotmt of God, and of the same tiniverkal

and binding nature on all, let professed Christians or

Mahometans, attempt to constitute another day, to the

contrary notwithstanding. And let Us remember, that

this law of the sabbath is a part of that laljr by which

God will judge us in the great day of account. (Rom.

ii. 12. Luk« xii. 7.)

Were the Israelites the saints of the true God; and

is the real christian the true Israel of God; let such be-

ware how they despise the God of Israel's sabbath, lest

he disown such. Was the glorious Saviour less the

Saviour of I&rael, than he is of the Gentile nations; for

salvation is of the Jews or of the Israel of God; then

let us have Israelis God, and I&rael^s Saviour, and Is-

rael's Sabbath, if we would be the true Israel.

It is now time to give some account how the First-day

became introduced into the christian chuixh, as a sab«

bath. And I would first observe, that in case I could be,"

And felt clear in my conscience before God, and observe

the first-day as a sabbath, I should, long ago, have em«

braced it as such; having no doubt that, in all human

probability, it would have greatly added to my worldly

interest and reputation— \*And now, I am in some meas\*

ure sensible, that this book may remain long after I am

^ead and gone; and in case I should misrepresent truths

with design, to please man; will it not meet me at the

bar of an impartial Judge?— -\*The account I shall here

give of that matter, of the change of the sabbtith or in-

troduction of a first-day sabbath into the church of Christ,

is taken partly from Bamfield, Carlow, and other histo-

ries I have seen and rea<}; and partly from inferences I

have gathered from reading the bible and other books»

and the circumstances of the world of maakindf on raa-

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^re deliberation— And first we may challenge all man-^

kind to produce one scrap of authentic record, to prove

that any such thing as a command to observe first-day as

a sabbath, not only froni God, or from any man or body

^f men that, professed the true God X)r Jesus Christ, un-

til near 200 years after the Christian sera: and very lit-

tjie if any colour of any such command, can be found be\*

fore the time of Constantine the Great, in the fourth

century; and not until after real miracles had ceased^

fee.

Now I do not presume to say, that man's motive, in

introducing first-day as a sabbath, was not good, as they

conceived; at least, as good as the introduction of Pedo-

baptism— for it is evident they were introduced about

the same time, but from different causes.

, Now our scripture in part, and more particularly an-

cient Ecclesiastical history, informs us, that towards the

-end of the first century, and even in the days of the a-

postles, there were many new and false teachers, . and

pretended preachers of the gospel; not only of the Jews'

extraction, who insisted on circumcision and the keep-

ing of the ceremonial law, but also, of the Gentile phi-

losophy or Plato extraction, or tenets— Those last were

denominated Gnostics, under a notion that they could re-

store mankind to the knowledge of the Supreme Beings

and of this tribe of teachers, there were a variety of

sects: and it appears that Simon the Sorcerer, we read

of in Acts, who was baptized by Philip, was one of them;

as also the Nicolatans. Now there was degrees in the

extravagance of their doctrines and pretensions; but a

very leading idea of them all, generally, was, the plu-

rality of Gods; and at least two original Principals, one

goodj and tlic other evil; and that the God of the Jews

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w«s«ot'theBtipreibeLord of «11, but reelher k Tf«mt,

tiiftt usurped power t»v€t the human race; and that the

principal business of oar iliyme Saviour's coming^ kito

die \rorld, was, to destroy the einpi«>e of the God of tlie

Jews. Hence, those sects g^ierallf rejected all the old

Testament, and the Gospels, and some ^f the Epistiesy

as not agreeing with their theory or philosophy: and In

general, they denied the real body of lesus Christ, ait4

his sufferings, &c. Those sects increased in numbers,

and popularity, after the apostles' days; and altho\* thiey

were considered heretical by the chri«tkin church, as a

body; yet many of their ideas were embraced by some

of the most influential doctors of christianity;>\*'i^B one

Origen was a man of great learning and ^Lbiltttes, and

greatly flourished aibout this time; and notwithstanding\*

his attachment to the Platonic system, we have no cer-

tain account but that he kept his standing in what was

then called the true Chrii&tian Church.\*— -He was the in-

tfoducer of what we now call Final Restoration of all

Mankind, and was strenuous on the idea erf interpreting^

«CTiptures, in a mystical sense, or by way of allegory.\*

Some of the great men in the Christian Church, about

this tiifte, undertook a coalition of ail Religion; and for-

med their system partly from the Jewish theology, and

partly from this Platonic or oriental piiiiosophy, and part-

ly from other heathen superstitions, &c. Now as tho»e

\* For a more nccurate and lengthy account qf tkote

and such like ideaa^ I would refer my reader to Hannah

Adams\* Vienv of Religiony and to Mosheim's Ecclesiastic

cdl History y Isfc, There were a great variety of names

ttnfi sentiments among those sects; see'y BardesanistSj

Cainiansy Mani^heans^ Saturniam^ VaUntineanaf Origen\*

ists, ^c, ^c.

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that held to the necessity of circumcision, separated

from the body of the Christian ChurcU soon after the

apostles\* days; and such a great variety of sects and doc-

trines springing up about this time; all of whom preten-

ded to be Christians; and all Christians about this time

being subject to the pefsecutions that arose against

them, from the Jews who were at some times their bit-

terest enemies, and from the various worshippers of the

heathen gods; it seemed a matter of necessity that great

concessions should be made in order to the peace of the

•world; for the Roman empire seemed deluged with the

blood of the inhabitants.— Christians, in cases wHcre a

fair prospect appeared, would defend themselves, and

•when they got the power of the civil magistrate, would

persecute and destroy their oppose rs: (so far had the

pure doctrines of the gospel been generally corrupted,

as is abundantly evident) — add to this the natural idea

of benevolence and condescension the gospel teliches,

together with the great zeal about this time, manifest

t6 obtain converts to the Christian profession, and to en-

large the bounds of the church — ;(as it is evident by Mo-

sheim and pthers— -that in some instances wh^t was cal-

led pious fi-auds were often, if not universally, resorted

to, i. e. fictitious miracles, and pretended writings of the

apostles and first leaders of the church) — also the idea

of Christ's rising on the first day of the week — (and

there is no doub^ but that it had been a practice that

many of the christians had given some tokens of res-

pect to that day on that account, as rising about the

time they supposed he arose, and praying and singing

praises to th6 risen Saviour, but not in neglect of obser-t

ving the Lord's seventh-day sabbath) — and as supersti-

tion iQcreased abundantly about this time— They also

C)

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lionaured the days the martyrs laid down their lives, and

often held their meetings in their tombs or burying pla-

ces, and praying with their faces to the east, and using

the sign of the cross, &c. &c. &c.

Again; it is evident that the leaders of the church a-

bout this time, altho\* real miracles had generally ceased,

btill held to the infallibility of the true church of Christ,

and that they had a right by divine authority to make

laws for the church — (if not for all nations; and here is

the seeds of the pope's supremacy, which soon after ob-

tained in the Church Universal, then so called.) Now,

us all the before-stated ideas and practices did exist, and

is matter of fact, as being practised more or less very

universally in the christisn church, towards the end of

the third century, I think no person acquainted with an-

cient history will venture to dispute-— Hence, of course,

those leaders of the church at this time, might argue

like this: The evils of persecution are great and des-

tructive, and charity inclines us to believe that many if

not alj those sects, which have been cut off or have sep-

arated from the church, may be sincere worshippers of

the Lord Jesus Christ; and possibly the Jews and heath\*

en are sincere in their way of worship; and it is gener-

?illy allowed, that there are in fact, a number, at least

THREE Gods.\*— And as th(^ church has a right to make

laws, and as condescension is commendable, and unita-

tlon desirable, in all; let us, as we cannot give up Moses

and the prophets without also giving up Christ, and as

\* The idea of a Trinity^ and the fvord, were received

into the Christian Church before this time: Mosheim in--

jcrws lis that one TheojihiluH^a fireaeher in the church

(if I mistake not) of Ajitioch^ was the first introducer

cf that Tjordy about tht ymr 161 after Christ^

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the people are zealous to celebrate the daf the Saviour

arose, — ^now let us appohit Sunday as the Christian Sab-\*

bath, and call it the Lord's Day: those attached to Mo-

ses, perhaps, will consent for peace sake, and think, as

the church has a right to make laws, it is immaterial if

so they do observe one day in seven or a seventh part of

time; and as to the heathen, when they see that we wor-

ship on the same day that they generally worshipped, and

for a long time, had dedicated to the Sun\*— this also is

dedicated to the Son, of God, and all allow of a number

of Gods — they will be apt to join with us; at least, they

VfWl not be so bitter against us: — As to the Jews, they

crucified the JLord, and the wrath has come on them to

the uttermost, we need not fear them:— [their templo

and nation had been destroyed before this time.»ooaThe

reader may observe, that the foregoing, is merely^' my

own ideas of what they might argue at that time under

such circumstances.] — therefore as it would be too bur-

densome for the people to observe two days out of every

week as a sabbath, we will call Sunday the Queen of

Days, and the Lord's Day, £cc. and appoint it far the

Christian Sabbath: and to confirm it beyond all dispute,

we will have an Epistle from Heaven. —

Consequently, there was an Epistle, said to be from

heaven, found on the tomb or altar of St. Simeon, iu

Golgotha, where Christ was crucified. [See Bamfield's

History, and Carlow has something of it] Said Epis-

tle was considered so holy; that no one dared to take it,

for three days, and as many nights: but the people, who

were struck with'terror, cried to God for mercy; and af-

ter three days, the patriarch erected himself and Akarias

the archbishop, and stretched out the bishop's mitre, and

ventured to take it into his hands, &c. The contents of

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t". at Epistle, as given by said authors, is too lengthy to

lo be cilcd in tlus book — ^It may be sufficient to observe,

IS to thit piece of priestcraft, that it complained of the

Christians for not keeping holy the Dominical day, or

Sunday; and it enjoined the keeping of the sabbath from

tne ninth hour of the seventh day, until Monday riding

ot the sun; and also, the festivals of the saints or mar-

tyrs, and threatened them with many judgments, in case

of refusal, £cc. [I would here note, as 1 have not Bam-

ii(dd's History now by me, I am not certain whether this

Epistle, said to come from heaven, was pluvious to Con-

stuntiiie'a time, or afterl3 However, it is evident that

much was made of this pretended Epistle from heaven;

but it appears that all would not do, to introduce the

rhange of the sabbath, as a general thing, until Constan-

line, the then [fourth century] emperor of moat aH the

known world, and who ruled in absolute manner: he ha-

ving, by some means or motives, been brought to pro\*

fess the christian religion, m\d paying great respect to

the clergy, was induced to decree a law, about A.D. 31 5>

to enjoin the forbearance of labour on Sunday, except

in affairs of agriculture. [See the Abbe Millot^s Ele\*

ments of General History, vol. ii. page 234.3 -^^^ ^^

Uy degrees it appears that the bishops, popes, kings and

emperors, by the power of the civil sword, established

the observation of Sunday or first- day as a sabbath, in

place of God\*s Sabbath, in the Christian Church. It

was, at first, common for many to observe botli days; and

after that, part of seventh-day and all first-day; and final-

ly, all first-day alone: and I am not ceKain, but that (by

said Histories) the first persecution to bloodshed and

death, that we have any account of, as Christians' perse^

cuting Christians, w^s pn account of this change pf th%

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Sabbath:— .and it is evident, that all that would not then

•ubmit to the decree of said popes, bishops and empe-

rors, as to said change, were either put to death, or ban-

ished Hence the few in number that still keep the

Lord's Sabbath.

I much regret, that the limits of this book, and the

want of leisure, will not permit me to be more copious

and particular on this point— but I must omit it.

From the natural hatred the Gentile christians bore

to the Jews, and the natural propensity that man has to

choose his own way, and the chimerical notions they

draw of God, by their philosophy, aside of Revelation;

together with a pretext for unity and conciliation, with

a large share of isuperstition,— we may find a first-day

sabbath introduced into the christian church, and sup-

ported and established by the civil sword, in place of the

Lord's sanctified Sabbath day.— And let every candid,

Christian-disposed reader, seriously answer the follow-

ing question: The firat-duy Sabbath^ was it of Gorf, or

men? Those who do not fear being stoned, I conclude,

will readily answer: It was of men. And if the Sev-

enth-day Sabbath be of God, why we do not observe it,

is for all to answer at the bar of God.

What little I have written .on this subject, being only

a brief abstract from some of the most sdaterial argu«

ments and records of Bamfield, Carlow, &c.; together

with my own ideas on the subject, is only intended as an

addition to Carlow; and I would refer the inquiring mind

to his book, and to Bamfield— but more particularly to

the bible, if they wish stability of mind, or to serve God.

If sincerity in the way we were brought up, will ex-

cuse us at the bar of God, for the transgression of his

positive command, I sec uot but that the idolater may be

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equally excused, aft no doubt many ofT them are sinccrre.

Jf worldly interest and conveniency, will excuse us, I

see not but that Jeroboam might have been excused for

his altering the day of the Lord's feast. If by faith in

Christ, we are dissolved from our moral obligations to

God and man; let lis turn antinomians at once, and eat

and drink, &c. for to-morrow we die. And if, after all,

wc plead ignorance of the Lord's sabbath; we may as

well at once deny the Lord that made us, and gave us

his Revelation— for we must know, in case we do really

believe the bible, that the seventh day is the sabbath of

the Lord our God.

I could have wished to have given my ideas more

lengthily on this point, as also to have made some re-

)narks on the just observance of the sabbath. Sec— but

it cannot be admitted in this short treatise.-\* We must

therefore hasten to our conclusion; and leave the event

of our pei'formaiiices to the over-ruling providence of a

jaierciful God.

ICPThe reader is to understand that the Sabb'atari-

ans, as mui:h as any religioVis sect, wish to cultivate

christian charity, and to fellowship all that God's word

will warrant them to feilowshipi and charitably hope of

ihose they csumot fellowshijp.

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coNCLtrsioj^,

I FEEL under some necessity, to make some apoTo»

gies for myself, respecting this book: as on account of

many errors I expect will be found in tt> such as, repe«

titions of the same ideas, and great neglect of attend-

ing to all the most important ideas on the different sub-

jects embraced in this work>-^at not for any designed

misrepresentation of any truth, circumstance or matter

of fact. I-fVeely own it does not so fully answer my

own mind as I could^ish; and I have little reason\* ta

think that the minds of others will be fully answered in

the case.. If my readers will consider, not only my want

of ability, time, and suitable encouragement to defrajr

the expense of publication; but also the great neglect o£

some, in sending forward the materials of the historical

pai t, even until after it was contracted to hare been sent

to the press; that I had so little time to compile it, and

instead of having a friend to peruse it, and to help m^

transcribe it, no mortal but myself and the printers, ev

er saw ail of it; and some part of it, I am not certain of

ever having read after the first hasty draft; and waji obli-

'ged to send it in parts to the press, for the want of time:

and as I was obliged to write it by piecemeals, some-

times half an hour, and sometimes less, (being often

called off to attend the avocations of the present life) in

'my embarrassed situation; that I have regretted by timeSf.

my undertaking to publish it— ^expecting to gain neither

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praise nor profit in this world, by mankind: — I say, when

all those circumstances are considered, perhaps my rea-

ders will make some allowance, and not censure too hard,

in case they should find errors. All I have farther to

say on that matter^ is, I hope some abler person and pen

may do more ample justice to the various subjects con-

tained in this hook, than was in my power to do, under

4>resent circumstances.

From the account and observations contained in this

book, any judicious person may see the impropriety of

the Sabbatarians' extending their external fellowship to

any other denomination of Christians, or the consistency

of their holding to what is called Close Communion: for

if external fellowship is built on the written word of

God, (and I see no other stable ground to build it on) —

and if the receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper

is considered as the only proper token of full external

fellowship, and I conclude all consider it so, and if the

Sabbatarians hold the whole ten Precepts of the moral

law of God, to be still as binding on all christians as a

rule of life, as the precepts of the gospel are, (which I

expect all the well-irtformed Sabbatarians do) and if by

bidding others God speed, by an external receiving and

fellowshipping them, make them partake of their evil

deeds, [2 Epi. of John, 11.] I can see no propriety in

fellowshipping externally, any thing and every tjiing,

man may call religion and gospel order— even admitting

they are as sincere as can be: as it won't do to fellowship

externally on sincerity, or good feelings, and frames of

our own or others' nunds, as has been observed — For by

the ^me rule that we may dispense with the Sabbath, as

an article of fellowship, we might also with Baptism^

not only as to mode; but in toto: and also with all for jn»

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and modes of worship, and church government, doc-

trines and actions of men, even to the Nicolaitans, Pa-

pists, Sec. Now we have a number of express scrip-

tures, that forbid our eating with, or fellowshipping cer-

tain characters, as disorderly walkers, and evil do6rs, &c\*

And I must confess I know no way to determine such

characters, but by God's word or law, for sin is the trans-

gression of the law. Now it is thought, that there can

be no real, candid, sober person, upon due reflection and

examination, (if they admit the bible to be of divine au-

thority) but must confess, in case they will be honest be-

fore God, that the Sabbatarians, in the article of the sab-

bath, are right, and have the truth as to faith, whatever

they may think of their practice. Now, if we would be

like the apostl^. John, that loving disciple, we should

love people in the truth, for the truth's sake; and not

think by sophistical arguments, or the force of the civil

power, to over-bear them, or turn them to error.

I have hear.d, and seen in books, many prophecies,

calculations and arguments, about the- Millennium, or

tliousand years reign of Christ upon earth in the lat\*

ter day glory of the church, as tho' nigh at hand—

and to be brought about l»y some revolutions in tlie

political transactions of the nations of the world, in

the present state of things. But how absurd are

such notions! and how unlikely is Jiuman policy and

the civil sword, to unite all classes of the human

race in peace, and the pure worship of the true God!

when it is utterly out of the- power of man or any

body of men, to compel their fellow mortal to ren-

der one act of pure devotion. Now some have tho't

and with great reason, that when that period does ia

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fikct fake place, (in case it takes place in the preysent

world) that all mankind would observe the Lord's

seventh-day Sabl>ath. Trnly, unity is beautful; a«d

pleasant it is for mankind ta love as brethren, and

in proprtion to the strength and extensivenes of that

union; so is the happiness of it.

The next inquiry is, how shall that tinity of all

Christians, be brought about? and what shall be the

standard for them to cotnc together at, 6r upon? As

to the standard, can we look for any other than God's

word? as Jesus has promised to be with them under

that standard to the end of the world. And as t^

the means to bring so desirable a situation about; is

there any one, within the reach of mortals, more

likely to effect the end, .than for all denominations

to lay aside the spirit of persecution, and censorious

judging, especially in doubtful mratters of &ith;, and

also all their errors or religious practices that they

have not a Thus saith the Lord, for, in his word, as

also those mere speculative ideas and doctrines, that

have arisen by construing the written word in a mys^

tical sense, or from deep and obscure passages in

the scriptures, and attend to the plain obvious mean?

ing of the text of scripture, which is able to make

one wise unto salvation thro\* faith in Christ Jesus—

and leave out of the question, the civil power to en-

force ^ny doctrine of faith or conduct, as merely re-

lates to the church or cause of religious worship; and

in place of a persecuting spirit, put on ehaiity, as the

bond of parfection; and in place of censorious judging

their fellow, and a suspicious or jealous eye, have fer-

, vent prayer to God for themselves and their fellow mor^

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^trals; and in place of the civil power, to enforce obedienctf

Ito the truth, see that all walk in the commandments and

4[>rdinai>cs of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ with a

Tiieek and lowly deportment, endeavouring to keep the

^inity of the spirit in the bond of peace, striving only to'

excel one another in acts of benevolence to their neigh-

"bour, and vital piety towards God; in a word, be really

Christ-like in heart, lip, and life, truly subjected to God's

order of government as revealed in his word, and acqui-

esce in his governing providence. If suth a resolution

was universally adopted, and really pursued; how would

Atheists and Deists tremble! and the common people

magnify the cause and people of God, and believers be

added! How would the Jews look dbout themselves— i

{^while now they have for excuse, that as the bulk of

Christians observe the day formerly set apart to the suni

and idolatrous worship, in the place of God's sabbath,

they infer that the leader of this people was a breaker

of God'^ law, and consequentley an evil doer; and what

benefit, may they say, can mankind derive from the do-

ings and sufferings of an evil doer? So we may see that

the poor Jew is blundering in unbelief, by the practice

of professed Christians.]— and embrace the gospel, &c.

Therefore, i« there not room for all denominations to

perform? And first, I will begin with the Sabbatarians—

not presuming they are perfect in practice, whatever

they may be in faith. Would it not contribute towards

effecting peace and unity, not only in the limits of this

sect, but uiversally, for all that profess the Lord's sab-

bath, to pay more strict attention to a due observation

of it, according to the divine command? Is there not

room for many families, to b« njore attentive to the pufe»

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lie worship on that ^creiil day, and less attentive to vis-

iting and to worldly conversation, and indulging their

children in wanton plays, instead of leadiug them to

meeting? Is there not room for heads of families, to be.

more frequent and fervent in calling their families to-

gether, and praying with them, especially on the sabbath;

to attend to read portio;is of the scripture, and inform

the children's minds by way of comment, and see that

the children and servants read useful books on the sab-

bath at least; as God seems to threaten to pour out his

wrath on the heathen and on the fanatics that call not on

his name, (Jer. x. 25. and Ps. Ixxix. 6.) Is there not

room (or reform and improvement in family government

in general? and is it not possible that they, as a sect of

Christians, may imprpvein niany points of church dis-

cipline? Will God\*s word warrant them in indulging

members that move out of the reach of the church they

covenanted with, and remaining in no church that can

properly discipline them, (when such churches are near)

and they do. not join such church in their own fellow-^

ship? Have they a Thus saith the Lord, for the common

practice in neglecting the support of the gospel, and of

the unequal way of bearing burdens generally? Would

it not tend to peace aiid good order, were they, as a sect,

more attentive to inform their minds, by readipg their

bibles and other useful books, the nature and order of

God's government in his church? And. is tlierc no room

for some among them, to be more liberal in encouraging

useful publications? Is there no room for their preach-

ers generally, (as well as myself,) to endeaA'our to cor-

rect their language in general, and in the pulpit in par-

ticular, and seo that they use not words improperly, aV

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I^afit) not, wofds that have no meaning) or such as nei-.

ther themselves nor heal^ers know the meaning of ? And

would it not be well, for preachers to preach less them-

selves, ^hy telling the hearers of their own feelings and

resolutions, &c.) and more of Jesus Christ, his law, and

gospel, &c. And is there no ganger of preachers^ by:

habit, indulgmg an improper tone, in place of true elo-

quence, and of opqf ating more on the passions, than the

understanding of the hearers? And, as it is a maxim,

that ignorance is the parent of superstition, is there no

danger that such as may be opposed to improvement in

useful knowledge, may mistake superstition for real pi-

^ty and devotion? In short, as tlie import of the word

Christian, is to be Christ-like, is there not room for all

classes of the community to learn the lot and station

God in his providence has assigned them to fill, and to

really^ be more what they profess to be?- 1 trust uiy

?jeader will allow the foregoing inquiry to be at least

%vn\ questions, and answer them in his own mind, at his

leisure: as they are not meant for any particular person,

so I hope no one will be offended; for if ignorance is the

p9,rent of superstition, in fact, those that oppose useful

improvement, and are offended at truth, indicate that

they are either superstitions or are mere worldlings, in-

stead of being real christians. "Take ray yoke upon

you, and learn of me," saith the Saviour.

And in order to accomplish so desirable a thing as u-

nity and universal , peace, and order, in the chdstian

world; would it in any degree prevent the desired at-

tainment? Should the first-day Baptists, as a denomina-

tion of christians, not only attejid to the foregoing que-

ries, but also endeavour to cast the beam of the Lord's

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6ut)batli, out of their own eye, by really^ kee'ping his |M)s«

3 live command as well as his ordinance, in order that

ihcy might see more clearly to pull out the mote of form,

in their brother's eye? Would it be amiss for them once

more to read and well consider their bible? before they'

get into an habitUated notion of another sabbath than

the Lord's sabbath, or no day for a sabbath, &c.? as well

as to examine closely whether God\*s word will warrant

them in all they hold as doctrines; and see if some of

their doctrines are not more the commandments of men,

than God's commandments; in short, meet their breth-

ren on the standard of the written word of God, accord-

ing to its natural and obvious meaning, as regards faith

and practice.

But, some may say, he assumes the place of monitor,

£cc. — It will be readily allowed, that in most cases it is

inuch easier to prescribe rules, than to practise them-—

And as I Mould wish to take my full share in both, I hope\*

no one will be ofTended; " for not the hearers of the law

are just before God, but the doer of the law shall be jus-

tified,'\* suilh our great apostle, Rom. ii. 13.

And may net the Catholic Baptists, so called, 'or all o-

ther Baptists, in case they wish for so desirable a thing

TcS universal love and unity among christians, in addition

to the forcp;oing observations, enquire closely, and see

if none of their allowed conduct docs not admit sinceri-

ty Tdt tiuth, or creatures' judgment and feelings in the

room of (lod's sacred standard, and "examine whether or

not, the cause of llicir so often dividing and subdividing

and finally in some places becoming extinct as a church,

is or is not osving to building on the sandy foundation of

creature- invention, viz. superstition, fanaticism, enthu-

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slasm, sincerity^ and conceited good feelings, in place of

building on the Rock of ages, even God and his reveal-

ed word—Possibly there may be room for some improve-

xnent or alteration in some of their proceedings in reli-

gion, either in government or practice, if not in articlqs

of faith, Sec.

And how is it with the Methodist denomination? Sure-

ly method and order are good: but notwithstanding their

open communion to all, have they nothing to alter in? —

Are they perfectly righteous in their own eyes? Do they

despise others? Would they wish all mankind to be Me-

thodists; or that all would walk as Christ walked, and

be christians? Have they a Thus saith the Lord, in his

word, for their mode of government or discipline in the

church? Did Christ allow baptism to be performed as

the creature might choose? Did he exclude any from the

public meetings in case they had heard and seen three

-times, and yet would not join him? Did he make it a

.matter of fellowship, whether his followers prayed so

many times a day, or whether they prayed vocally at all?

And did Christ intimate as tho' man's piety and devotion

chiefly consisted in much noise, and appearances, in loud

and long prayers, and repetition, &c.? or in falling down

ip order to be sanctified? And did he tell his disciples,

;that aft^r the christian religion had got established, and

churches organized, that any one of them must travel

:all their time among those regularly established church-

es, and try to get the people to rend themselves from the

covenant they had made with their brethren, and join in

the particular mode and doctrine of that one, iliereby iu-

..timating or insinuating, that, that one was perfectly right

.and the rest entirely wrong, &c.? Possibly on close

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inspection, and comparing their conduct and doctrincaf,

with God\*s standing word, TEKEL, would be found

written against some of their allowed conduct. And

they also, might amend, reform and improve, in order

to accomplish universal unity among all christians. At

least it may do them no harm perhaps, to see to it, that

they teach and act according to the law and testimony of

God's word. And in ca^c there must be a general con-

tribution, to make out the fund, of peace and unity a-

mong ail, and if the rich should give more than the

poor, and yet every man as he purposethin his own mind^

as God loves a cheerful giveri may we with due humili-

ty ask our ancient an4 honourable, rich and learned

neighbours, the Papist, the Episcopalian! the Puritan or

Presbyterian, and Congregational Independent, &c. hoW

much we may calculate upon from them) to make oiit

the sum total.

I beg none may be offended at a poor ignorant beggafr

when he asks an alms, or pleads for charity; and as wis-

dom and wealth, as well as learning and strength, may

reasonably be expected among the ancient and populous

—^especially, in case one has the art of transmuting

th;::g >, or can turn bread into flesh, and blood into wine^

ju '>t as they please; surely where much is giveil, nitu^

will be requirtd. Will you, for the sake of universal

peace and unity, condescend to meet your brothcfr

woiins, on tl.c standard of God\*s revealed word? Will

yo p' jasc to cast off all you have not a plain command,

in i 1 > word, for? Or will you please to shew us fairly,

i:, Gjd's word, where you have power to make laws in

vifiation to God\*s laws? where he has admitted his pro-

fessed people to make likenesses of men^ or any other

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thing, to bow down to? and where he has directed Us to

picay to -departed souls, or to use the sign of the cross,

or only to pray towards the east? or in what chapter and

verse we have an account of Purgatory; and that by giv-

ing money to a priest to say mass, souls may be deliver-

ed froni their torments, &c.? — ^and many other such like

things, too tedious to enumerate.

Where is it recorded, in the gospel of Jesus Christ,

that he told his apostles that one was greater in power

or authority than another? or that the bishops might

lord it over God's heritage? Where may we find, in all

the doctrines and examples of the meek and lowly Sav-

iour, that he allowed his preachers to call on their breth-

ren for tythes, and in case they would not, or could not,

pay so much, and at the time your bishop pleased, to

take it by force? (like the sons of Eli of old.) Or where

may we find his warrant to the civil magistrate to use

the sword to compel obedience to any of his laws, or to

persecute for conscience sake in any case whatever?—

Where do we find him telling his disciples, they must

attain such a degree of knowledge in the sciences of

the world, before they may be admitted preachers of the

gospel? And where may we find his. command to bap-

tize infants? at any ratej much more, to sprinkle, and

call that Baptism, ' And once more, please ^to shew us

where he commanded his disciples, to do that which be

never did; i. e,. brake God's solemn commanded sabbath,

and keep the day the heathen dedicated to the sun, in

idolatrous worship, &C. &c.

\* Nowj my respectable neighbours, in case you will re\*

ally lay all suck like things aside, or show- a plam Thus,

uaith the Lord, for all you will retainj doubtless you wiJl

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contribute much towards the desired accomplishment oC

uaiversal peace and umty— >Iq such a case, I might safr

for one, here is my band, and here is ray heart, to m^et

you on that ground in love and unity.

And here is our respectable friend Quaker, sitting si\*

lently by. He has grounded' his QfQ-anns, ntianifesting

no disposition to fight or. oppose.. Also the Shaker^ and;

^ister Jemimar-Why, if they are few in number, or

spaall of stature, or even females, ppssibly they may cast

off, or cast in, something— as ^ every little helps,' and th^

widow's two mites is commended\* We also read of olct

that the wise hearted women spun goat's hair, towards

making the Lord's tabernacle. And altho\* the Almigh-

^ may not choose to dwell in temples made with hands,;

y,^t if our bodies are surely the temple of the Holjf

Ohost, as Paul intim^tes,^ 1 Cor. iii. 19. surely we majf

have something tO; do with our bodies in order for Chris^

tp reign in us, &c.

Well, then, ncighbgurs, what will the spirit admit you

to cast in, or cast off, in or^er to effect the girand plan pC

ejotire peace and vnion? Will you please tp rem^mber^

t^ierc is a time ^nd seasQjo to every purpose under th^

\*^?—ra time to speak, as wejl as a time to rcfpain; a.

Ipeie tQ m.oumxas well as a tii^e tq dancer ai)d is th^^re

^pt a time foryoupg women to marry, ai^d guid^ th^

iipn^e, a$ well a? tp a^t. thewselves up as a; teAder of

,Sk. new, sect? Aiii h&s, not God, in ^l^mu ^r

ppii^^d a.time.for his worsihi^ even on his seventh-d^

sabbathi! And has not Christ Qjdainec^ andprac^tisfed ei^r

t^rnaj o^jcH^anQes, Sec? Does, not a. time of proHtj^on

n^B continue? Andare we not yet in a visible body?^^

K^ the Mprlifii iK^^v^ M manlund\* m^terisdly ^iMit^

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fretn vhat it w^s in the days of our Siivioitr^ fto8H^ Haa

9Dyr re^ad cause intervened since thcn» to alter man's obi\*

ligation t\* his God or his neighbour? Is there not at

rniuch need of faith now, as there was then^ And is there

not as muoh need^ of external mode» to manifest that

fM.th, as there was^ when the divine Saviout^ who knew

-what was in man, was bodily present with his discijrfes?

"Has he given man any standard^ of fakh and j^ractice?

or any standard to try the spirits by, . other than his rc-

Tcaled word, or contrary to that divinte oracle? Can a

soul be visible without a body? or, what would such a

soul be called? Has it ever been the course of the Al-

mighty^s conduct, to call man to speak in his cause, or

influence such with extraordinary powers, in ordinar]^

times and cases? And is there not the same rule to dis-

pense with all appearances of religion, even words, that

there is of one positive command or ordinance, that God

has given^ Will you please to demonstrate your right

to neglect or contemn the solemn ordinances and com-

mands of Jehovah, by any real miracle? they were con-

firmed at first by real miracles, you will allow; is it not

therefore reasonable to suppose, in case the institutov

were disposed to alter or disannul them, he would also

confirm such a commission by miracles? ^Please to

consider these and such like ideas, and attend to the

scriptures, or rather the divtne Saviour, who has direct-

ed us to search the scriptures, aij well as to search our

hearts, intimating that iq them we think we have eternal

life. Then let us beware how we invalidate the scrip-

tures.

(Now Plato and some other heathen philosophers, by

the light they had, could give good rules of mannera^— ^

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but they nor you, aside froin the scriptures, can girfe any

assurance of eternal lifC) or tell us how to attain that

life.)

I trust, it may do you all no harm to hear the in vita\*

tion, to cast into the treasury of the Lord, in order to ac-

complish universal peace and union— -Thereforje hope

none may be oflfbnded.

Now, in case a]l denominations of christians, would

thus cast off, or cast in, as the case might be, and con-

sent to meet on the standard of God's revealed word, it

would indicate something like a Millennium. But if

we have bitter envying and strife, even in our hearts,

such peace and union will not be apparent— For if we

bite and devour one another, let us take heed lest wp be

consumed one of another.

But viewing the rising generations, for whom I have

a peculiar regard— permit me my young friends, of all

denominations, classes and colours, into whose hands

this book may fall, to ask you some questions, and give

you some advice as a dying man; altho' in order to en-

gage the attention of some, I may have used ^some

quaint or odd expressions, and gone thro\* the whole

book in a very brief, and perhaps rough and intricate

order; yet the subject matter, especially the latter part,

is of serious and of important concernnient to all souls.

May I therefore ask you, or will you rather ask your own

souls, what you think of a Millennium? of Christ, and

of his cause? of religion, and your own soul? And if

Galio careth for none of those things, let him think assu-

redly, a time will come when he cannot avoid thinking

of those things, and of feeling too the consequences of

not attending to them now\*

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But, says another, I am young— time enough when I

ftm old, to think of those things.««»Remember, time is

not at your command. Do you know you shall live un-

til you are old? In the burying place you may sec graves

shorter than you. And says another, I am in the pur-

suit of the world, or am about marrying a wife, and

therefore I cannot attend to those things.— ^Remem-

ber, the world passeth away with a great noise, and what

shall it advantage you, if you gain the whole world and

Jose your own soul? or is a wife of more value than your

soul? Judge judiciously, and rightly estimate all things:

Possibly this very night thy soul will be required of

Jhee; yoa,\*rather attend to those things yourself, and in-

-line your wife tb do the same.

Another may say, You direct me this road or day, Sec.

vsnd my father tells me Of another road and day, Sec. and

ja third tell of, no rpad^ and of no day; and another tell^

<»f a Mahomet as a saviour, and of a sixth day, Sec. and

some tell of all as being liappy; and others of this soul

-you tcjil so much -of, will be extinct by and by, See— And

wl^t shall I think, and how shall I form my judgment oh

those things? ^ome even say, there is nothing in reli-

gion, it is all priestcraft, &c.— ^Why, my dear friend

«ome things you certainly do know; and all other things

essential to happiness, you may know, in ease you right-

ly attend to those things now, in God^s time of visita-

tion. You do know, that you are a living being; and

from what you see and feel, you must expect to died.—

You do know, that something within you makes you su-

perior to the beasts of the earth, and the iBonsters of

tlie seas, and the fowls of the airt This is certain; it is

matter of fact\*<^You must know this, whether I, or your

fether, ov asOOlher, tell you so or otherwise. You must

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know, also, that this certain somethipg^, we call the smiT^

gives you the pre-eminence over those other beings you

see; for it is not your bodily strength Uiat does it, that

this soul having such faculties, makes you capable to

contemplate, to reason on things, calculate, and contrive,

Qnd also makes you conscious that you are • accountable

to your own soul, to your fellow mortal, and to your Ma-

ker; for by this time (in case you are endowed with

common sense) you must know, you did not make your-

self. But who did make you and all other .^ings> and

gave you those superior faculties, and still protects and

supports y<)u? where x^s he live? and what is his nafne.

Sec? You do not know; and alas, you cannot knowy by

all your present faculties of nature— For as you may

reason and £x on one thing or being as your Maker, s^

your fellow being may reason and fix oa another object

or being as your Maker; and he has just the 4^me rig^

so to do, as you have; for he is. your equal in this rc^

pect; and has the same right to compel, you to acknow-

ledge his sypposed maker of all, as. you have to. compel

him to acknowledge yours, (unless you aUovf Strength, a

right, and one is stronger. than the other — which in thi$

case, is no right at all.) And you do kno^v, that in case

he should prove stronger than you, and compel you l^

force to acknowledge his supposed maker, it would not

alter your mind as tonhe being you had fixed on, in the

least; (so free and independent are all souls.) Neither

could you, with any propriety at all, render his supposed

maker any true devotion— It would be morally imposU-

• ble so to do, unless the other had convinced your min^,

by fair reason, that his was tjie true maker, Sec.- ' — In

just such a situation mankind would all now be, were it

KiQt for the power of custom or tradition, and divine R^-

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velation. These thingSj so far, I think all must know."

All the human race >ve hate any account of, in all ag^s

that have exercised their reason on this point, have ii-

greed there is, in fact, some one or more supreme and

divine Originals as the first cause of all things; and ac-

cordingly have paid their acknowledgments to such as

they supposed was their maker or supporter, &c.—- For

mankind in all ages, have not been so totally ungrateful

16 their supposed maker, as not at some time to pay some

acknowleflr;ement to their deity or maker— that in bur

language is called God: which acknowledgment, &c. is

called rdiuion or devotion or worship. You also do

know, that you have not a consciousness of guilt for

"What another lias done, as before hinted. All have done

it, under some external or outward form or mode, as a

manifestation of their iaith, or from tradition. Now as

poor mortals\* reason, is finite or limited, and their judg-

ment imperfect, faikble and uncertain — which you,^ my

reader, must also know certain, as a matter of fact, even

by your own experience aiid observation— I say, (and so

saitli ail worshippers of the true Godj unless we allow

Deists to be worsfiippers of the true God, and Heathen,

and Infidels, &c.) that the true Maker, or God supreme

of all, in order to put this matter out of dispute among

the nations of the earth, or for his own glory, or to dis-

play his glorious character, and divine attributes, as also

for the peace and happiness of the human family, or for

reasons to mortals unknown, Vvas graciously pleased, to

tnr.he\* a divine Kevc^lalion of Himself to his creature' man:

in which Revelation he has condescended to inform us,

something of his nature, power, wisdom, goodness, &c.

and why and. how he made man, as well as other beings

and things, and how maiV apostatized from him, and the

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consequence tbereoF) &c.; and also his infinke goodfiei^s

in providing them a Saviour, — [And here I would ob-

serve, that the gospel was preached to save the souls of,

meU) even before the law, as a ruje of life, was ever giv-

en by God after the fall of inaiu and, why was it ever

given at all, if it was not to last as Jong as man's state aS,

probation lasted.3"-in which also God informed man, the

way he mu/it conduct to please him, ai^d.tbe ojutlines at

least, of his worship; in fifie, his obligation and duty to

his God, to himself, and his fellow mortal^ in the vari-

ous ages stations and relations in this life; as also cf the

nature, faculties, account^ibility, and durability of the

soul of man; with promises of rewards here and here-

after, to the obedient— -and threatenings of pynishments,

here and hereafter, to the disobedient, &c.» -And tp

confirm this Revelation of God, as worthy of a good

God, there is in it by far the best system of morals that

ever was known. [And it is more than probable, that

all the ancient philosophers who have attempted to give

a system of morals, have had the benefit of this copy of

God's Revelation] And I may say it is a perfect sys-

tem... .converting the soul: and it was confiriped by stu-

pendous, divine and real miracles, before multitudes of

witnesses; some of which at least, no man has ever been

able to disprove, altho\* they have tried their utmost with

the help of the devil. Now this divine Revelation, we

call Scripture, or the written word of God, is the truth

of God; and by which, (and I may say, which only) we

do know there is a God, and who is the true God, and

Maker of all— -and ever has been the standard and cri-

terion to distinguish between the True, and false gods;

for altho\* there have been a multitude, who have attemp-

ted by theiir re^on, or some impulse of their minds, to

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Mt ibrUi BBotlier ^Ged And l^vn, €cc. there never was any

could confirm Uieir mtss^OQ with real loiracles; and qoti^

seq^aktAy all pretensmis aad^imctkHR given Itay man,

in opposition to lus Gad^ BeveiatkMi, liaserferbe^n coxh

sidered false, i>f all tbe tme Miowers or iwsorshvppers

of the true<9od; and the reeeivasig or believing of thie

ctivine Reyelation, has ^yeriseen the dbtinguishiiig mark

of the tr4»e people of the tr^ie^GrtMl: hfince, it is tme, and

AO lie— ^ matter of iaot; aiad we may al^l know lit, so far \*

as we can know any thing of the kind<\*-^Atid it is tho't,

that if Deists or InBdeis would takp half the trouble to

JbeUeve.and obey thistdWlne Revelation, that they do to

disbelieve, ^ere would not >be a Deist in the world:

And in short, I doubt whether in fact, there is such a be\*

ing, which has well read and con^dered our bible. Now

according to this Revelation, a divine Saviour or seed of

the woman was to come, in t^e fulness of time; he did

actually come, or appear, and also witnessed his mission

Jby the most stupendous and salutary miracles, that were

real matters of fact; and witnessed to the law and the

j>rophets, or said Revelation; and taught as relates to

iaith and morals, agreeable to the Revelation before giv-

en—For had Christ or his apostles, or even all divine

teachers, taught another system, it would unavoidably

have destroyed both — ^so nearly is the law and gospel

connected. True he was more clear and explicit in ma-

ny points of morals, but as a system it is the same, and

must remain so, or he was another God, or the first God,

and Revelation was imperfect; which will equally des-

troy both, as before stated— Hence he sent his divine

missionaries into all the world, to teach the glad tidings

r(not of a new god, or another god, or revelation, differ-

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cnt in the main points) that God, according to his prom-

ise, had sent the Saviour, who died for our sins, accord-

ing to the scriptures, and was raised from the dead ac-

cording to the scriptures, &c. (Observe there was then

no such thing as scripture, save the Old Testament.)-^

Hence, we find the great apostle of the Gentiies " wit-

nessing both to small and great, saying none other things

than those which the prophets and Moses did say should

come,'\* &c. Acts xxvi; 22. Now compare this text with

Acts xxiv. 14, and Luke xxiv. 27. and in short, all the

writings of all the apostles, and see if we can find a re-

lease from moral obligations, or from the seventh-day

sabbathoo««Add to all this, the glorious triumphant Sav-

iour appears, as in the presence of God, to intercede for

all that will come to God by him, (or all that will atteijd

to God's Revelation) and in order that no mortal may

have excuse in the great day of account, he sends his

spirit to enlighten and convince, or reprove the world;

as, " the manifestation of the spirit is given to every

man, and the true light that lighteth every man that com-

cth into the world," &c. Obsei^ve, this true light ever

corresponds with God\*s revealed and written word, or

both would be uncertain: and this light is what sheweth

you clearly (as it agrees with the scripture as before ob-

served) independent of what I or your father may say,

what your God requires of you, in order for your hap-

piness-— Therefore my advice to you, in those things, is,

to hear and attend to what your Maker has told you in

his revealed word, in preference to what even yoiir fa-

ther or any other fallible mortal may say, to the cohtra"-

ry of that divine system of revealed religion. '

Now to be more particular, by way of advice^ I would

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observe, that God's word enjoins on you, Brst, not only

to believe this Revelation as come from God to be true,

but that you shall not have any other God before him, or

bow yourself to any likeness of any thing visible or in

your conception as in distinction froni him in order to

worship; also, not to take God's name in vain; and alsO|

to remember to keep holy his seventh-day sabbath, &c.

as may be seen briefly in Exodus, 20th chapter, amount-

ing to this: Thou shalt hear, love and obey the Lord thy

God, with all thine heart, Sec; and thou shalt do to your

fellow mortals as you would wish them to do to you in

like circumstances, &c.— But perhaps my young friend

may say, I have not done so, but the reverse; & I want to

continue in my present pursuits; what next? I answer:

God's word tells you to repent and turn to God: and he

llkas promised pardon to the believing penitent; (see his .

word— as room will not admit of citations.) But will

repenting of sin, atone for it? By no means: his word

kas informed you the plan of atonement; and saith the

great Saviour: " Ye believe in God, believe also in me,'\*

»-\*Aot as another God, as I expect, but rather as the

promised Saviour God had revealed in his word. — But

our preacher says (and he is called a good man too, and

a man of learning) we cannot repent nor believe, of

ourselves. Apd can you walk or breathe, of yourself?

As to what your preacher tells you, don't you for your

life, believe him, when he tells you any thing on this

point, contrary to God's word: you may as well turn to

an idol: he is a creature, even fallible — If he speaks the

mind of God, he will speak agreeable to God's revealed

word, or will, as has been stated. And let him first

shew you the place in God's word, where God has said,

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you caaaot repent^ asid beHftve^ See. I think God^s irror^

saitlu ^^th cooMS by luftringu You certainly bare earsi

and have or m»y hear and read God\*ft Revelationf for it

is in tkymoiifth and in tfaine bemrt, « that if thou ahak

confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesosy^ suid skait bell ere

in thine heart that C>od has raised hktt horn ikt dead

thou sbalt he saved-" (Rom. x. 9.) And can ywt expect-

to be saved and be happy yridl% you contmoe in your

s'uis^ that makes you so miserabte? Yott must certainly

know that also cannot be, let men say as they pleaaie a-

lx)Ut ail as being sa^redi, for Christ ia not the minister ef

bin, neither came he (mjethmks) to save men in their

sins, but from their 8m& But some say, my soul> m case\*

I still coniintie ia my sins mU be anail^ted or die, a^

irell as my body. If you haire suck a preacher^ ask hiiA

to shew the place in God's word where it is sa recorded^

We read that thje subtil serp^kt told old mother ETe sher

should not surely die, when €U>d's ren^ealed word hadt

said, Thou shalt surely die. (Oen. il 17. & iii. 4.) Noir

such like coatradictiQas are found recorded in our bible^

but if we attend to the places we shall find the speakers

are, God and his enemy: and w« hare a number o£ de«

xnonstrations that shew us tlie event, or whose word was-

true— And I cannot ad ?be you my friend to trust to suck

anassertionti s^nd as to that there is nothing? in religtooy

&c. It is an old ittaxim, there cannot be so much smeke

without some fire. I>epeBd uson it, my friend, there n^

a divine reality in tvue Religioi^ even tog;ether with this

divine Revelation I have been speaking of, for God has

been wont to give the Holy Ghost to those that really o-

bey him in his word, (see Acts v. 32.) to console their

souls and to assist them in the self-denial road, &c. This

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^u in part also must certainly know, as for instance, I

will suppose you have been used to tell the truth in mat-

ters you know, and here is a circumstance that truth

■will be against you, and you tell a positive lie; will you

feel in your mind on due reflection and meditating on

God's word and the consequences of that lie, as you

•would in case you had spoken the truth? Surely not.—

Now do you go and confess that lie, and take all the

shame to yourself, and consent to take the punishment,

and make good the damages, that lie has done, and sat-

isfy your lather that you will do so more; and will you

not feel more tranquil in your mind, especially in case

your father tells you he forgives you, and still loves you>

&c.?

So our heavenly Father has promised, and does in fact

do, to the humble believing penitent, who cries for mer-

cy: and have we one instance in all the scriptures, that

Jesus ever finally turned any one, of any age, nation or

colour, that in earnest humbly applied to him—- -There-

fore, as it is a thing certain, that we have a soul that is

invisible, so it is a thing certain, that the soul . that en-

joys the divine favour, has a certain enjoyment; and that

there is, in fact, a divine reality in true religion. — And

if you are not ha^^py, my friend, in your soul, it is your

own fault— God has given you a soul, that must exist in

happiness or misery; which soul, by its faculties God

has given it, is accountable: he has given you ears to

hear, and a tongue to speak, and ask for such things as

you need: he has also revealed lus will and your du^y;

and also provided for you a Saviour, and has told you la

his word how you are to conduct in order to be happy;

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Tind if you are not Jiappjr, ywir moutk wUl bo stoppedl •

before God in the great day of account —

These things you do know; and in ca^ you wish to.

know Real Happiness, I seriously advise you to ^tend

toGod's word, or revealed will: read it, and pondesr it

A/cll; that teaches you to pray to him for what you can-

not do without.~And not only read it, but believe it as

a divine Truth, a matter of facti and: believe no other

scheme opposed to it, even if your father has believed

it, and tells you to believe it;— and not only believe it„

but also obey it— \*as faith without obedience, will do yoqu

no real good.

As I one day lay on my bed, I cast my eyes on my

window — I saw a number of flies of different sizes,

strength, figure, &c. also occasionally there came ia a

bumble-bee, a hornet, wasps, &c. JNow the flies wer^

chiefly at the bottom of the window, and appeared all

crawling upwards; some would help themselves with

their wings; but I observed, generally when the fly was

in the middle or main ojT the pane, and attempted to us\*

his wings to help him up, his head would be agjynsliWi^

glass— And altho' many of them, by fluttering, SeCv

would get upwards, some farther, and sonoe Jess, they

nearly all would tumble, down before they reached ther

top of the pane of glass or window. When the. bumble

l)ce came on his heft, altho\* he made a great noisie (sa

as to affright the flies), with the strength of his wings,

Sec. yet he would keep his head against the glass, and

soon fall to the.bottom, and sometimes down on the floor

[^and several 1 have killed in that situation. J When the

hornet came on (as they eat flies) the flies in the open

pavt of the^ glass would soon retire^ generally to the-

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edge of the ^lass; some he would catchv and othees lie

wourLd affright away that I saw no more of them. The

hornet also\* in case he attempted to got u|>wards by the .

gUisS) vrould keep hi^ head agahist at, and fall — and some

of them J have killed. And much so of the wasp. 1

also observed tlmt when the Eies ^t close to the wood

of the sash of the windgwi or oa the sash, they would

crawl up with ajp^parent eas^r even to the to|^ of the wln»

doW| and on to the plastering above, &c« fiut the bum-

ble-bee^ hori^t,. Sec would never atte^aopt that patht whe«

ther they were too proud>^u^ too big» to ^ in that nar-

row ro&di, or disdained hy or what, I eould not teU; so it:

vas, I aUo olj^^ved that when the files would leave

the sash on the narrow streak just by it, which they often

"would do^ and attempt to crawl u^ the open glass, the^

would fall or be caught by the hornet, or fiy away, Eicc.—

My curiosity led me to Inspect the cause, of the files\*

crawling up#he ^lass while on that narrow edge so near

the sash, with such ease;, as before observed; and on

close inspection I found that the painter in painting the

sash (as his pamt was white, and near the colour of the

glass, was hardly perceivable) had let his brush just

toucb tlxe edge of the glass, andhad dried on, and was

not so slippery as the rest of the glass, and the flies had

a good road; but by the steady hand of the pamter, it

was as straight as the sash was jointed^ and esitremely

narrow-— so I found the cause.

On reflection, salth I within my mind^ What may be

learned by these insectsl Why tnay I not moraltEe a lit\*

tie, as well as great men of learning!? Well then, what

a companson will the flies bear with the human raceN-»

All are creatures: all the odds in fact,= is, man has reason

as well as sights and had the files reason, they might all

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have seen how easily their fellows got up when en the

sash or the narrow strip by it; consequently} in case they

had reason, their destruction was their own carelessness

or inattention to the road left for them. (As the gift of

reason makes accountability, and the soul immortal.)—

And how does the glass represent the world of proba-

tion! wherein are slippery places, and false appearances

of safety. How does the top of the window and the up-

per plastering, hold out the idea of another state of per-

fection! And how does the narrow strip represent

Christ as a sash, and the narrow strip made so straight

by the psunter, represent divine Revelation, or the nar-

row road of morals just by Christ— both being fitted by

the great painter of the universe, and closely connected

•—And how does the hornet suit the character of the de-

vil! and the wasps, the wicked- spirits: a£i also the bum-

ble-bee, false teachers, great philosophers. Sec. that make

80 much noise in the world, and have no ncftion to go on

the narrow road, or on the sash: they^ want to see and be

seen, &c. I have not room to enlarge.

Our scriptures and our Lord tell us of false gods, and

Christs, of false spirits, and of false prophets and tea-

chers, &c.— Consequently, there must be false systems,

false doctrines, false customs, false ideas and concep-

tions, &Cw\*— and in the proportion of their melignany

or sin: so will be the consequence of their errors. But

all this does not by any means prove that there is not in

fact •ne true and living God, and system of Religion

that is true and matter of fact, but rather proves in fact

there is a true <jrod, &c. Therefore, I will close this ad-

vice with the poet's words;--

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Have communioii with few,

Be intimate with one,

Deal justly with all,

Speak evil of none.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: "Fear

Ood, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole

duty of man: for God shall bring every work into judg-

ment, with every secret thing, whether it be goodj or

whether it be evil.\*\* Eccl. xii. 13, 14.

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