

connection with certain facts, of whose certainty *evidence* is given, which evidence, to be received, must be examined? Christianity proposes truths of speculation, and truths of practice. If men can examine and ascertain the first by proxy, why not *obey* the last in the same manner? But who can love or fear, believe or hope, by substitution!

If to deny the right of private judgment be destruction of the nature of Christianity in general, it is more remarkably so of the Christianity of reformed Churches. The right of private judgment is the very foundation of the reformation, and without establishing the former in the fullest sense, the latter can be nothing but a faction in the state, a schism in the Church. * *

The Reformers were not to blame for exercising the right of private judgment themselves—their fault was a denial of the same right to others. They had the highest authority for what they did, deriving it from the doctrine and example of Christ and his Apostles.

Take one, two, or more, of our Saviour's doctrines, and ask, what magic can there be in *subscribing them without examination*? Himself never proposed such a thing, but on the contrary, exhorted his hearers to *search the Scriptures*—a strange impertinence, unless the right of private judgment be allowed.

Nor did he only exhort the people to judge for themselves, but he also warned his Disciples not to usurp that right. "Call no man your Father upon the earth, neither be ye called masters."—Neither *impose* your opinions upon others, nor suffer them to impose theirs upon you.

Had Jesus Christ considered the right of private judgment in any unlawful light, he would have first instructed Herod, or Caiphas, or some of the principal Rabbies, and by them he would have converted the nation. But instead of that, he condemns the doctrines of Church governors, and addresses his sermons *ad populum*, gives it as a proof of his mission, that *the gospel was preached to the poor*, and constantly protects his followers in the exercise of the right of private judgment. * * *

The Apostles, worthy followers of such a Master, went into all nations, preaching a doctrine which no Church governors upon earth believed. Did they deny the right of private judgment?—If they had, their expeditions would have been in the Quixotic style. Did St. Paul write to Corinth, "I speak as to wise men: judge ye what I say?" Did he write to Rome, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind?" Every body understood this. The populace at Birea, men and women, "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." The students at Athens desired to know *what the new doctrine was*, of which the Apostle spake, for the purpose of *search*, no doubt. The magistrates, at Gallio, declared themselves, *no judges in such matters*. And hence the amazing success of his preaching; He reasoned