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ESSENTIAL AND NON-ESSENTIAL.

There is scarcely any moral distinction more popular in the churches at the present time, and more detrimental to the interests of precious truth, than that which is recognized between what are called the *essentials* and *non-essentials* of Holy Scripture. Such a distinction is wholly unwarranted by the teachings of Divine inspiration. It is readily admitted that some portions of revealed truth are not so fundamental to the great interests of personal salvation as others. But to affirm that any portion of Bible truth is non-essential, in the sense in which the word is commonly understood, is an impeachment of the wisdom of the Author of Revelation. If every thing in "the volume of the Book" be not essential to salvation, it is essential to the accomplishment of some wise purpose for which the Author of Revelation designed it. It may not be one of "the weightier matters of the law," but yet it is indispensable to the perfection of the Bible as a system of revealed truth. One's little finger is not essential to his physical existence—its removal does not necessarily endanger his life—yet without it, his bodily organization would be defective. In like manner every jot and tittle of God's revealed truth is essential to the perfection of that Word which "is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." To represent any portions of truth revealed in the Word, therefore, as non-essential—as matters of indifference—points that may be properly held in abeyance, and that should not be allowed to interfere with schemes of organic union in the churches,—so to teach is to do manifest dishonour to the Word of God, and to impeach the wisdom of its glorious Author. On this subject the late Dr. Candlish of Edinburgh, on the return of the Free Church deputies from England, uttered the following scriptural sentiments:—
"Every portion of divine truth, every jot and tittle of the truth of God, as laid down in His Word, I am bound to obey. I can recognize no right in any Christian man or in any Christian church, to sit in judgment on the comparative importance or unimportance of any portion of the Word of God. I can recognize no rule of our duty but this. Is it a truth revealed, is it a part of God's testimony to me? If so, it cannot be insignificant in my opinion; my duty is to propagate that opinion among all my brethren of mankind. There may be many purposes for which it may be all right and reasonable that I should draw the line of demarcation between what are called the essentials and non-essentials of the Bible. As a matter of charity, this may be of importance in my forming my judgment of my neighbours, and it may be of importance that I should draw the line of distinction between what are called the essentials of the Gospel of Christ, and those points which are secondary