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## Dissertations on various Subjects.

### SECTION I.

#### *Giving the true sense of several places of scripture.*

AS the scripture is the rule by which we are to be judged, it certainly is the rule by which we are to regulate our conduct: therefore it is of the utmost importance, that we have a true knowledge of what is revealed from heaven.

The doubts and difficulties with which men are frequently embarrassed in their spiritual researches, do, in a great measure proceed from that general deviation from the primitive simplicity of gospel truths, and gospel language, which so sadly prevails among the various denominations of Christians: in consequence of which, a multitude of useless, and unscriptural distinctions have been introduced into what are called systems of divinity, which serve only to perplex and confound the minds of anxious and well disposed inquirers. Of this sort, are the sentiments of those who pretend that ordination was performed, in the time of the apostles, by presbyters only. Let us inquire whether this claim can be supported, by any one instance in the New-Testament.

We are referred to the 13th ch. of the Acts, to prove a presbyterian ordination. It is said that the prophets and teachers there mentioned, were presbyters; and ordained St. Paul and Barnabas. Provided this was an ordination; then presbyters undertook to ordain those that were apostles before. A notion too absurd to be advanced by any gentleman who has the least regard for his own character! Whatever is meant by this designation, it was not an ordination, to give St. Paul the apostolic office.