

# THE CHRISTIAN.

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Conducted by W. W. EATON.

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.—*Peter*. On this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.—*The Lord Messiah*.

## DISCOURSE ON POSITIVE INSTITUTIONS.

BY JOHN TAFFE.

And the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man saying, of every tree of the garden mayst thou eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of Good and of Evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.

Genesis ii., 15, 16, 17.

I have read this portion of sacred Scripture in your hearing, with a view of calling your attention to the subject of POSITIVE DIVINE INSTITUTIONS. The first proposition, therefore, to which I invite your attention is, that *positive divine institutions are tests of respect for divine authority; and that respect for divine authority is of cardinal and indispensable importance in the religion of the Bible.*

As in every other science, so in the science of all sciences, the science of religion, which teaches man how to live right, and how to secure to himself the imperishable riches of eternity, if we would have just views of it, we must begin at the beginning, and acquaint ourselves with first principles.

If we would comprehend the whole, we must understand its parts. If we would understand the religion of the Bible, we must stand out in the light of the Bible, as in the light of the sun. If we would enjoy the light that irradiates from the pages of this divine volume, we must understand this book of books; otherwise, it will be to us a dead letter, as it is to those who call it a sealed book.

Then be it observed, that the Universe, every where inscribed with evidences of the power, and wisdom, and goodness of God, may be divided into two great empires—into the empire of matter, and of mind, each governed by laws peculiar to itself.

In the material universe there is one great law, to which the movement of every orb conforms. This law is unchanged and unchangeable as the omniscient artificer of nature.

Every thing around, above and beneath us, proclaims the wisdom and the might of Jehovah, who never began to be, who ever was, who and evermore shall be, the eternal inhabitant of eternity. Who has taught him? Who has known the mind of the Lord? or, who has seen his counsellor? All his works, like right lines, move onward and forwards. There is not a discordant note in all the works of material nature.

As the harmony and grandeur of the spheres, as well as the wonder-