

be "the Good word of God"—when we *feel* it to be "the powers of the world to come."—God himself declares, that, we must NOT receive the testimony of any man, of any teacher, nor even of any Angel: CONTRARY to this (our own) "Experience."

☞ This is the truth, and it cannot be denied. ☞

Then, what must be the condition of those "who have tasted of the good word of God, and felt the powers of the world to come," and who now deny--deride—and condemn that "Good word" that "Truth which (once) made them free?"

I am Sir, &c.

OLD PATHS.

Fredericksburgh, July 27, 1836.

# LETTER VII.

SIR,

All descriptions of men require food. And a sufficiency of nutritious food will support all.—Yet different men have different tastes—this man has a greater relish for this kind of food—the other man has a greater relish for that.—And, even, where food is of the same quality, or description, men differ in their tastes, and likings, as to the mode of its cookery; and the implements or vessels to be employed. And, however men may differ in these respects, yet, all agree as to the necessity of food. Food is the *essential* thing,—not its kind, or mode of Cookery—not the *form*, materials, or size of the vessels or implements employed. It is not the vessels, nor the preparation, which support life—it is the FOOD which they are used for to prepare or contain.

☞ This is exactly parallel to our spiritual case under the Gospel. God has given Christ for the life of the world. Christ is that living Bread sent down from Heaven, to give and support the spiritual life of men. That life consists in HOLINESS and LOVE. And the *only essential hand*, or means, for receiving this living Bread is FAITH—living faith—a believing in Christ with an heart unto Righteousness. And as natural Bread is necessary to the support of natural life; so this living Bread is necessary to the support of this spiritual life. But, as it matters not what may be the *form* of the vessel in which we prepare or receive our natural food—nor of what materials the vessel is composed; provided the food it contains is good; and the vessel itself, not too unwieldy for our management,—So, it matters not, what the *form* of Church worship or discipline may be; nor what the *Names* of its orders in the Ministry—no matter what may be the *Form*, structure, or material of the Church vessel; provided it shall contain the Bread of life, and that by the simplicity and suitability of its structure, it shall aid (not impede) the exercise of our hand of Faith in the procurement and partaking of that living Bread.

But, the nature of the case requires, that, we must not make this vessel of church *Forms*, orders, and ordinances a substitute for the Bread of life itself; nor make it so cumbrously heavy as to be inconvenient for Christian management; neither should we adorn this church vessel in such a way, as that the multiplicity of its gilded ornaments and sounding titles, shall attract the eye of our Faith to the *vessel itself*; instead of the living Bread, which it ought to contain.—This would be Anti-Gospel—This would be evidently, contrary to the genius of the free, unincumbered Gospel of Christ. This would be to bring us back again under the Jewish "school master"—the non-age of the "Law." This would be to direct our minds to outward forms of splendid shew, or to sounding titles of church "orders": and, thus, turn away our spiritual eye from the spiritual *essentials* of the Gospel of Christ!

But, this is what IRVINGISM has done; or fain would do! And this is what several other Churches have too much already done; which were once pure, and (at least, essentially) Gospel in their beginnings.

In proof—I say—whatever God has commanded, is *essential*.—Whatever