

from the *will* of Heaven. I exhort you to confess the Lord Jesus Christ before men, not only in your general demeanour, by acting in conformity to his general moral requirements, but by obeying him in his positive insitutions. By so doing, from the love you have to him and his will, you will be able to say—"I thus publicly give up myself to the service of heaven, not because it is reasonable or unreasonable, but because God commands I bow submissively to his Almighty will." No one understands what it is to dwell in God, and have God dwelling in him, until he thus entirely surrenders, not only his moral, but his intellectual being, to the entire controul of him in whom he lives, moves, and has his being.

The man whose religion consists in believing only what he can bring within the cognizance of his senses, and will do nothing religiously but what he can see the propriety of in every respect, will soon become an Atheist. You have, perhaps, already perceived, that the young people of New England educated under what is pompously called "rational christianity"—without an obedient confession of the true character* of the person and work of the Lord Messiah—are fast becoming infidels. The greater part of them when closely pressed with the necessity of obeying the Messiah—on their own confession, that he was a *great* and *true* teacher, he ought certainly to be obeyed, to the letter,—with scarcely an exception they will soon convince you that they have as little affection for his teachings as they have for what they contemptuously call "orthodoxy."

The circumstances by which you are and will for a long time be surrounded, will all favour this rationalism. Though the self styled orthodox professes a most pious horror for Unitarianism, all their plans to secure the patronage of the rich and popular in the community directly tend to the promotion of a system of mere rationalism. This has been the case throughout protestant Europe, and much of New England. Only for a few men of uncommon minds—like Dr. Beecher—all the New England Congregationalism would have long since given place to the Neologism of Germany.

But I have wandered. I wish to have the conviction fastened on your mind that nothing that God commands, is to be considered trivial. Nothing that he has enjoined can be neglected with impunity. On commands, aside from the authority of God, apparently the most trivial, have some most momentous events, connected with the history of the human family, hung. The "transgression that first brought death into the world, and all our woe," the influence of which eternity alone will scarce develop, was eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. God has by this proved his determination that men shall bow submissively to him without knowing any other reason than his *will*, if they would enjoy the present and future salvation. He does not, however, issue his commands without placing before us a motive for obedience; for to all of his precepts

* I am here reminded of an anecdote of the talented and eccentric "John Randolph" of Roanoke, Virginia, which I have somewhere read. Entering a book store, I think in Baltimore, some one directed his attention to a "Socinian Work." He glanced at it, and with one of his sarcastic sneers said, "these Socinian books call to my mind the placard of a company of strolling players, who promised to treat their audience with the play of Hamlet, with *Hamlet left out!* And these Socinians proffer to us the Christian religion, with *Christ left out!*"