

ordinances merely nominal or superfluous; and some, either for the sake of variety or convenience, regard neither the power of the spirit nor the operation of ordinances, but worship they know not what and cannot tell why by the faith of proxy, leaving their religious welfare and the good keeping of their souls to the care of ministers and statesmen. Still, all is taken for religion and good sound orthodoxy. A well-meaning pious minded person observes a brother professor freezing in some frigid zone while endeavouring to argue himself happy in keeping the externals of old-fashioned theology, and, reasoning upon his perilous and perditionable position, forthwith hurries into a torrid or burning clime, where the spirits of professing men, however willing and sincere, are never made perfect. That the extremes and imperfections of the professing community have principally originated in good motives and excellent intentions, I would not be understood to deny; but that they are of God, or that they are the legitimate issue of pure religion, or the exhibition and developement of that religion, I cannot believe. In the origin and manifestation of these diversities, there is a spirit; but not the holy spirit.

Happy the man and blessed that people who observe all the ordinances of the Lord's house, and who appreciate the import and experience the power of these ordinances—who unite the meaning and feel the influence of ordinances with their observance. While attempting a return to the primitive institutions of the christian church, we are not to forget the piety and purity, the spirit and power of christianity. The human organization called man, has a body and a soul: so has religion. Ordinances constitute its body; the influence, import, and power of ordinance its soul. As in this material world we have no spirits without bodies, so we cannot have that regenerating system called religion without ordinances. But let no one say that religion consists wholly in these. We desire something more than the name or the form; we desire the power—the reality—the soul. Christianity, the religion of Jesus Christ, is a living, moving, energizing something not contained wholly in the best and most perfect samples of ceremony.

Every science, as also every system, has certain peculiarities and characteristics which distinguish it from every other; and religion, the science of all sciences, and the perfection of all systems, is not an exception. And if there be any one trait or distinguishing feature which appears more prominently than another in the religion of Christ, it is the immaculate and spotless purity it both implies and enforces. Christianity is essentially a system of purity. A profession without a corresponding spiritual or holy life, may indeed be fashionable and polite in certain circles of society, or may claim the applause of the popular mul-