

dance on God, to proceed without any further draft on your friends." While, therefore, they retain a cordial attachment to that Society for the liberal aid heretofore afforded, they commended this year, in a pecuniary point of view, as a self-supporting church. Many of your readers will, I have no doubt, rejoice in these indications of happy progress.

H. WILKES.

July 31, 1843.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER.

DEAR SIR,—I wish you would exert your editorial influence, as much you can, in persuading Christians to speak and write more earnestly and frequently on those subjects which are of the greatest importance, rather than on those minor points on which they differ. For, surely it is not agreeable to Scripture or reason, that men should spend ten or fifty times more zeal and labor on inferior points than on those which are confessedly of the greatest importance. Yet this is often done. But how are we to know what is most important?

There are some religious duties which are to be more frequently attended to than others—some are necessarily confined to certain times and places, and others are not so.

For instance, it is a duty to attend to baptism, the Lord's Supper, public and social worship, repentance, faith, love, &c. But those things differ as to the frequency with which they are to be attended to, and also in importance. Baptism is to be attended to but once in one's life, the Lord's Supper and public worship, frequently; but faith and love, and desires after God, are always essential to the life of the soul, as breathing is to the life of the body, and therefore are not confined to times and places, but may be always attended to. I think that those things which we are frequently to perform, are more essential to religion than those which we attend to but seldom. It would be strange if infinite wisdom and goodness should require to do that often which has less connection with real religion, and that seldom, which is most essential to it.

2. There are some things which were always necessary as part of true religion, or in which it consisted,—faith, love, obedience to the will of God, in whatever way he made it known to men. The external ordinances of religion are binding according as times and circumstances render them practicable, and have been changed by divine authority at different periods. A man or woman may be for years confined to the bed of affliction, and so unable to attend the external ordinances of religion, and yet be eminently

pious. Who then would make all these of equal importance?

3. Wicked men may attend or submit to all the outward ordinances of religion, and think themselves, and be thought by others, religious. But any thing which men, continuing wicked, sensual, not having the spirit, can do or have, cannot be an essential part of real religion, the substance of which is that love which is the fulfilling of the law—Rom. xiii.

External ordinances are very useful by the blessing of God, to those who attend to them by faith in him who appointed them, and depending on his presence, as the scaffold is useful in carrying on a building, but as the building is more complete, and appears to greater advantage when the scaffolds are laid aside as useless, so will religion be more perfect and glorious, when outward ordinances are no longer needed.

But in religion many are acting as absurdly as it would be to mistake the scaffold for the building, and spend all their time and means in making the scaffold showy and splendid while the building is forgotten. In what an awful degree is this the case with many at present! How necessary, therefore, to hold forth the truth that the "Kingdom of God" or real religion, does not consist in "meat and drink," or any thing which men, while under the power of a carnal mind, can do; that their prayers, and all their pompous services, are an abomination to the Lord, this is clearly taught in Scripture,—see Psalm l. 8,—and Prov. xv. 8, 9, 26. 23,—Isa. i. 10—15.) It is to be observed here that the things of which God expresses his abhorrence in such strong language, were not the inventions of men, but what he himself had appointed, now rendered hateful to him, and ruinous to men, by resting in the mere observance of them, making them the end and not the means. What then does God think of the pageantry, with which many now presume to insult him, by turning his worship into an impious farce?

How absurd to glory in any thing which men, continuing under the power of sin, can do or have? Can those prayers and other services, which are an abomination to God, be profitable to men? What is the use of a religion that does not purify the heart, and produce love to God and man, and regulate the conduct in the way of righteousness? 1 Peter i. 22. 1 John iii. 7. 10

OMICRON.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—It is to me matter of surprise and regret that so much ignorance exists in our Christian community on some of the