

Friend, who in the silence of his mind his heaven and God finds, hesitates to admit the above positions. So far then, under the typical dispensations, that those honoured by God as his friends, were those who publicly confessed him.

The teaching of the Saviour was just as explicit. He who would confess him before men, would be recognized by the Father in the day of eternity—while those who were ashamed of him, and would not confess him before men, were threatened with rejection in the presence of God's holy angels! His last words to his disciples, only a week before his coronation in the heavens, were to point out explicitly the way ordained by him, in which all those who would be imitators of him should confess him before the world. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," are the ever memorable words of the ascending Saviour. This decision he has never revoked. He who would substitute any thing in the place of this decree, would change "times and seasons," and prove that he belonged to one of those powers, seen by Daniel in prophetic vision, opposed to the saints of the Most High.

I know, my brother, there are many minds, who in the contemplation of their own powers, consider themselves philosophical, that look with scorn and affected pity on those who urge the necessity of obedience to God—to the letter—as indispensable in order to the development of christian character. Many such minds are professedly devoted to the christian ministry. At the hazard, however, of being called exclusive, or even a bigot, I assert that such minds are neither well stored with biblical theology, much less are they naturally philosophical. In no one principle does the divine government evince more pure benevolence and divine philanthropy, next to the sacrificial death of God's own Son, than in the ordination of a positive law placed on the very threshold of his tabernacle—his church; and as absolutely necessary to the full development of the divine favour, ready to take up his abode in the truly submissive soul.

You know what we mean by "*positive law*." Very few of our modern theologians give the subject much attention. Indeed I have conversed with quite popular teachers of religion—who have studied systematic theology—who proved by their ignorance of "*positive law*," as connected with religious institutions, that it had never received much if any of their attention. For the benefit of some others who may read this, I would just remark, that by *positive law* we mean those precepts of Heaven for which we can find no reason but the will of God. That men should love God—that we should love one another—that children should love their parents—that we should believe the truth and turn from our sins—we term "*moral*" requirements because they are right and commendable in and of themselves: they were always right, and would have been whether God revealed such duties or not. But that man should not eat of the fruit of a certain tree—that he should offer sacrifice—be circumcised—go to a certain temple and altar to worship; be immersed into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and meet frequently to break and partake of a loaf and drink wine in memory of the death of Jesus of Nazareth—and many other things of a like nature—are neither right nor wrong, good nor evil, in and of themselves, aside