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THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

From the Christian Baptist.

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Having taken a cursory view of some of the leading features of the christian religion, exhibited in prospect, and in actual existence at its first institution, we shall in the last place advert to its present appearance. But alas! "how is the fine gold become dim!" Instead of the spotless doctrine, simply and plainly exhibited in the New Testament, we have got the sublime science of theology, subdivided into scholastic, polemic, dogmatic, and practical divinity. Instead of the form of sound words, given by the spirit, to be held fast, we have countless creeds, composed of terms and phrases, dogmas and speculations invented by whimsical metaphysicians, christian philosophers, rabbinical doctors, and enthusiastic preachers. * * * * *

Our zeal burns brightest in contending for orthodox tenets, and a sort of technical language rendered sacred, and of imposing influence, by long prescription. Such as the covenant of works; the covenant of grace; the active and passive obedience of Christ; legal repentance; the terms and conditions of the gospel; the gospel offer; the holy sacraments; ministerial, sacramental, and catholic communion; the meditorial kingdom of Christ; the millennium; historic faith, temporary faith, the faith of devils, the faith of assurance, and the assurance of faith; the direct act of faith, the reflex act of faith; baptismal vows; kirk sessions; fencing the tables; metallic tokens, &c. &c. Thus to speak in clerical dignity, more than half the language of Ashdod is mingled with less than half the language of Canaan; and the people are generally zealous about such confounding, misleading, and arrogant distinctions, which all result in divesting christian-