

of Christian been exposed to reproach by the extravagant and criminal conduct of those who have borne it, owing principally to their erroneous doctrinal sentiments. How often even in our own times is the neglect of plain duties, and even the commission of gross immoralities, palliated, and even justified, thro' ignorance of the true doctrines of the Bible; or by a deceitful perversion of them. To the same cause may be attributed much of the perplexity, doubts and distress of sincere, humble christians. The adversary of their souls takes advantage of their slight acquaintance with the real nature of Christianity, to ply them with such temptations as might be overcome in one instant were they so well acquainted with the Word of God as to be able to answer him as our Saviour did, with "*It is written.*" Let the trembling humble christian, who dares scarcely presume to call God his Father; and who, as often happens, is deterred from engaging in many christian duties which his heart would rejoice to perform, under the notion that he may be deceived concerning his interest in the Saviour; obtain more correct views of the character of God, of the plan of Redemption, of faith, justification, divine influence, and of the intercession of Christ, and his distressing fears would vanish, and, rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God, he would be ready to every good work. There are afloat in the world a thousand vain speculations and discordant sentiments concerning religion, which dismay the young and unestablished, and often perplex the more advanced in knowledge and piety; but did we like David make the perusal of the Sacred Volume our delightful and constant employment; did we, like him, read it with prayerful meditation, (see Psl. 119.) did we honestly desire to know the Truth and practice it, we would find in our own happy experience, a fulfilment of our Saviour's promises, "Seek and ye shall find," "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God," "Ye shall know THE TRUTH and the Truth shall make you free;" and we would be enabled to say with the Psalmist, "Thro' thy precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way."

Far be it from us to magnify the *reading* at the expense of the *preaching* of the Word. All we ask is careful attention to the former, in order to secure the more diligent attendance on the latter. We utterly discountenance the absurd notion that the Bible is the *only* proper book for a Christian. Such a notion is repugnant both to reason and religion. We highly value and earnestly recommend, the pious and indefatigable labours of many expositors and writers on Theology, as well as many practical and devotional works which are extant. At an age and in a country so remote from that in which the Scriptures were written, as ours is, with customs, habits and modes of speaking so different from those to which allusion in them is frequently made; some foreign assistance is not only convenient but absolutely necessary to a right understanding of many things "which are profitable," at the same time the labour of others in this department, is, as far as we are concerned, comparatively useless, except as they tend to elucidate and enforce what the Bible itself teaches; or as they excite us to study it for ourselves.

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