

hallowing of the sabbath, Christianity confirms what the Mosaic law enjoined. But the burdensome load of rites and ceremonies is annulled and a pure spiritual worship is instituted in its place. God who is a spirit, must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and our blessed Lord whose attendance upon the public worship of the sanctuary was always regular, has left us an example that none of his followers can depart from with impunity.

The world, my brethren, has seen many religions, and many have come in the name and with the pretensions of prophets of God. These religious impositions had their use to barbarous ages, and were permitted for the wisest purposes. And bad as they were, the greatest philosophers and legislators gave them the sanction of their authority, because they were better than no religion at all. Yet whatever may have been the sublimity of some of their ceremonial rites, and the excellence of some of their moral precepts, they are universally marked with this decisive feature that of being combined with ambitious views, with some personal interest. We trace in them alike the ambition that instigated their authors to propagate them, and the weakness and imperfection of human nature. They uniformly lead to one of the fundamental errors in religion, either to enthusiasm or superstition; and, by a necessary consequence, to the fatal separation of piety from moral virtue.

The authors of these impositions have uniformly propagated them as subservient to that love of glory that aims at the subjugation of the minds of mankind, or to the love of power, that aims at supremacy and dominion. They have either put the sword into the hands of their followers to propagate their feverish or frenzied imaginations, or withdrawn them from the most sacred sphere of social duty and have vainly thought that the favor of the Deity may be propitiated by an unproduc-