

Without faith in the testimony of God, a person is without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world. A Christless universe, as respects spiritual life and joy, is the most perfect blank which fancy can create. Without faith nothing in the Bible can be enjoyed; and without it there is to man no kingdom of heaven in all the dominions of God.

In the kingdom of nature, *sense* is the *principle*, and *ordinances* the *means* of enjoyment. Without sense, or sensation, nothing in nature can be known or enjoyed. All the creative, recuperative, and renovating power, wisdom, and goodness of God, exhibited in nature, are contained in ordinances. The sun, moon, and stars—the clouds, the air, the earth, the water, the seasons, day and night, are therefore denominated the *ordinances* of heaven, because God's power, wisdom, and goodness are *in* them, and felt by us *only through* them.\* Now sense, without the ordinances of nature, like faith, without the ordinances of religion, would be no *principle* of enjoyment; and the ordinances of nature, without sense, like the ordinances of religion, without faith, would be no *means* of enjoyment. These are the unalterable decrees of God. There is no exception to them; and there is no reversion of them. To illustrate and enforce the doctrine of this single paragraph is worthy of a volume. The essence, the whole essence of that reformation for which we contend, is wrapped up in this decree as above expressed. If it be true, the ground on which we stand is firm and unchangeable as the Rock of Ages; if it be false, we build upon the sand. *Reader, examine it well!*

In the kingdom of heaven, faith is then, the *principle* and ordinances the *means* of enjoyment; because all the wisdom, power, love, mercy, compassion, or *grace of God*, is in the ordinances of the kingdom of heaven; and if all grace be in them, it can only be enjoyed through them. What, then under the present administration of the kingdom of heaven, are the ordinances which contain the grace of God? They are, preaching the gospel—immersion in the name of Jesus, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit—the reading and teaching the Living Oracles—the Lord's day—the Lord's supper—fasting—prayer—confession of sins—and praise. To these may be added other appointments of God such as exhortation, admonition, discipline, &c: for these also are ordinances of God; and, indeed all statutes and commandments are ordinances;† but we speak not at present of those ordinances which concern the good order of the kingdom, but of those which are primary means of enjoyment. These primary and sacred ordinances of the kingdom of heaven are the means of our individual enjoyment of the present salvation of God.

Without the sun, there is no solar influence; without the moon, there is no lunar influence; without the stars, there is no sidereal influence; without clouds, there can be no rain; and without the ordinances of the kingdom of heaven, there can be no heavenly influence exhibited or felt. There is a peculiar and distinctive influence exerted by the

Jeremiah, lxxxi. 35, 35; Job, xxxviii. 31—33; Jeremiah, xxxiii. 25. † James, i. 25.