

easily be found, by giving to the sacraments and the liturgy and the elementary instruction of which the catechism is the ground work, their due weight and that importance which belongs to them in the original system of the Gospel. Then would the people be better prepared to hear and profit by sermons, and better able to judge of them than they are. Then would preachers not dare to present their hearers day after day with the same undeviating routine which neither informs the understanding nor regulates the heart. The pernicious effects of preaching without a liturgy, and giving it the pre-eminence above divine worship, is manifested in the conduct of those sectaries who have broken off from the established Church. They maintain that their former connection was materially erroneous, and essentially dangerous, and that their present system is exclusively true. You will see such sectaries pursue their object with all the zeal of proselytism, as if conversion to their present views, were indispensable to salvation. In a very little time you will see the very same persons change the views which they thought so essential, and pursue another system with the same exclusive zeal, not hesitating to declare that their former views were erroneous, nor to insinuate that salvation belongs only to their present system, which is equally liable to change.—Dr. Priestly passed through all the gradations of opinion, from high Calvinism to something only the next remove from pure Deism; and at each separate step, he was clearly right, and all the rest of the world, so far as they differed from him, clearly wrong.—Thus the Churchman became a Schismatic,—the Schismatic an Independant,—the Independant an Anabaptist, and the Anabaptist an Antinomian, carrying all the force of apparent conviction, and all the zeal of eager proselytism along with him at each step; the present being always essential, and exclusively essential, to salvation; while the last step, which was equally essential while it lasted, is now of no more value than the original point from which the Schismatic first commenced his progress.

It does not by any means follow from hence, that truth is variable, or that the discovery of it is unimportant, or that the certainty on which the most serious religious conviction ought to be founded, is unattainable. But it does follow from hence, from the nature of the thing, and the condition of man as the judge of religious truth, that, however firmly