

they fully enjoy in all places that share of respect, and attention, and education in Christ, which is due to them as joint heirs of the blessings of his salvation. The long established customs, and the feelings too, which spring from the American system of slavery, are exceedingly adverse, and it requires a spirituality and heavenly mindedness which few comparatively attain, to spend six days in the week as master and servant, and one day as brethren and equals in the kingdom of heaven.

To this subject there is however, a growing attention; and as the Christian communities advance in the knowledge of the Scriptures and acquire greater proficiency in the heavenly doctrine, they will more assiduously devote themselves to the mental, moral, and religious culture of those brethren who are politically degraded on account of circumstances over which themselves have had no control.

Your third question is—“*Do any of your churches admit unbaptized persons to communion; a practice that is becoming very prevalent in this country?*”

Not one, as far as known to me. I am at a loss to understand on what principles—by what law, precedent, or license, any congregation founded upon the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone, could dispense with the practice of the primitive church—with the commandment of the Lord and the authority of his Apostles. Does not this look like making void the word or commandment of God by human tradition? I know not how I could exhort one professor to “arise and be baptized,” as Ananias commanded Saul, and at the same time receive another into the congregation without it. Nay, why not dispense with it altogether, and be consistent?

If I felt myself authorized to dispense with it in one case, I know not why I might not dispense with it in every case, and thus wholly annul the institution of Jesus Christ. But this is said only with respect to the authority by which it is done. Viewed in relation to the meaning and design of the institution, it assumes a still more inexplicable mysteriousness. Does Christian immersion mean any thing to a believer? Is it the sign or pledge, or means of any spiritual blessings? Is it the demand, or seeking, or answer of a good conscience? Has it any thing to do with the understanding, the conscience, the state, or character of a man? And if so, what is it? If he be as happy in himself, and as acceptable to God without it as with it, is it not an unmeaning ceremony?

But it may be said there are two baptisms—a spiritual and a literal—a baptism in the Spirit and a baptism in water. Paul, however, says there is but “one baptism,” and that is a literal baptism: for he says, “One faith, one Lord, one baptism.” Now if he does not mean a literal baptism, he cannot mean a literal faith or a literal Lord. If we turn Quakers, and spiritualize away the one, we must to avoid tyranny in language, spiritualize the others—the one Lord, the one body, the one faith, &c. &c.