

**THE PHILOSOPHY OF UNBELIEF
IN MORALS AND RELIGION, AS
DISCOVERABLE IN THE FAITH
AND CHARACTER OF MEN**

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The philosophy of unbelief in morals and religion, as discoverable in the faith and character of men by Herman Hooker

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HERMAN HOOKER

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BY THE REV. HERMAN HOOKER, M. A.

There is a peculiar evidence of divine truth which you never see—see what else you will—if you judge of it merely by the intellect; much less, if the intellect be swayed by adverse affections. But when the repugnance of the heart is overcome, we have this evidence in the substance, the relish of the truth; we see a conspicuous excellency in it, which approves it to the mind, and confirms it by a happy experience of its power and sweetness. * * * * * It is a most specious deception, that which enables you to disbelieve all you will, with the pretence of faith, and the colour of believing all you should.

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P R E F A C E.

NUMBERS live in the neglect of religion, without knowing or considering the cause of their indifference to it. They profess to receive the Bible as the word of God, and if they do so, their conduct is inexplicable and opposed to all reason and analogy. There is, therefore, ground for presuming they are in error on this point; and if they are so, it is indispensable that they should be undeceived, as a first step to a correct understanding of their spiritual condition. This incongruity between the accredited faith and the conduct of men is so common, and in degrees so various, that it is to be feared we are ceasing to regard it as an exception to a general law—as something monstrous in practice—and are satisfying ourselves with the virtue of acknowledging it, or perhaps of declaiming against it, while we take not the trouble to inquire into the reason and enormity of it.

This inquiry the author has endeavoured to conduct—with good design he knows—with what good effect he leaves for the reader to judge. As the discussion advances, much is said, referring to the varieties of human

character, and to the secret operations and tendencies of unbelief, suitable to be reflected on by devout believers, and yet not ultimately, it is thought, impertinent to the steady design of the work.

Having shown, or presumed, that numbers may justly be denominated infidels, who do not so consider themselves, and are not generally so considered by others, notice is taken of the confirmation which this view receives from the Scriptures, and of the adaptation of the doctrines of Christianity to the known nature and wants of man, and to the ends which it proposes to effect, and in the accomplishment of which man is made, what he is not and cannot be in any other way, both blessed and deserving to be so.

The inference, then, which is more or less disclosed in every branch of the subject, is, that if our views of Christianity do not renovate our natures and sway our conduct, it is because they are delusory, the mere allowances which an evil heart has made in its own vindication, and in which it loses sight of itself and of God together, while looking as at an image of its own creation, and which it kneels to and worships as having qualities that are in accordance with itself—which yet itself has imparted, or rather are itself again.

Philadelphia, June 23, 1836.

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