

**THE TRUTH VINDICATED: BEING AN APPEAL TO
THE LIGHT OF CHRIST WITHIN, AND TO THE
TESTIMONY OF HOLY SCRIPTURES : BY
WAY OF ANSWER TO A PAMPHLET ENTITLED
"EXTRACTS FROM
PERIODICAL WORKS ON THE CONTROVERSY
AMONGST THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS"**

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The Truth Vindicated: Being an Appeal to the Light of Christ within, and to the Testimony of Holy Scriptures : By Way of Answer to a Pamphlet Entitled "Extracts from Periodical Works on the Controversy amongst the Society of Friends" by Henry Martin

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HENRY MARTIN

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"EXTRACTS FROM PERIODICAL WORKS ON
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SECOND EDITION,
CAREFULLY REVISED, WITH ADDITIONS.

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1836.

PREFACE

TO

THE SECOND EDITION.

It is now not much more than a month since this little volume issued from the press; and I am informed by the publishers that every copy is sold. They inform me, also, that the demand appears to increase rather than diminish. The same motives, therefore, which originated the work, have induced me to print a second edition.

I regret that the first edition was not more free from literal and typographical inaccuracies. In extenuation, I may say, that the work was hurried through the press with undesirable haste, a haste induced by the anxiety I felt to see something in the hands of the public, in refutation of the falsehoods and misrepresentations which had been so blazoned forth in the *Sectarian Magazines*. I may further add, that the last two chapters were written amidst numerous other engagements, whilst the former part was passing through the press. In this edition many of the errors will be found to be corrected. So much for these minor matters. Now, as to the work itself.

It has been said by some, that the principles avowed and advocated in this book, are the principles of Hicksism. That Elias Hicks might own for truth some principles which are contained in it, I shall not take upon myself to deny; but that it follows hence, that those notions, and peculiar doctrines, which

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distinguished Hicksism, from any other *ism*; and constitute it the *ism* that it is, are therefore believed in and upheld by me, is an assertion almost too ridiculous for me to attempt seriously to refute. It might with as much reason be said, that, because I believe, in common with Heathen nations, in the existence of a superior Being, I am, therefore, a polytheist and idolater.

I again repeat then, that I am not a believer in Elias Hicks, or any other man, (in the religious sense of the word,) but a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ: and if, upon any matters which relate to my soul, I hold views like those of some other men, I do so from a conviction that it is "the Truth, as it is in Jesus." If the system acknowledged by the followers of Hicks is established upon no surer foundation than the deductions of what is called human reason, or upon "those suggestions which most comported with Elias Hicks's particular bent of mind," I utterly deny and disown it. Nor am I to be deterred, or driven from the ground upon which, I trust, my feet are firmly fixed, by so specious and artful a mode of controversy, as is resorted to by the enemies of the principles of the Society of Friends. The question, I say, is not to be thus blinked:—the great and vital principle, that the Spirit of Almighty God is at times revealed in the heart of man, independently of any "written revelation," is not to be overthrown, is not to be scoffed and jeered away, by confounding it with the meteoric flashes of a bewildered imagination; and applying to both that censure and reprobation, which the vain and deluded followers of the *latter* only can deserve.

The Society have disowned Elias Hicks and his *peculiar* doctrines; for these are no more in accordance with the principles of Friends, than are the *peculiar* doctrines, advocated by the Reviewers and the author of the "Beacon." The faith, and the chief rule of faith and practice is based by the one, upon *some* of the writings of "Holy men of old," "translated out of the original tongues, and with the *former* translations diligently compared and revised by his Majesty's (so called) special command." And the other, mixing up the images of

imagination with the efforts of reason, says "These be thy Gods, O Israel!" But neither of these foundations can be owned by Friends. And it is the invention of malice; it is the babbling of ignorance; it is the crooked work of the Spirit of darkness, that attempts to assimilate *ΕΙΡΗΝΗ* of these foundations with that upon which the Prophets and Apostles were built, "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone."

"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" Other foundation, the Friends cannot acknowledge. What misapplication of terms! what confusion of ideas! what perversion of truth, then, to affix the name and nature of Deism or Hicksism, to religious principles based upon the immovable "Rock of Ages!" Why stigmatize with odious names, with jeers and sarcasms, those principles which have their root and spring in the unbounded mercy of God, through Jesus Christ?

Are there, then, *two* foundations; *one* upon which "the Apostles and Prophets were built," and *another* upon which we must build? Doth not the same foundation stand sure for *us* as well as for *them*,—"Jesus Christ, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever?" If the Apostle Paul declared in his day, that no other foundation could be laid than Jesus Christ, what authority have you to reject it, and substitute another—even the perishable letter of Scripture? Bring forth your strong reasons; produce the legal instruments of your power; show us the sign-manual of your authority to "disallow" that "living stone," chosen of *God*, "elect and precious," and to supply its place by one *chosen of man* after the device of his own heart! Why must the foundation upon which we are to build, be of *man's* choosing? What divine command to that end has been issued? and to whom? Where can I find the proclamation from Heaven, that the Apostolic declaration, that "other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid," is null and void? and that the only sure foundation, upon which all faith and works can *now* be based, is just so much, neither more nor less, of the writings of inspired men, as the contentious Priests of the Roman Catholic Church thought proper, sixteen hundred

years ago, to appoint for that end? Is it any where declared in any of the books of Holy Scripture, that a time should arrive, when the pompous dignitaries of an Ecclesiastical Establishment should assemble in convocation together, and determine for themselves, and the rest of mankind, what copies or translations of copies of the writings of holy men, should, to the end of time, be considered the only depository of the Divine will? If no *Scriptural* authority can be adduced to support this priestly dogma, why do you so vehemently contend for its acknowledgment? Were these men, who thus gave out to the world this decree; and are you who blindly follow in their benighted way, commissioned to proclaim it, under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit of God? No: for you already, in the vain conceit of your imaginations, prescribe bounds for that Holy influence—even within the confines of an Eden of your own planting; wherein alone, you tell us, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of Life can be found. What assumption, then! what arrogance! what pharisaical pretension! for some few men to erect, according to the dictates of their fancy, the deductions of their understandings, or the suggestions of their prejudices and interests, an immutable and paramount standard for the test of truth, from the records of the epistles, prophecies, and other writings of good and holy men!

Raised, as this system has been, by the crafty invention of the traffickers in the name of the Most High; fostered and matured, as it has been, by the wise, the noble, and the mighty of this world; clung to, as it is, by credulous ignorance and superstition; it nevertheless cannot stand the test of rational inquiry, so weak, unstable and uncertain is its foundation. With stubborn assurance do its abettors, its Diana-like craftsmen, reiterate the charges of "mysticism," "Deism," and "enthusiasm," against those principles which discard, in matters of salvation, all *dogmas, creeds, and authority*, but *that* which proceeds from *Christ* the Head of the Church; and yet they can produce no authority higher than the *conjecture* or opinion of those, who for the most part have a strong *pecuniary interest* to bias their decisions, for the foundation upon which *they* build.

Call that principle "mysticism" indeed, which enforces an humble reliance upon the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit; and yet endeavour to exact implicit confidence and blind belief, in the vain surmises, strange conceits, and heedless assertions of writers for pay, and preachers for hire! Call that principle "enthusiasm" indeed, which, in conformity with the testimony of Scripture, points us to Christ, as "the way, the truth, and the life;" and yet recommend, as a *Christian* doctrine, and a *rational* duty, an unscrupulous acquiescence, a blind and abject subserviency, a total prostration of our own understandings, and a "trusting with all our heart," to—"the Lord?" No, but to the ipse dixit of men fallible like ourselves, and who have the vanity and anti-christian folly to call each other, and be "called of men" Rabbi! Rabbi! Doctor of Divinity! Reverend Sir! and a whole train of deceitful, Papal and Babylonish epithets! Call that principle "Deism" indeed, which in the words of their own "ultimate appeal," declares, that "He who has not the Spirit of Christ is none of his!" What, I ask ye, but an evil Spirit, even the Spirit of him, "who was a murderer and liar from the beginning;" that Spirit which, in the "letter-lauding" Scribes and Pharisees, said to the Holy Jesus, "Thou hast a devil;"—what, I ask ye, but the Spirit of that "Old Serpent," could intoxicate man with the wine of his wisdom so far, as to induce him to malign "the truth as it is in Jesus"—"to call sweet things bitter, and bitter things sweet;" "light, darkness; and darkness, light?"

I wish not to use terms unbecoming the occasion, or to indulge in harsh and vituperative language. I would not render railing for railing. But let us remember that though, when tempted by Satan to fall down and worship him, the Saviour of mankind simply rebuked him, and said, "It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve;" yet do we read that, in the warmth of holy indignation, He exclaimed, in language awfully severe, against the puritanical Scribes, and pharisaical hypocrites, who resisted the testimony which the Father had given him to bear: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

and in language little less severe than even this perhaps, have the true burden bearers, at times, been called upon to denounce that malignant spirit, which raises its smooth head and tortuous front against the light and Spirit of God in the conscience—“*Wolves in sheeps' clothing.*” “*Greedy dogs, that never have enough.*” Likened to brute beasts. “*But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.*” Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of *Balaam for reward*, and perished in the gainsaying of *Core.*”

And if there be any, as some there doubtless are, among the many accredited exponents and preachers of holy truth, who are receiving wages from “the God of this world,” even “filthy lucre” at the hands of Mammon; if there be any of these who are at times favoured in their ministry by the assistance of God’s Holy Spirit; and who, in sincerity of heart, desire to do the thing that is right, and preserve a conscience void of offence, before both God and man;—if there be any such, who *gain a livelihood*, by thus professing to preach “the unsearchable riches of Christ;” and who yet fancy themselves justified in receiving pecuniary compensation at the hands of their fellow-creatures, for that which, if true ministers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, has been *freely received* from Him: towards such, according to Apostolic recommendation, I trust I “have compassion, making a difference,” and would ask them, as sincere and upright men, in the spirit of Christian charity, whether, if a “dispensation of the Gospel has been committed to them,” they are not doing a violence to their best feelings, and even an injustice to their understandings, to turn it to a lucrative account. Be it little, or be it much, the principle remains the same; for he who asserts a claim of even one penny for the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” will find no scruple sufficiently strong, to restrain him from exposing his wares, and erecting his stall, amongst the hardened and polluted money-changers of the temple.

And herein may be seen the difference, both in practice and