

Although the great principles and precepts of religion are simple, they are liable to be misunderstood and misapplied, if the intellect be uncultivated. Individuals quite ignorant may become devotedly pious, in a community where there are intelligent men to instruct them. But if the vast majority are unlettered, religion will almost inevitably lose its power beneath a multitude of external ceremonies, or run wild with fanaticism. For these extremes are more fascinating to the ignorant mind than the unostentatious piety of the heart, because accompanied by more external glitter and noise. Besides, it is much easier for a heart in love with sin to practise pompous rites and ceremonies, or to cry out with Jehu, *Come and see my zeal for the Lord*, than to carry on a daily warfare with sin within and without, and to set an example of charity, humility, and self-sacrifice. Hence it is, that in an ignorant community, religion never fails to degenerate into formalism or fanaticism; and not unfrequently the two have been united.

No less essential is intellectual cultivation to the support of genuine freedom. Men must understand its principles, or they will either become the dupes, and ere long the slaves, of unprincipled ambition, or they will mistake licentiousness for liberty, and soon be glad to take refuge in the despotism of one from the despotism of many.

Imagine next, that a nation is blessed with religion and education, but has lost its freedom. Can the former flourish under an arbitrary government?

Tyrants are usually eagle-eyed to discover any influences that are hostile to their usurped prerogatives. Now, the whole system of the Bible aims a fatal blow against all unrighteous authority, both because it brings all men on a level before God, and because it shows such authority to be hateful in his