

woman who knows the least about the great principles of religious liberty would at once say, "Let the various religious bodies of the Territory choose for themselves in regard to the mode of baptism; a Federal officer is not the person to prescribe the mode or to administer the ordinance of baptism."

Why not this reasoning apply to marriage as well as to baptism? Can you make a distinction so far as the divinity of the two ordinances is concerned? I cannot. I read here in the last verse of my text, "What God has joined together, let not man put asunder." It will be perceived from this sentence, that God has something to do in the joining together of male and female; that is, when it is done according to His mind and will: we will make that a condition. But we will say that, in all cases under the whole heavens, where a couple are joined together, and God has anything to do with it, he does not ask Congress to make a law, nor the President of the United States to appoint a form, and he will sanction it. No, he claims the right, and his children claim that God has the privilege, to prescribe the form or ceremony, and the words to be used; and when that ceremony is performed by divine authority, we may then say, in the fullest sense of the term, that they are joined together divinely, and not by some civil law.

The union of male and female I consider to be one of the most important ordinances which God has established; and if its solemnization had been left entirely to the whims and notions of men, we might have had as many different ways of performing the matrimonial rite, as we have of administering the ordinance of baptism. You know that in the performance of the baptismal

rite, some believe in sprinkling, and some in pouring; some societies believe in immersion after they have obtained the remission of sins; others, like Alexander Campbell and his followers, believe that immersion is to be administered for the remission of sins. Another class believe in being immersed face foremost; others, again, believe in being immersed three times—once in the name of the Father, once in the name of the Son, and once in the name of the Holy Ghost. Taking all these classes as churches, they are no doubt sincere; they have been instructed by their teachers, until they sincerely believe in these several forms of baptism.

Now, if Congress, or the legislative assemblies in the different States and Territories, were permitted to make laws regulating this they would perhaps have many other forms besides those I have named, which they would force the people under heavy penalties to comply with. And so in regard to marriage. If Congress should undertake to make a law to govern the Methodists, for instance, in the solemnization of marriage, they would not like it, neither would the Presbyterians, nor Baptists. A man belonging to either of these denominations would say, "Here is a law which prohibits me from exercising my religious faith, and compels me to be married by a justice of the peace, or a federal officer, or some person who, perhaps, does not believe in God, and who has no respect for the ordinances of heaven. I am compelled by the laws of the land to have him officiate and pronounce me and my 'intended,' husband and wife, or to remain unmarried." The Constitution does not contemplate this forcing of the human mind in regard to that which is ordained of God. If I, believing in