

comprise them all in that one given by the apostle, 1 Pet. v. 5. "Be clothed with humility." If ye take this one advice along, I dare engage ye shall not be a stranger to comfort. The people of God have no such enemy as pride, and no such friend as humility. Pride sets God and them at odds, and turns him to be their enemy; humility invites him to the soul, and he comes upon its invitation. He will bear many things in his people, but if you belong to him, humble he will have you; and if gentler methods will not do it, before he obtain not his end, he will leave you, till you make yourself a scandal to religion, and then he will make you a Magor-missabib, a terror to thyself and others, till you be humbled to purpose. To enforce this advice, I shall say three things of pride, and as many of humility. 1. Pride is an enemy to Christ, it cries down his fulness, and cries up man's emptiness: and therefore if you love Christ, hate it. 2. It is an enemy to credit, though this be that which it aims at; a notable instance of this we have in Jonah. 3. It is an enemy to comfort: this the people of God can tell from woeful experience; it keeps them from the comfort they might have, it embitters their present enjoyments; nay, it provokes God to take them away. On the other hand, if you be clothed with humility, then I assure you, 1. You shall never want a guide; "The meek will be guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way," Psal. xxv. 9. "And with the lowly is wisdom," Prov. xi. 2. 2. You shall never want good company; "The high and lofty one dwells with the meek and lowly, to revive the heart of the humble, to revive the spirit of the contrite one," Isa. lvii. 15. 3. You shall never want grace to help you in time of need; "for God, who resists the proud, gives grace to the humble," 1 Pet. v. 5. Prov. iii. 34. And if you would indeed be humble, then look oft to Christ, oft to yourselves, oft to the law of God, compare not yourselves with others, and look not only what you have, but what you want, and where that was got which you have; walk on in this road, and assuredly goodness and mercy shall follow you all the days of your life. The Lord shall guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and make fat your bones, and ye shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. The Lord shall be unto you an everlasting light, and your God your glory; and upon all the glory there shall be a defence, and there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm, and from rain. Now, to him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

SERMON VI.

FAITH'S VIEWS OF THE GLORY OF GOD; OR, THE TRIUMPH
OF FAITH.

Jesus saith unto her, said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? JOHN. xi. 40.

THE history of the miraculous resurrection of Lazarus, by our Lord, is so well known that I need not introduce myself to the words read, which

make a part of it, by any deduction of that history. And therefore I shall, waving the formality of an introduction, immediately, and without any more ado, take the words read in this 40th verse, under consideration. In this, we have our Lord's reply to what Martha spoke in the 39th verse. Now that we may make way for an explication of this verse, we must offer you a short account of the person to whom he speaks, and of her case, in the few following remarks.

1. Martha was a godly woman, one for whom our Lord had a special love, as we read, ver. 5. of this chapter : but a woman she was, under a deep and heavy trouble, being lately deprived of a brother ; a brother beloved of her, a brother beloved of our Lord ; and, for any thing we know, an only brother.

2. Her trouble, heavy indeed in itself was yet mightily increased by the prevalency of unbelief over her, whereby she was diverted from the consideration of the wise and immutable purpose of the Lord, whereby the present trial was ordered for her, and was also detained from a due improvement of the sweet comforts our Lord had offered her under trouble, of which we have a large account, ver. 23, 25, 26, &c. And moreover, hereby, on the other hand, she was strongly inclined to pore upon vain, entangling, and disquieting thoughts, about means whereby she foolishly supposed, that this affliction, which was ordered by the unalterable counsel of the Lord, might have been prevented. Lord, says she, "if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died," ver. 21.

2. The cope-stone was put upon her trouble, by unbelief's power and its prevailing so far, as to make her on the one hand, lay down the conclusion, that her trouble was irremediable, her case was beyond a cure ; he is dead, long dead, and stinking : and on the other hand, overlook the Lord's power, and slight the advance he made, and steps he was taking toward her delivery ; for, when he bids take away the stone, she thinks this to no purpose, and therefore is against his meddling. The plain meaning of her words in the preceding verse is, "It is to no purpose to open his grave, he is dead, and now past hope, and it will be to no purpose to lift the stone, which will increase our grief, prove noisome by the stench, and no way help him who is dead, and not to rise till the last day." To this our Lord answers in our text. "Jesus saith unto her, said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God."

In which words we have, not to break them too small, four things, which we shall take notice of, and a little open.

1. We have the importance of the answer pointed at, from an account of the giver of it, "Jesus saith unto her ;" Jesus who loved her, who never mistook a case, nor the cure of it ; Jesus, who well understood to "speak a word in season to the weary, and to have compassion on the ignorant, and such as are out of the way."

2. We have a sharp reproof given her, *First*, For her unbelief, in rejecting the encouraging revelation he had made of himself, with respect to her condition, verses 23, 25, 26, &c. And, *Secondly*, For her inadvertency, and forgetfulness of the advice formerly given her, that she should believe, as the way to get a good issue of her present strait : "Said I not unto thee ?" &c. I once told thee, that the way to get a good issue was to believe, and must I tell thee it over again ? Dost thou still persist in thy unbelief of me as the resurrection and the life ? And misconstruct the advances I make toward your delivery ? Whence, by the way, we may ob-

serve,—“ That unbelief not only is the immediate source and spring of most of the Lord’s people’s troubles, its very actings being indeed a heavy part of their load ; but moreover also, it doth procure to them sharp rebukes from the Lord.” Again, we may notice,—“ That the increase and continuance of the troubles of the Lord’s people, is in a great measure owing to their inadvertency, and forgetfulness of what the Lord is doing, or has done, or said for their relief and support.” 3. We have a direction formerly given, in order to her obtaining a comfortable issue of her present trial again renewed ; “ If thou wouldst believe.” “ What I told thee before, I tell thee again, That the only way to have a good issue is to believe. Never rack thyself about events, be not afraid, only believe.” If ye ask what faith he calls her to exercise here, I answer, 1. That faith which our Lord so much presses upon people in straits, is undoubtedly that faith which is of the operation of God, which is justifying and saving, to which our Lord attributes the cure of such as came to him, and which did receive from him the forgiveness of sins, Mark ii. 3. Yet, 2. We say, it is not that faith as it is justifying, or in that exercise or act of it which is commonly and justly called justifying faith. It is not a receiving the Lord as our righteousness, as the propitiation ; for this Martha had done before. But, 3. This belief or faith which she is directed to, is a looking toward the Lord as not only able, but as engaged, by the revelation he has made of himself in his word, to give his people a blessed issue of their trials and straits, how great soever they be. That same principal which receives the Lord as our righteousness in order to justification, enables also to look to him in all straits, as a very present help in trouble : and this last is that faith, which our Lord requires here and elsewhere, in the like cases. Only believe, that is, only eye the Lord, look only to him, expect relief only from him ; fear not thy getting of it, for thereby thou must either reflect upon his power, or faithfulness : and if thou thus believest, thou shalt see the glory of God. Whence note by the way.—That the true way to get an outgate from under any trial is to believe ; “ only believe,” Mark v. 36. And “ if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldest see,” &c. Again, from our Lord’s renewing this direction, we may observe—That new, or growing trials, do not so much require new cordials or new discoveries, as the due use of old ones that have been neglected. At least, it is so often, and our Lord judges so in these. 4. We have in the words a notable privilege proposed and promised, upon condition, the advice given were complied withal ; “ If thou believest, thou shalt see the glory of God.” Now, this privilege is not the raising her brother presently : he indeed designed this, and in this it was, he resolved to show her the glory of God, and he quarrelled her, for her not believing him able to do this, and even that he would do it, in case it should be for the glory of God, and her good ; but I say, this he couches in a general, thereby showing, that as to the particular way of our delivery, we must submit that to sovereignty, which is not to be limited as to ways, means, particular events, or seasons, while the Lord has been pleased to assure us, that the end shall be secured : and therefore, he lays down this general, which the faith of the Lord’s people may in all trials lay hold on. “ Thou shalt see the glory of God :” which imports, 1. That her trial would have an issue. 2. That the Lord’s glory would be seen in it ; and this surely should quiet us, that we shall have our chief end, and God his glory. Since every believer should, and will make God’s glory his chief end, he ought to rest content whatever his trials be, when

the Lord assures him this end shall be obtained. 3. Hereby she is assured, that she should see the glory of the Lord ; that is, that not only should the Lord be glorified by the issue of this trial, but moreover she should have the satisfaction of seeing that God was glorified, and even how this did contribute to his glory. 4. Hereby she is directed to expect that his glory should be joined with her good ; for this is proposed as a promise and privilege ; and nothing is so but what is for our good. Now, sure here is all that can be desired, when God promises, that upon her believing in the issue of the present trial the Lord should have glory, and she have good and advantage by it, and that even sensibly, and to her experience, she should see the glory of God, or experience it.

Now, from the words thus explained, of the many truths which we might note, we shall only lay before you this one.

DOCT. " To believe, is the sure way to get a sight of the glory of God, in giving a blessed issue to the most perplexing cases which can befall the Lord's people : " or thus, " however hopeless like the case of a child of God, at any time, may be ; yet, if he will believe, he shall see the glory of God."

Nay, may I say, however hopeless like the case of any may be, yet if they will believe, they shall see the glory of God. " Blessed is the person that believes, for there shall be a performance of those things that are to be of the Lord," Luke i. 45. In prosecuting this truth, we shall endeavour,

I. To show you what it is to believe.

II. We shall lay down some considerations, for clearing the truth of the doctrine, and showing what ground there is for believing in the most hopeless like cases, which can befall the Lord's people.

III. We shall show you what of the glory of God may be seen in the issue.

IV. We shall show what this seeing of this glory imports.

V. We shall hint at the excellency of this way of believing ; and,

VI. We shall apply the whole.

To return then,

I. We are to show what it is to believe ; and, as we insinuated formerly, here we are not to speak of faith in general, but of that special exercise of it, which is required of the Lord's people in their straits. Now, faith thus taken, we shall open in the few following particulars, which may also contribute somewhat toward a due understanding of faith, in its other acting.

1. Then to believe, is to eye the Lord, to look towards God. " Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved : for I am God, and there is none else," Isa. xlv. 22. When believers are in straits, when they sink in the deep mire, and find no standing, when, with Jonah, they go down unto the bottoms of the mountains, and the depths close them round, then do they find, that somewhere they must look for relief ; they are not able to hold themselves above water : somewhere therefore they must look ; unbelief offers some mountains, things that have an appearance of strength, to which when any do betake themselves, they are put in a worse, and not in a better condition, and made, at length, to confess, " that in vain is salvation looked for from the hills, and from the mountains, nay even from the multitude of them ; " whereupon the soul looks toward the Lord, as the only one, in whom salvation can be had. " Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel," Jer. iii. 23.

2. To believe, is to look towards God in Christ. "No man cometh to the Father but by me," saith our Lord, John xiv. 6. As Christ is the way to the Father, in order to justification, so he is the way in all particular straits. When we are brought to any straits, and think of looking toward God, if we have any true notions of him, as he is in himself, without respect to Christ Jesus, it will add to our trouble, and put us in such a fright as they, Micah vi. 6. "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" Here is a perplexity great enough by itself: thoughts of the Lord, if not as revealed in Christ, if true, will not relieve us in any strait, but cast us into a greater. Faith then only looks toward God in Christ: thus Jonah in his strait, "Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple," chap. iii. ver. 4. The temple, the ark, the mercy seat, were types of Christ; and toward the Lord, as discovered there, he resolves he will look.

3. To believe, is to look toward God in Christ, as revealed in the word. The Lord is the invisible God, and no other way can we see him, than by faith, I mean, while here; sense can by no means perceive him, and reason, darkened by the fall, can form but very dark and unbecoming thoughts of him; for God, and the things of God, are foolishness to a natural man. If then we would have a sight of God, we must look to him, as revealed in the word. When Moses desired, Exod. xxxiii. 18. to see the glory of God, how doth God answer him, ver. 19. "And he said 'I will make my goodness pass before thee; and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee.'" Here is the way, he sees the Lord in a proclamation of the Lord's name, as we see in the following chapter.

4. To believe is to look toward God in the promise, to receive or embrace the promise. Great and precious promises are given to believers, 2 Pet. i. 4. and faith receives them; it assents, as to the other discoveries of the word, so particularly to the promises, which not only contain glorious discoveries of the divine excellences, but also an engagement of them to believers; and faith gives entire credit to the promise, as to both; persuading the soul, that, as the Lord is, what his word discovers him to be, so also what he has said, he will do; in due time there shall be a punctual performance of what is promised.

5. To believe is to credit the word, not because of any suitableness in the things to our thoughts, or probabilities, or feasible means of the Lord's accomplishing what is promised therein: nay, to entertain any persuasion of the truths of God, upon such grounds, is not faith, but conjecture; but faith looks only at the Lord's authority; all its stress is laid upon this, "thus saith the Lord." Faith stands not in the wisdom of men, that is, it leans not on the reasonings or conjectures of men from appearances, but in the power of God, that is, it leans only on the testimony of God, approving itself such to the souls of believers, by its own glorious power, whereby, without borrowing help from any other signs, it evidences itself to be the Lord's word, with a light so strong as carries the soul into an assent; this is, we conceive, the meaning of that passage, 1 Cor. ii. 5.

6. To believe, is to wait with expectation on God alone. Now this waiting (which is the exercise of faith, that is especially suited to the purpose in hand) we conceive, cannot be better explained, than by considering the opposite actings of unbelief. To believe then, is to wait on God: to

wait, I say, 1. In opposition to going away to other things. When one has come to God, and finds not that relief that present straits seem to require, then unbelief is for trying about, but faith is for staying still. 2. Faith waits, in opposition to wearying : while the case is perplexing, and somewhat troublesome, unbelief works a sort of a weariness, but faith waits, and cheers the soul with expectation of the punctual accomplishment of the promise, in its season. 3. Faith waits in opposition to giving over. Unbelief says, " This evil is of the Lord, why wait I any longer ?" It is for giving quite over, as hopeless, almost every case ; but faith keeps up here, and will by no means allow to argue against the truth of the promise, from any seeming delay. 4. To believe, is to wait, in opposition to haste of all sorts : " He that believeth makes no haste," either in concluding for or against himself, but waits until God appear, and relieve him effectually.

In a word, from the whole we may conclude, that, to believe, is, in all our straits and troubles, be they what they will, to look to the Lord, and expect an issue upon the credit of his bare word, not only when it is favoured by no outward appearance, or probability, as to the accomplishment of our expectation, but even when all appearances cross it, and seem to look another way : then do we believe, when we can put God's say against all opposition, and lean to it, " not staggering at the promise through unbelief," but accounting that God can remove all difficulties out of the way. Leaving this,

II. We shall now show you the certainty of this way of believing, as well as the warrant it has, in a few considerations.

1. Then, we may consider that God is the glorious and sovereign disposer of all the trials, and indeed of all the providences of any sort, that do befall the children of men. " The righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of the Lord ; he kills, and he makes alive ; he wounds, and he heals ; neither is there any who can deliver out of his hands : " and, according to his sovereign appointment, so every thing falls out to his people, and to all the children of men : a hair of our heads cannot fall to the ground, save when and how it is ordered by him. The winds and the seas obey him ; even the most unruly creatures receive his commands ; yea, and the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord : his kingdom rules over all.

2. To him also it doth undoubtedly belong to dispose of all trials, as to their events. He commands in the raging of the sea, and, upon his command, it turns calm : he stills the tumults of the people, and he commands storms into a calm : as he kills, so he makes alive ; as he bringeth down to the grave, so he bringeth up : the Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich ; he bringeth low, and lifteth up, 1 Sam. ii. He sets bounds to the sea, when it rages, when the billows thereof make a noise, and roar, saying, " Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further ; here shall thy proud waves be stayed." So also doth he bound, according to his pleasure, all the trials of his people, nay, of the children of men. " To God the Lord do the issues from death belong," Psal. lxxviii. 20.

3. That his people might be encouraged in all troubles, to put their trust in him, he has been pleased in his word to reveal, and so to reveal the glorious properties of his nature, as to satisfy all who read and understand, that there is no case too hard for him, in which possibly they may be cast by any turn of providence. With him is wisdom and strength ; he hath counsel and understanding : behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again ; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening : " What-

ever pleased him he hath done in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth." There is nothing too hard for God, "who doth great things and unsearchable, marvellous things without number," even "great things which we cannot comprehend," Job v. 9.

4. That his people might yet have the firmer and clearer ground for their faith, he has been pleased to engage himself, and all these glorious properties of his nature, in many great and precious promises, suiting their various straits; all which are summed up in that great one, "I will be thy God:" that has alone more in it, than can be understood; it has all the other promises in it; and, if thy case cannot be suited by any one of them, it has this more in it: if thou do believe, if it be in God that can help thee, thou shalt not want it: and O! what inconceivable mercy is wrapt up here! who can tell what there is in a God!

5. This being once understood, no case is now hopeless; what cannot a God do? Is there any thing too hard for God? Are not all things possible with him? It is only folly and unbelief that supposes any case now incurable; and God challenges his people for it, Isa. xl. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord?" (that is, God knows not, nor regards my condition) "And my judgment is passed over from my God?" (that is, it seems now even beyond the power, and past the might of my God, to judge and plead my cause against my enemies, and to execute judgment against them that oppress me.) To which expostulation or challenge, he subjoins another, showing the folly of these suppositions, "Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding; he giveth power to the faint, and, to them that have no might, he increaseth strength."

6. Matters being thus, there is no more requisite, but only, that, by faith, we take hold of God's engagement of himself, and of his holy properties; and hereby God is, as it were, put under a sort of necessity to give thee a blessed issue of thy perplexing case. There is no danger as to the cure of any case that God possesseth skill of, and that is of all, if only he be put to it. According to the person's faith, so it will be to him: and hence it appears, that the one direction given by our Lord to Jairus, Mark v. 36. comprehends all; "fear not, only believe."

III. We shall now proceed to show, what of God's glory is to be seen, in the issues he gives his people of their perplexed cases. Now, for clearing the way, you must know, that glory imports three things. First, Some excellency or perfection. Secondly, The manifestation, or discovery of that perfection. Thirdly, Something eminent and remarkable in both: A great excellency, and manifested in a way becoming its greatness and excellency, this is glory: and the glory of God is a remarkable manifestation of the glorious excellencies of the Lord, either by words or works. Now the way being thus far cleared, we say,

1. The glorious being of God is signally manifested in the issues he gives his people of their trials. When he comes to deliver his people, then he makes even men, otherwise not observant, to notice that he is. Thus, when Israel is in a great strait, and David promises himself a blessed issue, from the Lord's owning him in his conflict with Goliath, 1 Sam. xvii. 46. he expects a glorious discovery of the being of God; "This day," says he to Goliath, "will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand, and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcases of the

host of the Philistines this day, unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth ; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel."

2. The glorious sovereignty of God appears with a dazzling lustre, and so clearly in the issues he gives his people of their most perplexing cases, that even enemies do with wonder behold the rays of this excellency. When God gave a glorious issue, Dan. iii. to the three children's trial, then it was that the proud king was brought to an acknowledgment of God's sovereignty, ver. 26. which he denied a little before, ver. 15. there he says, "Who is the God that will deliver out of my hands?" Now he owns their God, (the most high God) and afterwards owns, ver. 29. "that there is no other God like unto him." And remarkable above many is Darius' acknowledgment upon Daniel's delivery, chap. vi. 35. and onwards, which ye may view at your leisure. Christ commanding the storm to a calm, filled onlookers with wonder at his sovereignty over the seas and winds, these unruly creatures, Mat. viii. 27. "The men marvelled, saying, what manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

3. The glory of God's power appears in the issues he gives of hopeless like trials. This Darius observes with wonder in that forecited Daniel vi. 26.—"I make a decree, that in every dominion of my kingdom, men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel ; for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth ; who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

4. The glory of God's wisdom appears in the issues of his people's trials ; when they observe the glorious ends he compasses, the surprising means he uses, the seasonable times he pitches on, and all the lovely circumstances of his actings in their deliverances : then will they, with Hannah in the issue of her trial, be made to own and see, "That the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed," 1 Sam. ii. 3. And with those, Mark vii. 37, who, when our Lord cured the deaf man, were astonished beyond measure ; they will say, "He hath done all things well : he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. O Lord, how manifold are thy works ! In wisdom hast thou made them all : the earth is full of thy riches," Psal. civ. 24.

5. The glory of his justice towards both his people and his enemies, is remarkably seen upon such occasions : so that a man shall say, "Verily there is a reward for the righteous ; verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth," Psal. lviii. 11.

6. The glorious riches of unparalleled mercy. This the issue of the church's trials made them to notice with wonder, Micah vii. 18. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage ? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy."

7. To add no more, the glorious faithfulness of God appears in this, when he delivers Israel from Egypt, and puts an issue to their trouble there ; then he is known by his name Jehovah, Exod. vi. 3. A God that performs his promises. Now, surely here is a most sweet and taking discovery ; when the sight of it has been so affecting to others, as we have heard, who have neither eyes to see, nor have they that interest in the things seen, which heightens the glory of them to his people who have both ;

what must and will the sight of this glory be to his own, when they see it? And this leads me on to the,

IV. Inquiry, to show, what their seeing the glory of the Lord in the issue of their trials imports to them, and we conceive it comprehensive of these.

1. It imports the certainty of the issue; "Thou shalt see the glory of God." That is, thou shalt assuredly have an issue. While trials are on their progress, God's glory is so far from being seen, that all things seem to rub upon his honour; "his way is in the sea, his paths in the great waters, his footsteps are not known." His enemies are high, his people are low; his wisdom hid, his power doubted, and his faithfulness called in question. Nor are things mended, until the trial get an issue, and then the glory of God, before veiled, is seen. So that we may evidently see, that this imports the certainty of the issue. It may be the issue may not be such as thou wouldest have it, or at the time, or in the way thou wouldest have it; but an issue thou shalt have.

2. It imports the comfortableness of the issue; it shall be such, as the very seeing of it, and of the glory of God in it, shall be a privilege, and that so great, as to compensate the disadvantage thou art at by the trial, and by the want of it. "Said I not unto thee," &c. as much as if he had said, I have told thee to wait on me by faith, and thou shalt get such a sight of the end, as will reward thee for thy attendance.

3. It imports advantage in the issue, bearing proportion to the glory that God shall have by the whole of the trial. If God get glory, thou shalt see it, that is, enjoy it. Now, surely in every circumstance of our trial God has a hand, and will have glory from all the steps he takes; and if we believe, we shall see this glory. We shall have all the advantage. Not only shall the God of glory manifest his excellencies in our trials, to our advantage and for our good, but in the issue we shall have, over and above the advantage of seeing and enjoying, all the glory that God has got. O inconceivably great privilege!

4. It imports sensible advantage: thou shalt see; that is, thou shalt have sensible and experimental discoveries of the Lord. The effects of God's appearance shall be sensible, either to thy natural or spiritual senses, or both.

5. It imports clear discoveries of the glory of the Lord. All the mists that now darken and obscure the glorious outgoings of the wisdom, power, and mercy of God, shall then be dissipated, and thou shalt have a clear discovery of the glory of the Lord. "Thou shalt see."

6. It imports great pleasure, as the genuine result of the whole. Dazzling lustre or glory wherein we are interested, and have some concern, when seen in a clear light, gives an inexpressible pleasure. "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun;" Eccl. xi. 7. That which is glorious is also pleasant; but glory, when it is seen, that is, when not obscurely known, but in a clear light, is doubly pleasant. Much more is glory pleasant, when it is not only seen by us, but when it is ours as to all the advantage we can desire of it; and, most of all, glory must be ravishingly sweet, when thus seen, if it be great, such as undoubtedly the glory of the Lord is.

V. I should now have proceeded according to the method laid down, to show the excellency of this way of believing; but this discourse, notwithstanding our utmost care to keep it within bounds, has already grown in-

sensibly to such a length, but this we must refer to the application, where we may have access to touch at it. And seeing,

VI. We cannot overtake the application we designed of this truth, therefore we only,

1. Improve it for information, in a few short inferences.

2. We shall put up our discourse in a word of exhortation.

I. Then of the many inferences we might draw from this point, we content ourselves to mention the few following. Is it so, that the glory of the Lord is to be seen in the issue of the most perplexing trials of such as do believe? Then,

1. Thence we may draw this conclusion, that the Lord is at work, ordering and disposing every circumstance in his people's trials, that the result and issue of the whole may bear the impression of his glory. There is nothing more sure than this, that God will quit the concerns of his glory to none; and therefore, what is in the issue to discover his glory, he will employ his own wisdom in ordering, and his own hand in polishing it for that end. Let us therefore beware of quarreling circumstances in our trials, and looking unto them as deformities, lest we be found to quarrel the Lord, who ordereth the falling of every hair from our head, and who will get himself glory by it in the issue.

2. We may hence also draw this sweet conclusion, that assuredly all those things that are any way instrumental in our trouble, are under the Lord's command and disposal, as they are concerned in our trials. If our afflictions and trials be a piece of God's work, wherein he designs to manifest his glory, surely there is not a tool made use of, but what he takes in his own hand, and what he rules; and therefore we need not fear hurt by them, how sharp and dangerous soever they may be. O poor believer that art surrounded with temptations, devils, fiery darts, and enemies of all sorts, each of them ready, as it were, to destroy thee, "fear not, only believe." Thou hast as little, nay much less reason to fear, as a man who has a boil upon his breast, or any other part of his body, has, when a skilful chirurgeon is cutting it with a lance. The lance is sharp, and would quickly cut him to the heart, but it is in a wise workman's hand, who will use it for his good, and if he get any hurt by it, it surely is occasioned by his own shaking and unsteadiness. So likewise is it with you, your enemies, however dangerous they may seem to be, are yet all in the Lord's hand; and therefore you can get no hurt, if you do not procure it to yourselves, by your own fear and distrust. And may not your own experience tell you that it is so, even you who are the most despondent in all this house this day? If these fiery darts, these enemies, had not been in the hand of the Lord, then had they not ere now pierced you through and through, and ruined you quite? May you not then say with the Psalmist? Psal xli. 11. "By this I know that I am favoured of thee, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me."

3. We may draw this inference, that believers have a great security for the issue of their trials. God designs the manifestation of his glory in them, and therefore your deliverance and God's glory are upon the same bottom. You cannot miss of the issue, unless he fail of the glory which he designs to have: fear not then, O believers, the issue of the darkest cases; God will not lose his glory. If he leave thee who trustest in him, he loses the glory that is as dear to him as his life.

4. We may hence learn, why we see so little of the glory of God in the

issue of our trials : we do not believe. Ah unbelief ! it is the woful source of all our wants in this sort, and indeed in any respect. " Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of the Lord."

I. To improve this truth for exhortation, time not allowing us to mention what otherwise we would have inclined to do : here there are a great multitude, and we hope not a few of such as the Lord will own as his, and it is like as many persons as many different cases, the one half whereof is not, nor can be understood by the most discerning ministers, far less by me, who may with far more justice say, than Agur did, " I am more brutish than any man, and have not the knowledge of a man ;" and yet under a necessity we are, however unworthy, by virtue of our office, to give every one their portion ; and here we would have been in a sad strait, if our Lord had not left us this one allowance that answers all cases, whatever differences there may be among them, whatever your case may be, we say as Christ has said, and we exhort you in his name, Believe, only believe, and ye shall see the glory of the Lord :

1. O believe ! for this gives glory to God. He that believeth, putteth to his seal to the truth of God, and gives him the glory of his truth, and so of all his other attributes. When we put to our seal that God is true, we give him the glory of all that he says of himself in his word ; we seal what God has said of his properties, of his nature, and in a word, every thing that the word speaks : and we deprive Satan of that which he, no doubt, valued himself much upon in his seduction of man. He valued himself, that he prevailed with innocent man, and while he was in his perfection, to listen rather to his suggestions, than to the truth of God ; but he is shamefully foiled, when man, even in his weak estate, dare credit God not only upon a bare word, but even upon that when all Satan's skill and power are employed to darken the truth, and all appearances seem to cross it. O believer ! then shame Satan, give glory to God.

2. Only believe ; for, as the way of believing is the way to gain thy chief end, the glory of God ; so it is the sure way to reach a blessed issue of your trial, whatever it be. For, 1. It is the way that Christ, upon all occasions directs to, Mark v. 36. Whatever thy strait be, we find whatever the case be that you bring to Christ, this was, and is still the way he directs thee to ; " Fear not, only believe." Look through the whole gospel, and thou wilt find it so. 2. The promise is to it ; " Said I not unto thee," &c. 3. The nature of God binds him to it, 1 Sam. ii. 30. " Them that honour me I will honour." And, 4. The godly have all found this true. Read Hebrews xi.

3. As thou shalt have peace in the issue, so it is the way to get peace and quiet, till the issue come. There is much peace and joy in believing, Rom. xv. 13. For, 1. Here thou hast a solid ground of repose, the sufficiency of God Almighty, and the word of him that cannot lie. 2. Here thou hast protection against all thy fears ; " What time I am afraid I will trust in thee ;" Psal. lvi. 3. 3. Here thou mayest be delivered from all thy cares : " Cast thou thy burden on the Lord, and he will sustain thee ;" Psal. lv. 22. And this is only done by faith. Compare for this purpose, Matth. xi. 28. with John vi. 35. 4. Here thou art secured of strength, proportioned to thy burden, 1 Cor. x. 13.

4. This way of believing has in it all that thy case can require : if it be in God that can help thee, here thou hast it : for here thou hast God engaged by promise to be thine, and his word for thy security, that he will be so.

5. This way of believing is notably suited to the times, wherein the holy God has cast our lot. All things are reeling, and full of uncertainty ; events will prove so far otherwise than expectation, that they will prove the wisest of men, fools. All the politic conclusions of men may and will fail, "but the just shall live by faith ;" and if thou takest this way, thou shalt be as mount Zion, "that cannot be removed," Psal. cxxv.

6. This way of believing is notably suited unto the trials thou art like to meet with this day ; such as, 1. The prevalency of the church's enemies. Now if they do prevail, then faith will assure thee, that they are only established for correction. 2. The falls of saints, or such who seemed to be so. Now this will not shake you ; for faith leans not upon men, but upon the Lord, 1 Cor. ii. 4. 3. The failing of things seen. All visible props shake ; well, faith will give thee a life in invisibles.

7. To add no more ; this way of believing is a way notably suited unto the present duty of communicating. Here thou art called to a feast. And 1. Faith will give thee the only ground that is solid, for expecting a fill ; some, it may be, expect much here, because they are well prepared ; others, because such and such ministers are here. If your expectations lean here, we have enough of you, you are upon a wrong ground : God will blast ministers to you, and make your preparations appear to be what they are ; but while these shall be sent empty away, faith will lay hold upon the Lord's promised presence in ordinances. This is the communion of the blood and body of Christ, leaned to by faith ; is another sort of a ground, than a thousand of these others, as to the expectation of success in the ordinances. 2. Faith will fit thee for a feast ; faith fits for fruition : "If thou wilt believe, thou shalt see the glory of God." 3. Faith will eat this food ; it is not to be tasted by sense, and therefore only by faith, (that is, the evidence of things not seen,) can this food be eaten. He that cometh to Christ, "shall never hunger, and that believeth, shall never thirst," John vi. 35. So that we see, to come to Christ, or to believe, is to eat the flesh, and to drink the blood of the Son of man. 4. Faith will not only eat, but it will mix with your food, and digest it, and make it profitable. The word preached only then is profitable, and consequently the sacraments, when they are mixed with faith in them who receive them. 5. If you feel not at present, it will keep thee from disquietment, by assuring you, upon the credit of Christ's word, that what "thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter," John xiii. 7. 6. It will keep thee living till sense come, "Now the just shall live by faith." Let me then resume my exhortation.

Upon all these grounds, is it so, that believing is the way to get a sight of the glory of God, and to reap all those advantages mentioned ? Then, dearly beloved in our Lord, by all that is dear to you, by the mercies of God, if there be any consolation in Christ Jesus, any bowels of love, we entreat, beseech and obtest you, get faith, and live by the faith of the Son of God ; and, for your direction, take only these two three words. 1. Fix upon your souls the sense of the inexpressible advantages of a life of faith, and your lamentable estrangement from it. 2. Cry mightily to the Lord for faith ; say with the disciple, "Lord, increase our faith." 3. Wait upon him in ordinances for it : for "faith comes by hearing."