

G R E A T
AND
P R E C I O U S P R O M I S E S.

SERMON I.

1ST PETER i. 4.—*Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

MAY we not truly say, that if ever the Christians who live in these days shall be advanced to stand within the holy place, and shall inherit everlasting life, all those that are now before his throne, may lay aside their harps, and give us leave to sing. Will it not be a mystery, suppose ye, unto heavenly Enoch, that spent so much of his time in communion and fellowship with God, when he shall behold such Christians within that everlasting rest, that have spent so little of their time in corresponding with God? Will it not be a mystery unto believing Abraham, when he shall behold such mis-believers, such disputers of the promises of God, advanced to reign with Christ? Will it not be a mystery unto wrestling Jacob, when he shall behold those Christians once crowned with immortal glory, that did so little know what it was, as princes, to wrestle with God, till they did prevail? Will it not be wonder to patient Job, when he shall behold such impatient Christians, as we have been, entering into that blessed place of repose? Will it not be a mystery unto holy David, when he shall behold such unmortified Christians entering within that city, into which no unclean thing doth enter? Will it not be a mystery unto tender Josiah, to behold such Christians as we are, that have our hearts dying as a stone within us, entering into heaven? Will it not be a mystery unto upright Nathaniel, to behold such hypocritical Christians, as the most part of us are, entering within the holy place; and to see those that have been clothed with hypocrisy and guile, now clothed with the robes of immortal glory? And will it not be a mystery unto self-denying Paul, when he shall behold such proud and selfish Christians enter into heaven? Give me leave to say this, go where we will, we shall be matchless and singular; for if we shall go into eternity of pain, we shall be the greatest debtors unto the infinite justice of God, in regard of the mercies we have received; and if we shall enter into eternity of joy, we shall be the greatest debtors unto the spotless grace of Christ, in regard of the mercies we have abused. There shall be none in heaven like unto us; and if we shall go to

hell, there shall be few there that may be compared unto us. And let me but add this further before I come to the words,—go where we will, we shall be out of doubt with our condition. Within a short time, we shall be exalted above the reach of this misbelieving ; a hypocrite shall be depressed below the reach of his faith ; and one that is grossly in nature shall be abased beyond the reach of his presumption. A Christian ere long shall misbelieve no more ; a hypocrite ere long shall believe no more ; and one that is grossly in nature shall ere long presume no more :—there is no misbelief in heaven, and there is no faith nor presumption of well-being in hell. But to come to that which we intend to speak of:—we told you of faith when we first began our discourse upon that precious and exalted grace, under a twofold notion and consideration—*first*, as it is justifying ; and, *secondly*, as it is sanctifying. For the *First*, we resolve to speak of it in a twofold consideration:—*First*, As it closeth with Christ simply as the object upon which resteth, and of this we have spoken from that place, 1 John iii. 23. *Secondly*, As it closeth with Christ, as he is held forth in the promises : and now being to speak of it in this consideration, we have made choice of this place, in which are those things concerning the promise shortly :—

1. Ye have that fountain and spring from whence the promises do flow, holden forth in the first words of the verse, *Whereby*, or (as the words may be more fitly rendered) *by whom*,—relating unto Jesus Christ, who is the original and spring of all the promises.

2. The properties of the promises, and these are:—1. The freedom of the promises, held forth in that word *given* ; *whereby are given*—which speaketh this, that the promises are free gifts, flowing only from good pleasure. 2. Their unchangeableness ; and that is holden forth in the word *given*—the gifts and calling of God being without repentance. 3. That they are *exceeding great* ; and the promises are called great, either in respect of that price that was laid down to purchase the promises ; or they are called great, in respect of the great things that are contained in them. 4. That they are *precious* : now the promises are called *precious*, either in respect of their original, that they come from precious Christ ; or else in respect of this, that they are the object (I mean, the object *quo*, or by which,) of precious faith, as it is called in the first verse of this chapter ; or else they are precious, because they are the things that a Christian ought to put a high esteem upon :—for the word that is rendered *precious*, may likewise be rendered *honourable* ; *whereby are given unto us exceeding great and honourable promises*.

3. We have holden forth, in the words, the great advantages of the promises—*by them we are made partakers of the divine nature*. Now this is not to be understood of any essential conversion of our substance into the substance of God, but of a Christian having the divine virtues of Jesus Christ impressed upon his soul, and expressed in his life and conversation.

4. And there is this *Lastly*, Concerning the promises in the words, *even the time when the promises are eminently accomplished* ; it is, *when we have escaped*, or as the word is, *when we have fled from the corruptions that are in the world through lust* ; that is the

time when a Christian meeteth with the accomplishment of the promise.

Now, before we can speak of any of these, we must speak a little unto some things, as necessary to be known, in order to the better understanding of all. 1. We shall not dwell long in pointing out unto you what a promise is ; we conceive it is a glorious discovery of the good-will of God towards sinners, and withal, a purpose and intendment, and, if we may say, an engagement, to bestow some spiritual or temporal good upon them, or to withhold some spiritual or temporal evil from them : and certain it is, that in this description of the promise, there is a divine harmony betwixt mercy and truth,—betwixt righteousness and peace,—they kiss one another. Neither shall we stand long to point out the distinction of the promises :—1. There are some promises that are conditional, and there are some promises that are absolute. Absolute promises are those that have no condition annexed unto the performance of them ; such a promise as is that—*God will destroy the world no more by water* ; that is an absolute promise ;—such a promise was that of *God's sending his Son into the world* ; that was an absolute promise ;—and such is that promise of conversion, *in giving of the hearts of flesh*—it is an absolute promise. As for the conditional promises, they are those that do require some condition to be performed by the Christian before the accomplishment of the promises ; such as, that the promise of salvation requireth believing as going before it—*he that believeth, shall be saved*. And pardon is promised unto a Christian upon repentance ; and yet we confess, that there is not a conditional promise that is in all the covenant of grace, but it may be reduced into an absolute promise, in regard that the thing promised (in the conditional promise) is an absolute free gift, and the condition of the promise is another. 2. There are some promises that are temporal, and some that are spiritual ;—temporal promises are those that promise some temporal thing unto a Christian ; and spiritual promises are those that promise the bestowing of something that is of everlasting concernment. 3. There are some promises that are not accomplished in this life,—such as this, *that we shall see him as he is, and shall be made like unto him*. But for the promises of faith and justification, these are accomplished in this life. 4. There are some promises that are extraordinary, and there are some promises that are common ;—extraordinary promises are those that are given to some particular believers, as a singular privilege ; such was the promise that was given to Abraham, *in his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed* ; and that promise that was given to Rebecca, *that the elder should serve the younger*. As for common promises, they are those that every believer in Christ hath a right to make use of.

Neither shall we stand long to point out, that it is the duty of a Christian to be much in the exercise of faith upon the promises ; it is clear from Psalm lxii. 8, *Trust in him at all times, ye people*. And it is clear from the practice of that precious cloud of witnesses, recorded of in Heb. xi. that spent their days in embracing of the promises. But we would have you consider, that it is more easy for a Christian believer to believe spiritual promises, than to believe

temporal promises : it is easier to trust Christ for eternal salvation, than to trust him for our daily food, when we are reduced unto straits. And the grounds upon which we assert this, may be these : —1. Because it is hard for a Christian to believe that Christ's death reacheth for the purchasing of temporal promises, which more easily he taketh up in spiritual promises ; for a Christian can hardly believe that such a thing was in Christ's intention, as to die for his daily food ; which is most certain, if we consider, it is a special mercy. 2. In a Christian's believing of spiritual promises, there is often some sense and reason that helpeth him to the exercise of faith, at least, they press not the contrary. But to believe a temporal promise, when a Christian is reduced unto a strait, and can see no outgate at present,—sense and reason stand upon the top of this faith, and press him to despair : as for instance, when a Christian is living upon the top of a mountain, and knoweth not where to sup at night, to believe that there is a promise upon which he may rest, that he shall not want his food, but that if the Lord hath service for him, he will provide here ; he hath not only reason to dispute against it, but the strong pinching sense of hunger, both crying out, *how can bread be given in the wilderness?* 3. The temptations that assault a Christian to misbelieve upon temporal promises, are more suitable and co-natural to a Christian than his temptations that assault him in resting upon the spiritual promises. When a Christian is in straits in the world, the temptations that hinder his exercise of faith are more consonant to flesh and blood. We are ready to yield to misbelief then, because we think it is rational, and speaketh the truth. 4. A Christian is often so affrighted by his daily failings, or some particular more gross out-breakings in his life, that howbeit he may, through grace, be helped to believe that the Lord shall make out those promises concerning his great salvation, and so do him good in his latter end ; yet, he may be sadly perplexed and distrustful, in making use of any particular temporary promise, for drawing forth any comfort or encouragement therefrom, as to this present exigent ; because he knoweth, although the Lord doth forgive his people's iniquities, yet he may take vengeance on their inventions, Psalm xcix. 8 ; and therefore may punish his present failing with the like calamities as he had done others. 5. There is also much of a natural and carnal self-love to a present life, remaining in the best, that we are many times worse to satisfy in our securities for the things of this life, than of that which is to come ; and can more easily trust the Lord for our souls, than for our bodies : so that though his naked word will sometimes satisfy us for the one, yet it will not for the other. And the *last* ground of it may be with a Christian's unacquaintedness with that lot of exercising faith upon temporal promises ; there being many who think not that there is use for faith, except for salvation, and the things above, which maketh his faith upon these more difficult, than upon promises that are spiritual. And this may appear more clearly, in that we find men more easily bear their spiritual wants, (even a Christian that is most exercised) than they bear their temporal wants ;—and more corruption and impatience doth arise from temporal want, than from spiritual want.

2. Consider, that all a Christian's duties are turned over into promises : there is not a duty that is required of a Christian, but is converted into a promise. Is not faith a duty ? in 1st John iii. 23, *This is his commandment, that ye should believe.* And is not that turned over into a promise ? in Jer. iii. 19, *Thou shalt call me, my Father* : the word importeth not only an act of necessity, but of violence—*thou shalt do it.* And in the xiii. chap. of Zech. at the close, *thou shalt call me, thy Father* ; and so in Ezek. xi. 19. Is not mortification a Christian's duty ? Col. iii., *Mortify, therefore, your members.* And it is turned over into a promise, Ezekiel xxxvi. 29, where he promiseth, *that he will purge away all their uncleanness.* And it is most clear from Micah vii. 19, *I will subdue* (saith he) *all thine iniquities.* It is not said, *thou must subdue them* ; but *I will do it.* Is not the knowledge of God a commanded duty ? And yet it is turned over into a promise in the covenant of grace—*they shall know me from the highest unto the lowest ; neither shall there be need any more that one should say, Know the Lord, for they shall be taught of me.* Is not the commandment of fear your duty ? as is clear from Eccles. xii. 13 : and yet that is also turned over into a promise—*I will put my fear in their inward part, that they shall not depart away from me.* So tenderness is a Christian's duty ; and yet it is turned over into a promise—*I will take away their heart of stone, and give them a heart of flesh.* And that I may say no more of this, look but unto these four places, and there ye will see almost all duties turned over into promises ; there is Jer. xxxi., Jer. xxxii., Ezek. xi., and Ezek. xxxvi. Ye will see all the duties of the covenant converted into promises. But may not some say, What advantage is there of this ? Much certainly every way, that duties are turned over into promises. 1. It may give a Christian hope, that once he will perform those duties. Will ye not once be tender ? Yes, certainly, because your tenderness lieth within a promise. Will ye not once be much in the exercise of fear ? No doubt ye will, and the ground of it is this :—Because our fear lieth within a promise, and so of the rest. 2. There is this advantage of it, that all the duties required of a Christian are turned over into promises ; because, by this means, a Christian may go to God, when he cannot perform such a duty, and desire him to fulfil his word, and accomplish his promise ; and so may make use, not only of the omnipotency of God, but of the faithfulness of God also. There is this 3d consideration that we would propose, that there are some things of a Christian within a promise, that he doth not believe to be within it, especially these three :—1. The challenges of a Christian are within a promise, when ye are convinced that is the accomplishment of a promise ; this is clear from Isaiah xxx. 21, where convictions and challenges are turned over into promises,—*when thou art turning unto the right hand, or to the left, thine ear shall hear a voice behind thee, crying, This is the way, walk ye in it.* And it may be clear, that our convictions are the accomplishment of promises, because it is the work of the Comforter, as well to convince, John xvi. 9, as it is for him to make one to rejoice. And if a Christian could believe that his challenges were the

accomplishment of a promise, he might embrace challenges; he might see the faithfulness of God in his challenges; and he might see much love in his challenges. 2. A Christian's cross is within a promise: so that when a Christian meets with such afflictions, he may sit down and cry out, that is the accomplishment of a promise; and this is clear from Psalm lxxxix. 31, 32, where, in the midst of the promises of the covenant of grace, that promise of visiting their iniquities with rods, is put in the bosom of them; and from Psalm cxix. 75,—*In faithfulness hast thou afflicted me.* Why doth David say, *in faithfulness?* It was this,—because this cross was the accomplishment of a promise; and it may be clear also from that word, Heb. xii. 5, *Forget not the exhortation;* speaking of the cross, the word is, *forget not the consolation that speaketh unto you:*—as if the Holy Ghost did say, crosses do yield much consolation; as in verse 11, *They yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness.* And if this were believed, that our crosses were the accomplishment of the promises, it would help a Christian unto much humble submission, and there would not be much murmuring under them, if once we did believe they were the accomplishment of a promise. Yea, there is this further advantage, that if we did believe that our crosses were the accomplishment of a promise, we would be much in advancing holiness under crosses. There is nothing that obstructeth the sweet fruits of righteousness, under a cross, so much as impatience. And I would say this to commend the cross:—A Christian never moveth so swiftly to heaven, as when he is under a sanctified cross. A cross, when it is sanctified, will prove a Christian's motion to heaven, more than the enjoyments. For our enjoyments ordinarily do retard our way, as much as further it. And there is this, 3dly, that is within the promise, *even our daily food, and the hairs of our head.* The hairs of a Christian's head are all numbered, and within the covenant: so that ye may see what a high respect Christ hath put upon Christians; this is clear from that word, Psalm cxi. 5, 8, *He hath given meat unto them that fear him. He will ever be mindful of his covenant.*

Our fourth consideration shall be to point out a little those grounds upon which Christ doth delay his accomplishment of the promises. It is certain, that Christians are oftentimes put to this,—*doth his promise fail for evermore?* and cry out, *why art thou become unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?* And the grounds of this delay are these:—Christ knoweth that a Christian can often better improve the delay of the accomplishment of the promise, than he can improve the accomplishment itself. We might find this in our experience, it being, for the most part, easier for a Christian to bear his crosses, than to bear his enjoyments. I think David had never so sweet a time as when he was pursued as a partridge by his son Absalom; then grace did breathe forth most sweetly in his actions: but let David be under prosperity, and then we see he falleth into the sin of adultery. And therefore, never repine when ye are under a cross: for certainly, if we had spiritual understanding, we would not judge it so great a hazard to be under a cross, as under prosperity, since we have greater strength to bear the one, than to

endure the other. 2. The slothfulness of a Christian, to whom the promises are made, makes the promises to be delayed in their performance, as was clear in the people of Israel; they were forty years in a wilderness, before that promise of entering into Canaan was accomplished. It was a promise that could have been accomplished in a few days, and yet, because of their sin, was not accomplished for forty years; as ye may see from that word, Numb. xiv. 33, 34. The accomplishment of the promise is delayed, that faith may be more exercised; this is clear from that remarkable word, *Until the time that his word came*; that is, until the word of the Lord was accomplished;—*the word of the Lord tried him*; that is, it was the matter of his exercise, an exercise especially unto faith. For indeed, it is much for a Christian to believe upon a word, when it is delayed in its accomplishment. The fourth ground of delay is—that the exercise of prayer may be more; and it is certain, that the best improvement of delay is, to be much in prayer. The promises occasion prayer; this is clear from Exod. iv. ult., *They believed, and bowed down their heads and worshipped*; and from 2d Sam. vii. 27, where the great promises being made to David, he crieth out, *Therefore have I found in my heart to pray this prayer unto God*—and it is clear from Psalm cxix. 49, *Perform thy word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope*. It is a bad improvement of delays, when we turn impatient; and it is a bad improvement of delays, when we quit our confidence. Know, that promises are accomplished after delays, and they have a lustre upon them, that they may compensate all the delays. 5. There is this other ground of the delays of the accomplishment of the promises, even that the thing that is promised may be sweet unto a Christian when it cometh; this is clear from that word of Solomon, Prov. xiii. 12, *Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; but when the desire doth come, it is as a tree of life*. O! but a mercy that cometh unto a Christian through a promise is sweet: yea, a drink of cold water, taken up as the accomplishment of a promise, is more sweet than a feast of fat things full of marrow,—of wine on the lees well refined. To take up your bread and your drink as the accomplishment of your promises, would make them refreshing to you. 6. The Lord delays his promises, that a Christian may be more in the exercise of dependency, and may be always kept about the throne. A Christian goeth to God from a threefold principle; he goeth to God from a principle of faith, from a principle of necessity, and from a principle of love. But would ye know that which putteth a Christian oftenest to God? It is a principle of necessity: and believe it, that if necessity did not drive a Christian unto the foot of the throne, he would seldom go from a principle of love, or from a principle of faith. 7. And there is this last ground of the delay of the accomplishment of the promises, that the glory of the wisdom of God may appear, and the glory of his power, in the accomplishment of the promise. And from this I would only say to Christians that are under this exercise, complaining of the want of the performance of the promises, these few things:—1. Believe that the promise shall once be accomplished,—that *though the vision tarry,*

yet at last it shall speak. 2. Believe that every hour's delay of the accomplishment of the promises hath a sweet design of love: there is not one moment of delay, but it is for the advantage of a Christian; as is clear from that word, Rom. viii. 27. 3. That promise that cometh after long delays hath these three sweet and soul-refreshing attendants:—1. It is performed most seasonably: a Christian, if he will observe, will see infinite wisdom shining in timing the accomplishing of the promise to such a particular day: a Christian will be constrained to cry of it, if the promise had been fulfilled before, there had not been such art of wisdom appearing in the performance of it. 2. That the promise, when it is accomplished, will engage a Christian more in the exercise of love, than for promises accomplished at a short and smaller time: there is nothing that will so inflame the soul with love, as to have a promise accomplished after delays. 3. The promises accomplished after delays, have much sense waiting upon the performance thereof. I think hardly a Christian ever met with the accomplishment of a promise after long delay, but his *soul was made as a watered garden, and as springs of water, whose waters fail not.* This promise falleth, and cometh to a Christian perfumed with love.

Now we shall shut up our discourse at this time, and shall only speak to these six defects of a Christian's faith, in believing of the promises:—1. That our faith is impatient,—we cannot stay upon the promises, if they be delayed. Hence ye will see, that in Scripture often, patience is annexed to faith, which speaketh this, that it is impossible for a Christian to believe as he ought, that wanteth the exercise of patience. So Heb. vi. 12, *Be ye followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises;* and that word in Rev., *This is the faith and patience of the saints.* 2. Our faith in closing with the promises is most inconstant. A Christian, when first a promise is born in upon his spirit, will then believe the promise, and join with it; but after six or seven days go about, he will change his faith; that is remarkably clear from Exod. iv. 31, compared with Exod. vi. 9. When first the promise cometh to the people of Israel, that they shall go out of Egypt, it is said of them in the fourth chapter at the close, *they believed the promises and worshipped;* but look to them in Exod. vi. 9, and there ye will see them not believing, because of *bitterness and anxiety of heart.* And I will tell you the grounds why our faith is inconstant:—1. Sometimes the reading of a promise to a Christian will be as savoury meat; sometimes when a Christian will read one time in the covenant, it will be perfumed with love, and his soul shall be perfumed with joy after it; and at another time, when he shall read that promise again, it will be *tasteless as the white of an egg, and as his sorrowful meat.* 2. That we are not much in studying the exercise of the things that are promised, which certainly would cut short many of our debates. There is this *third* defect of our faith, that we are not diligent; a diligent faith we call this, that after a Christian hath believed, he would be much in the exercise of prayer for the accomplishment of the promise; he would be much in the exercise of meditation, to make that promise sweet and lively unto him. And

a *fourth* defect is this—we build our faith more upon dispensations than upon the word; when dispensations say that which the promise saith, then we will believe; but when dispensations speak the contrary language unto the promise, then we will reject our confidence and hope. I will tell you great mysteries of believing:—It is hard for a Christian to believe, when the commentary seemeth to destroy the text; that is, when the commentary seemeth to declare that the promise shall never be accomplished. In some it is this—it is hard to believe, when dispensations will say the word of the Lord will fail, and when promises bid you believe. 2. It is hard for a Christian to take impossibilities in the one hand, and the word of promise in the other, and say—O precious Christ, reconcile these two together, that impossibilities do not destroy the promise, but that the promise may be accomplished, notwithstanding this. 3. We have these defects of faith amongst us, that we build our faith more upon sense, than upon the word of promise. When a Christian is in a good frame, he will believe; but when Christ hideth his face, he will then give up his hope. And *lastly*, there is this that our faith upon the promises is general: we believe in the truth of the promises, but we study not to make a particular application of them. I shall not stand long to make any use of what we have spoken; only I would have the Christians of this age, and those that are here, to go home with this conviction,—the damnable neglect of believing the promises. A Christian neglecteth these three duties of religion most; he neglecteth the duty of self-examining, the duty of believing the promises, and that soul-exalting duty of meditation; these three duties a Christian doth so constantly neglect, that almost he is above the reach of conviction that he doth neglect them. But I would say a word unto those that are destitute of the faith of the promises, and are strangers unto those blessed things that are recorded within the covenant; and it is only this, doubtless ye must believe your senses, if ye will not believe his word. It is a question indeed, which of all the senses shall be most satisfied in heaven, whether that of seeing, *when we shall behold the King in his beauty, and see him as he is?* or that of hearing, when we shall hear those melodious *hallelujahs* of that *innumerable company*, which are *about the throne*, without any jarring amongst them all? or that of smelling, when we shall find the sweet perfume of his garments, which are perfumed *with all the powders of the merchant?* or that of touching, when we shall find *Mary's inhibition taken off, touch me not*, and be admitted to embrace him, who now is *ascended to the Father?* or that of tasting, when we shall drink of those *rivers of consolation that shall never run dry?* This, I say, is indeed a question; and give me leave to tell you, O atheists, enemies of God! it is also a question, which of all the five senses of a reprobate shall be most tormented in hell, and what would ye answer to it now? Whether think ye the sense of sight, when ye shall behold the darkness of wrath, the devil and his angels, and your fellow-prisoners in that dungeon?—or whether shall your sense of hearing be most tormented in hell, when ye shall hear those screechings and howlings that shall eternally ascend up before God,

by the souls that are in prison? O! but the greatest enemy would have compassion on his enemy to hear their cries. Or whether will ye say the sense of tasting shall be most tormented, when ye shall drink of these *rivers of brimstone*?—or will the sense of touching, when ye shall be eternally scorched with these flames of eternal indignation?—or the sense of smelling, when they shall eternally be, as it were, suffocated with the smoke of that sulphureous furnace that shall never be quenched? O! think you, if Cain would come from hell, and preach that doctrine that we should not persecute the saints, would we listen unto him? If Absalom should come from hell, and should preach against the evil of ambition, would we listen unto him? And if Ahithophel should rise from the dead, and preach that doctrine unto you, *let not the wise man glory in his wisdom*, would ye stop your ears?—or if Judas should come from hell, and preach to you the evil of hypocrisy, in betraying the Son of Man with a kiss, would you believe him?—or if Dives, who is recorded in the gospel, should come from hell, and choose that text to preach upon, James v. 1, *Go to, ye rich men, and howl, and weep for your miseries that shall come upon you*?—and if Demas would come and second him with that word, *love not the world, nor the things that are in the world*, I fear ye would cry out, *we will embrace that doctrine at another time*. We desire not to insist much upon these. But O! to believe that there is an eternity of pain, and that there is an eternity of joy. I will give you a description of the atheist, and let you think upon it; it is easier to convince hundreds of you, that ye want the fear of God, than that ye want the faith and love of God. Oh! imaginary faith and a conceit of love! will ye never quit these two idols? I confess, once ye shall have a faith that no man shall ever rob you of; and that is, the faith of that truth, that, when once ye enter into eternity of pain, there is no redemption out of that place. Awake, awake, for behold the Judge cometh, and he shall render vengeance unto those that know him not. To his blessed and precious name, we desire to give praise.

SERMON II.

1ST PETER i. 4.—*Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

THOUGH justice and judgment be the habitation of his throne, yet mercy and truth did go before it, as two divine ushers to convey us home unto God. There are these two things that we should have Christians principally to study:—1. That ye would be much in the study of those wrongs and injuries that ye have done to Christ. 2. That ye would be much in the study of those infinite acts of