

The love of GOD to us, and our love to him, will promote humility; and that precious grace will make us steady and faithful to GOD---it will make us patient under pains and miseries. Love to GOD, as good, elevates us above the whole world---it will cure us of envy, and inflame our gratitude and ardent thanksgiving to infinite goodness. Abound in praise, and singing of psalms and hymns every day of your life.

Imitate GOD's goodness every hour. Copy the lovely example of the Lord Jesus Christ, who went about doing good every moment of his life, Acts x. 38.---Under the head of goodness we place mercy and patience.

1. The MERCY of GOD.

Mercy is the tender propensity of the divine will to succour souls in distress and misery. Mercy pities and succours in temporal calamities; and it is exceedingly compassionate to poor sinners in distress of soul, and ready to die without pardon. Mercy lays aside all thoughts of punishing the sinner, and treats him with the softest bowels of compassion, and receives him into the bosom and friendship of GOD. The LORD being merciful to him, Gen. xix. 16. The LORD GOD merciful and gracious, Exod. xxxiv. 6. The LORD is of great mercy, Numb. xiv. 18. Thy GOD is a merciful GOD, Deut. iv. 31. His mercy endures for ever: repeated twenty-six

times in Pf. cxxxvi. Our God is merciful, Pf. cxvi. 5. A God ready to pardon; or, in the original, a God of pardons, Neh. ix. 17. He will abundantly pardon, (Heb.) he will multiply pardons, Ifai. lv. 7. Full of compassion, Pf. lxxviii. 38. Of great mercy, Pf. cxlv. 8. Mercy shall be built up for ever, Pf. lxxxix. 2. As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, Pf. ciii. 13. He will not always chide, ver. 9. He will not contend for ever, Ifai. lvii. 16. He will not cast off for ever, Lam. iii. 31. He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy, Micah vii. 18. It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Lam. iii. 22.

USE of the MERCY of GOD.---This should teach us to put on bowels of mercies towards our brethren; and we should sing of the mercy of God for ever.---Read Dr. Owen on the Riches of Mercy, in his Expos. of the 130th Psalm; and Mr. John Mason, on a Merciful Temper.

2. The PATIENCE of GOD.

Patience is a moderation of anger: 'tis a restraint of anger, and deferring the effects of his hatred and wrath according to his sovereign will. It is an extension of mercy for a season: for the mercy of God is always in his patience, and mixed with every exercise of patience. The patience of God is only exercised for a time,
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until some certain end of GOD is answered: and in which end patience issues, and is finished for ever; either in the condemnation of the wicked, when they have fitted themselves for ruin; or in the salvation of true christians, when they are prepared for it. For patience is exercised towards good and bad men, until mercy or justice, salvation or condemnation, take place; and then patience is for ever at an end.---GOD expresses his patience towards men in the days of Noah. For that he is flesh, yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years, Gen. vi. 3.---His patience was exercised towards the sinners in Canaan. The iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full, Gen. xv. 16. The LORD GOD, long suffering, Exod. xxxiv. 6. A GOD, slow to anger, Neh. ix. 17. A GOD, long suffering, plenteous in mercy, Ps. lxxxvi. 15. Jehovah is slow to anger, ciii. 8. The LORD your GOD is slow to anger, Joel ii. 13. I knew thou art a gracious GOD, slow to anger, Jonah iv. 3. Riches of forbearance and long-suffering, Rom. ii. 4. The Lord is not slack, but is long-suffering, 2 Pet. iii. 9. The long-suffering of our Lord is salvation, 2 Pet. iii. 15.

XV. The HOLINESS of GOD.

The HOLINESS of GOD consists in his impartial and invariable dislike of all moral impurity, or sinful disorder; with a complacency in the righteousness

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ousness and goodness of his own nature, and in every rational nature that has any resemblance to himself.

The HOLINESS of GOD is the most shining purity of the divine perfections; according to which, and with the most perfect reason, he always wills and operates in the natural and moral worlds of heaven, earth, and hell, towards men, devils, and angels.

GOD has a consciousness of the infinite dignity and beauty of his own nature and perfections; and this sense of his own worthy character fills him with the utmost zeal for his own glory.

HOLINESS is the very last attribute in GOD to which a converted sinner is reconciled. No carnal and unregenerate man loves GOD, as an holy GOD. His enmity is deep and strong: nothing but invincible grace can subdue and destroy it.

HOLINESS is the life and beauty of GOD. No perfection is so much celebrated by the holy angels as holiness. Thus the seraphim, i. e. the zealous angels and gospel preachers, repeat this glorious attribute, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, Isai. vi. 3. Thus the living creatures, i. e. christian preachers, in all ages, sound forth this most beautiful perfection of GOD. Holy, holy, holy LORD GOD almighty, which was, and is, and art to come, Rev. iv. 8. GOD himself manifests

manifests a singular love to this attribute: he singles it out to swear by above all others. Once have I sworn by my holiness, Ps. lxxxix. 35. Holiness is himself. I swear by myself, Jer. xxii. 5. Holiness is his soul. The LORD GOD hath sworn by his holiness, Amos iv. 2. The LORD GOD hath sworn by himself, (Heb.) his soul, Amos vi. 8. Pride is an abomination to his soul, i. e. his holiness, Prov. vi. 16. My soul loatheth them, i. e. my holiness, Zech. xi. 8. He sware by himself, Heb. vi. 18.---What an infinite evil must all sin be, seeing it is an abomination to the soul, i. e. the holiness of God!

HOLINESS appears in creation, especially in the creation of the soul of man. He was made with a purity of nature, inclinations, passions, and taste: his whole soul resembled the shining purity and beauty of God. Man was like his God, glorious in holiness: purity shone forth in his understanding, will, affections, and actions: in his whole deportment he was a beautiful representation of the holiness of God.

Man, when he was just come new into existence, out of the hands of his holy maker, had a soul shining with rays of divine light, and adorned with the brightest wisdom and holiness: had the eyes of his understanding fixed on the perfections of his God; from the consideration
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of which excellent perfections he gathered, by the easiest reasoning, what was beautiful and just, whatever was worthy of GOD and himself.

He had likewise the purest holiness of will, reposing in GOD as the supreme TRUTH; revering him as the most dread MAJESTY; loving him as the sole, the supreme GOOD; and purely for the sake of GOD, holding dear whatever his mind divinely instructed, pointed out, as grateful to GOD, and expressive of his perfections.

In fine, whatever contributed to a more intimate union with him---whatever tended to increase that sweet communion with GOD, which was now allowed him, he ardently pursued; panting after farther converse, and raising himself to this devotion, by the creatures, as so many scales or steps to GOD. And shewing forth the praises of his most unspotted holiness, as the pattern of his soul, to which he was, with the greatest care and exactitude, to conform in his temper and actions.

HOLINESS appears in providence, in preservation and government, in the punishment of the wicked in this life, and the rewards bestowed on the righteous.---This will be treated of at large in our Contemplations on Providence, in the third volume.

The HOLINESS of GOD appears brightest in REDEMPTION. Here GOD displays his holiness in a
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more vivid light than in heaven or hell, for four thousand years before the incarnation of Christ. Here God's hatred of sin shines with brighter terrors than in the regions of eternal punishment. Here his holiness appears to be valued above all the world of angels and the whole universe. And, farther still, his holiness appears for a time to be valued above the glorious Lord Jesus Christ himself! What an appearance full of wonder and terror is here!---And if it is possible yet to enlarge the thought, I would add, that holiness appears for a time to be valued above all the other attributes of God.

The holiness of God, shining out in our pardon, justification, adoption, regeneration, vital union with Christ, sanctification, final perseverance and glorification, will be distinctly considered in the following parts of this work.

USES of the HOLINESS of GOD.

I. How dreadful is the crime, and yet how frequent is the ABUSE and CONTEMPT of the HOLINESS of GOD!---by base and unworthy ideas, and vile misrepresentations of God---by charging our sin upon God's decrees and providence---by drawing arguments from the word of God for the commission of sin---and by extenuating the evil of sin when it is committed---by praying for aid and assistance when we have a bad end and design in view

view---scoffing at holiness in good men, and treating them with scorn and contempt on account of their religion and seriousness. The holiness of GOD is abused and contemned by all irreverent and unprepared addresses to him. To rush into his presence without thought or fear, is an affront as great as it would have been for the high priest to have swept the dung of the sacrifices into the Holy of Holies, and thrown it upon the golden mercy seat between the cherubims. All depending on our own righteousness for justification is an insult on the holiness of GOD: and when we charge and censure the divine law as too strict and rigid, we then condemn and disdain the holiness of GOD.

2. See how great is our fall from GOD. Man has totally lost the moral image of GOD. Wisdom and holiness have totally forsaken our nature. All true goodness, justice, and truth, are fled from the soul of man. We are as really destitute of the holiness of GOD, as the devils are. There is only this difference in our state: we are in a land of hope; they are eternally excluded from all expectation of mercy. All sin is opposite to the life and beauty of GOD. He can live no longer than his hatred of sin lives. Sin cannot escape due punishment, because GOD will never deny, or conceal, or despise his own holiness; which he must do if sin remains unpunished: for
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not to hate, and not to punish, are the same thing. Hence see the absolute necessity of a full and perfect SATISFACTION for sin by the death of Christ. And hence you must be convinced, that a sinner never can be justified by his own virtue and good works before an holy GOD.---By the works of the law no man living can be justified, Gal. ii. 16.

3. Here you see the necessity of the true and proper Godhead of Christ! He is stiled the Holy One of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, in the same verse, Isai. liv. 5. He is the holy, holy, holy LORD GOD of hosts, Isai. vi. 3. compared with John xii. 41; where that passage is applied directly to Christ.

4. Here you see that the christian religion is of divine origin and extraction. The Bible is an holy, holy, holy book. Its discoveries are all holy; the laws are holy; the threatenings are holy; the promises are holy; the doctrines are all holy; election is to holiness; redemption procures holiness; regeneration is in order to holiness; adoption promotes holiness; sanctification is the essence of holiness; perseverance preserves and secures an eternal honour and victory for holiness; holiness lives, and breathes, and sparkles in every part of divine revelation. Those infidels and sceptics, who represent the Scriptures as the invention of men, are the most contemptible

fools in the world. All wicked men hate the Bible, and abuse it; which they never would do, if it was the invention of bad men, and favoured lust and profaneness! Whenever you hear this witless sneer, that the Bible is the invention of artful men, treat it with that scorn and disdain which it eternally deserves.

5. As GOD is infinitely holy. Here you see, that he is the only being who is fully fit for the government of the whole creation. He cannot do wrong: he will do right in every thing. He will make every thing beautiful in his own time and manner, Ecc. iii. 11. He will do all things well, and appear at last, like himself, as a holy GOD.

6. COMFORT to all holy persons in the world. ---O! ye true christians, this attribute of holiness is yours for ever: 'tis all your own to eternity. It is fully included in those blessed words: I will be to you a GOD, Heb. viii. 10.---This lovely perfection renders him fit for our utmost confidence; for he never can fail or deceive us: his holiness is pledged to support us: he swears by this attribute, and he never will break his oath. GOD certainly values every holy soul above the whole world: he loves holiness; it is the delight of his soul; he will preserve it; he will increase it; he will finish it. He loves the work, and swears by his life and existence, that
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he will perfect the work in every holy soul, and bring it to honour in heaven.

7. Study to attain and preserve clear ideas, and a strong sense of the HOLINESS of GOD on your mind and heart. This will be exceedingly useful to us through life: it will promote genuine convictions of the impurity and deformity of our nature: it will make us humble in our greatest attainments in grace and holiness. We shall see that we are less than nothing, and vanity, when compared with the bright and burning holiness of GOD. It will increase our veneration for such a sublime and adorable character.---A sense of the holiness of GOD will arm us against all sorts of temptations: it will enflame us with a passionate desire to resemble the holiness of GOD, and to advance as fast as possible into a nearer conformity to his beauty of character.

8. Glorify the HOLINESS of GOD to the uttermost of your zeal and power. Make it the ground of your love to him, and delight in him. Observe his holiness with pleasure---trust his holiness to a full length---imitate his holiness with delight and eagerness---beg of GOD to refine, purify, and beautify your soul---labour to be greatly conformed to the holiness of GOD in his law, which is the written standard of beauty; and in his son, whose temper was a living law, and the eternal standard of perfection.

9. MOTIVES

9. MOTIVES and PERSUASIVES to holiness.---
 GOD commands us to imitate his holiness. Be ye holy, as I am holy. This is the noblest way to glorify GOD; and this is the supreme excellence and beauty of a creature, to be conformed to GOD. It is his life; it is our life; it fits us for GOD's presence in both worlds. And we can have no evidence of GOD's love without holiness: we can have no proof of our justification and adoption without it. Nor is there any comfort for a soul in life or death, for one moment, except we are made holy by the spirit of GOD.

10. MEANS to promote HOLINESS.---Contem-
 plate the holiness of GOD every day. Often plunge your soul into pleasing thoughts of it. Exert acts of love to GOD for his holiness. Make GOD your end in every action of life: and in every main action, review the holiness of it, in order to excite your shame and grief, or your gratitude and joy. If you have but weak holiness, GOD will cherish it. Labour to grow in holiness: behave in a holy manner in all your conduct. Seek holiness of GOD: love him most ardently for his holiness, and beg him to inspire your heart every moment with the highest delight in holiness, as the beauty and life of your soul. ---As GOD is glorious in holiness, let it be the object of our highest admiration and unbounded desire to be like GOD: and to have this as the
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utmost dignity of our christian character, that we are glorious, eternally glorious in holiness!

Read the great CHARNOCK's most astonishing discourse on Holiness. To him I am more indebted, under GOD, than to all the authors in the world. To this add ABERNETHY, on the Holiness of GOD, vol. 2. 8vo. and Dr. GILL, on Divine Holiness. Body of Divinity, vol. 1.

XVI. The JUSTICE of GOD.

The justice* of GOD is the ardent inclination of his will to prescribe equal laws, as the supreme governor; and to dispense equal rewards and punishments, as the supreme judge.

We may state the idea of divine JUSTICE in other words, thus: it is GOD's immutable regard to the rights of the divine nature, and the divine persons; and likewise to the rights of his people in heaven and earth, with a determined resolution to preserve those rights inviolate to eternity.

REASON and REVELATION furnish a thousand striking and beautiful demonstrations of the justice of GOD.---That he is just, and cannot be otherwise, appears from the infinite happiness of his

* Dr. Witfius gives a clear and judicious definition of divine justice.---*Justitia DEI significat rectitudinem illam, qua DEUS, secundum legem suam, infligit doloribus dignis, manifestat meritum peccati, et odium peccati, et quod se non deceat communionem habere cum peccatore, dissimulata violatione gloriæ suæ. Oecon. lib. ii. cap. viii. § xi.*

his nature. He is self-existent, and self-sufficient: he has the highest satisfaction and joy in his own being: he wants nothing: he has nothing to fear, and nothing to hope for: he cannot be awed by a superior power to do wrong: and such is the rectitude of his nature and will, that he has an ardent inclination to do right. The invariable rule and measure of his own operations in heaven, earth, and hell, shew him to be just. He never varies from justice in any instance of his conduct. The rational, just, and equal laws he has given to mankind, and which were originally written on the human heart, shew clearly the justice of God. And his adjusting the method and manner of duty, so as to make it the most agreeable, easy, and pleasant, shew his justice in a most amiable light. He has kindly adapted our duty to our noblest end and highest happiness, which renders a state of obedience the most lovely thing in the world to every man that knows his true interest. He urges us to remember God our creator in the days of our youth; which is the very best method to prevent abundance of sin, and to make religion easy and pleasant to the soul. He exhorts us to resist the first motions of sin, or impure and unlawful desires. Love to God, above all things, is enforced upon us as the noblest spring of duty and pleasure. All these shew the charming BEAUTY and loveliness of
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of the justice of God.---And a farther evidence of his justice appears in the invariable connexion he has established between good actions and rewards, and bad actions and punishments, amongst all mankind through the whole world: so that virtue ever will produce pleasure, and vice will always issue in pain and misery.

O! how amiable and how awful does the justice of God appear in this wise and equitable constitution of things through all ages and nations! How ought we to admire and love this thought, that God's justice, his laws, his rewards, and his punishments are always the same, every where the same, and will be the same to the end of time, and to all eternity! Let wilful and resolute sinners remember this, and tremble at the thought, that God's justice is so strict and inflexible, that he must either punish their sins, or destroy his own glory, unless they flee to Christ for life and salvation.---The keen sense of the wisest and best of men in all ages, their honest consent, and free and full acknowledgment of the justice of God's nature and conduct, is a powerful and convincing evidence of this great and glorious truth. And above all other men, the man Christ Jesus, who had a keener and stronger understanding than all men and angels, gives a mighty demonstration of the justice of God. Christ never disputed the equity of the

divine conduct, but approved of it at all times, and in all conditions, with his whole heart!--- Let Christ's assent and approbation of divine justice silence and suppress all our murmurs and censures of the conduct of God.---The happy issue of all God's darkest dispensations is a most glorious, striking, and lovely evidence of the justice and goodness of his heart. The very darkest providences, and the most dreadful distresses of the people of God, have always issued well in the final upshot of things. The most critical times of trial with individual christians, or the church of God, in general, have always had an happy consequence to display the perfections and grace of Christ, and the advancement of his people in holiness and joy.---This point is beautifully evinced by the judicious Mr. Halyburton, in his Sermon on Jehovah Jireh; by Mr. Fleming, on the Fulfilling of the Scriptures, 12mo. and folio; and by the Rev. Mr. Joseph Collet, of Oxfordshire, in his wise and excellent Treatise on Divine Providence, 8vo. a book I would warmly recommend to all my friends.

Another astonishing evidence of the justice of God consists in his denying an admittance of his dear people into eternal happiness, unless upon the credit of Christ's promise and oath, and a payment in the blood of the Son of God. This adorable procedure should fill us with the highest
veneration

reverence and astonishment, and should strike all our cavils and murmuring dumb and dead in the presence of God.

To all the above, let us add the highest instance in which justice appears; and that is the preferring the glory of the justice of God above the display of love to his own eternal son. This, for some time, was really the state of things. It appeared for a season as if God's affection for his own justice exceeded his value and esteem for his divine son: and Christ himself appeared to have a greater love for God's justice than he had for his own life, blood, soul, and character. He was willing to look like a criminal, or guilty malefactor, that God might not appear as a favourer of sin, and injure his just character to eternity. O! how has Christ restored and enlarged the lost prospects of God's justice to men and angels! We see more clearly the glory of divine justice in the death of Christ, than had ever been displayed in creation, in heaven, earth, and hell, for four thousand years before: and a greater display than will ever be made again in the day of judgment, and the final punishment of the wicked to eternity.

USES of the JUSTICE of GOD.

I. See the abominable nature of sin, and the inevitable ruin of impenitent sinners. If God is just, sin must be punished; otherwise God must

conceal his own character and deny his own nature. O! how awful a charge will justice draw up against the wilful and impenitent sinner, at the close of life, and at the tribunal of GOD! Sin will then appear to be an infinite evil, as it strikes at an object which is an infinite GOOD; and as it fixes a stain in the soul through an infinite duration.

2. How precious ought Christ to be to every true believer! O! how dear ought his person to be, who, as GOD-man, obeyed the law perfectly for us; and satisfied the justice of GOD, by the price of his blood, the sacrifice of his body, and the punishment of his soul, in our room and stead. Surely we ought to set the best affections on him, and despise ten thousand worlds when set in competition with him. We should daily covet a more intense union of soul with him---rejoice in every new discovery of his perfections---neglect no means or occasions of conversing with him---prize those parts of divine revelation, and those books and preachers most, which give us the brightest displays of his glory.

3. Let us imitate the JUSTICE of GOD. Let us cherish an ardent regard to the rights of GOD, and to the rights of mankind: and let us, with a determined attention, preserve those rights sacred and inviolate. Let us see a beauty in justice, and love it for its own sake as well as for its
beneficial

beneficial consequences. Let us be just to men's persons and properties; just to their actions and characters; just in our promises and contracts; just in our friendships and conversation; just in our expectations and demands on others; just to the imperfections of mankind; and just, by observing a due moderation even in our resentments.---See Dr. Watts, Dr. Evans, and Dr. Tillotson, on the Golden Rule, or Universal Rule of Equity.

4. Abhor all sin, as it strikes directly at the justice of God. To make light of sin is to make light of your own soul, to undervalue and despise the blood of Christ, and to make light of the holiness and justice of God. Sin aims to rob God of all his glory, and to destroy your soul for ever: therefore, none but the worst of fools will make a mock at sin.

5. Entertain no suspicions of a just God. Settle it down as an eternal axiom, that God cannot but do right. His ways and conduct are above our reason in many instances, but he cannot be unjust. The judge of all the earth will do right. Only wait God's time, and you shall see his justice shine out as bright as ten thousand suns, and you will confess that he hath done all things well. The least suspicion of divine justice is an infinite dishonour to the pure and perfect character of God.

XVII. The TRUTH and FAITHFULNESS of GOD.

The truth and faithfulness of GOD consists in the exact agreement of his words to his intentions; especially in respect to all the truths he has revealed, the laws he has prescribed, the promises he hath pledged, and the threatenings he has denounced.

Truth signifies the real nature of things: and, when applied to GOD, in the primary sense, it signifies that GOD is a real existence, true in his divine nature, real in all his perfections, and true in each divine person, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: and these divine persons have true, internal relations to each other in the infinite being of GOD.

GOD is essential, pure and perfect truth: he is the first and original truth, the prime fountain and pattern of all truth in the world.

This attribute of truth removes from the nature of GOD every thing imperfect and sinful: it removes all conception and imputation of any deceit, falsehood, disguises, duplicity, and artifice from the nature, mind, and conduct of GOD. Truth in GOD is eternal and immutable: he is one great, uniform character. And this attribute in GOD is so grand, awful, and lovely, that it is an eternal reason and motive to excite us to be lovers and searchers after truth, and to stimulate
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all lovers of truth greatly to speak of him, and celebrate and praise the God of truth every hour. ---Read the great John Balguy, on the Law of Truth, 8vo. and Dr. James Beattie, on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, 8vo. This book is highly valued by all learned and virtuous men!

God is true in all his internal acts and works within himself, and in all his thoughts and purposes: he is true in all his transactions with his Son and Spirit, concerning the works of creation and providence, and in a peculiar manner concerning the grandest of all God's works, that of the redemption of the church by the blood of the Lord Jesus.

SINCERITY of GOD

Is the ardent intention of his mind to speak the truth; the plain pure truth, without deceit or falsehood, with the fixed determination of his will to exert his perfections, agreeable to his promises and threatenings in divine revelation; together with his great attention to self-consistency of character, acting in all things in a manner worthy of a God.

The VERACITY of GOD is the conformity of his words to his intentions: and the FAITHFULNESS of GOD is the conformity of his actions to all his words of prophecy, promises, and threatenings.

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We have considered the fulfilment of prophecies in the former part of this volume---we have likewise seen the faithfulness of God in his promises and threatenings, in a short view of each. I must not enlarge on this charming theme now; but with joy and love I recommend the greatest book on this subject which I believe exists in the world, and that is the Faithfulness of God in Fulfilling the Scripture, by that EUCLID of the church of Christ, the great and good Robert Fleming.

USES of the TRUTH and FAITHFULNESS of GOD.

I. Truth and faithfulness is a powerful support and antidote against presumption and despair.

PRESUMPTION consists in daring to promise ourselves the end, happiness; without the use of the means, holiness. DESPAIR is a thought that the glory of God's perfections and our salvation are inconsistent with each other---that, if God be glorified, we must perish---or, if we are saved and happy, he must lose the glory of his attributes. Now the faithfulness of God assures us, that we are not required to be willing that we may perish, in order to promote the divine glory---or that God must lose his honour if we are saved. These two grand desires, that God may be glorious to the utmost, and we saved for ever, do act and re-act on each other, and mutually

mutually raise each other to the most intense ardour and exertion. The more we desire the glory of God to the utmost, the more we shall desire our own salvation; and the more we desire our own happiness, the more we ought to desire to see God infinitely and eternally glorified. We have no reason to despair of success, because like causes always produce like effects; and, naturally and morally, vital faith will produce the most divine success. Our best interest has the noblest security, and our best interest must flourish and grow to eternity.

2. Observe the faithfulness of God in the conformity of his providences to his promises.

Divine providence is the expositor and fulfiller of the promises and threatenings of God. This we have at large explained in a former part of this volume, p. 121--176.---I must only add here, that it is a delightful and improving work, to observe the faithfulness of providence to humble enquiring souls---to honest and generous christians---to diligent and active preachers of the gospel---to those christians who are long exercised with troubles and afflictions. These brave and hardy believers have a rich experience of the power, love, and faithfulness of God, enabling them to bear severe trials with a divine fortitude and a good grace. On the other hand, it is dreadful to observe how providence

fulfils the threatenings to the various classes of bad men in our world. O! how often God blasts and confounds the proud---how terribly does he punish, even in this life, the loathsome drunkard---the foul adulterer---the luxurious glutton---the unjust trader---the cruel OPPRESSOR---the vile swearer---the impudent sabbath-breaker---the bloody persecutor---the sly hypocrite---the narrow-minded sceptic---the wanton apostate---and the daring scoffer at God and good men---with the haughty infidel. O! how awful and how frequent are the instances of the faithfulness of providence in fulfilling the threatenings, in this life, to all kinds and degrees of sinners. Who so is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the justice, the bounty, and the faithfulness of God!

3. The sincerity and faithfulness of God is a sure ground for our unreserved confidence in his promises. We have all the reason in the world to take God at his word; to meet his sincere heart with a godly sincerity of soul, and to expect, with the utmost ardour, that, with the upright, God will shew himself upright.---See an excellent little book on this text, by the judicious Mr. Richard Steele, 12mo. 1670.

It is agreeable to God's nature to shew himself upright to the upright. Good and upright is the Lord. It is agreeable to his method of conduct,
in