

apprehensions of one, when God hath been pleased to cleanse the heart, to what there was before. Here now you may see the ground of the great ignorance that there is in the world. It is not because the things of God are so hard to be understood, and that because they have no means to understand them, but because of the filthiness of their hearts. No marvel though men and women live under means, and hear sermons, but yet have not known what Jesus Christ hath meant, seeing their hearts are so filthy and unclean. In 2 Tim. iii. 7, you find there the apostle speaks of women that 'were ever learning, and never were able to come to the knowledge of the truth.' And so it may be applied to men—to those that are laden with sin, and led away with divers lusts, 'They are ever learning, and never able to come to the know-

ledge of the truth.' Why do they not come to the knowledge of the truth? Why, because they are led away with lusts, and laden with sins. When men and women have uncleanness in their hearts, and are laden with corruptions in their spirits, why, no marvel though they never come to the knowledge of the truth; and therefore do not think your ignorance can excuse you to say, 'Why, I do according to my knowledge, and all men cannot attain to the like knowledge as other men. Alas! I am a poor creature, and am but weak, and not able to understand things so as others do. Oh, it is not for want of the strength of thy understanding so much, but the filthiness of thy heart; those filthy steams that arise from thy corrupt heart, they darken the light of the truth, that it cannot shine into the understanding.'

SERMON XXVI.

OR,

THE UNCLEANNESS OF HEART CAUSE OF ERROR.

'Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.'—MAT. v. 8.

THE reason why there are such errors among us about God and his ways, it comes from the uncleanness of men's hearts. And mark it, either such men as heretofore have been professors of religion and fall off, and grow drossy and sensual and carnal, and give way to their lusts, they fall to strange opinions; or otherwise young ones, that have had very profane and unclean hearts, and as soon as ever their consciences begin to stir in them, why, they will make a kind of profession of religion, but their hearts never emptied of their lusts, never humbled for their sins; yea, and the devil hath got a way now to keep men from that, to tell them it is but mere legal, and it will rather hinder them from Jesus Christ than further them, and so they fall upon profession of religion, and never know any work of humiliation, so that their hearts are as unclean as ever they were. And no marvel though these men have such misshapen thoughts of God and Christ, and the covenant of grace, and the things of eternal life; their hearts were never cleansed. Yet I say, mark it, your erroneous men that fall to so many vile and damnable errors, they are of one of those two sorts, either men that have been forward professors, and beginning to be carnal and sensual

and vain; or otherwise young ones that take upon them the profession of religion, yet never knew what the sight of sin meant. These see not God; their hearts are so foul and vile, they cannot see God as God, nor the things of God in the true beauty and excellency of them. I will give you a scripture or two to shew you how errors do follow from the lusts of men's hearts, rather than from the mistakes of the head: 2 Tim. iii. 5, 8—that is, for those that are but formal professors of religion, they come to fall—'Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,' saith the text. But what are they? 'As Jaanes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.' Men before described to have the form of godliness, but denying the power, that have made some profession of religion, and denied the power; saith the apostle, turn away from them; there is no meddling with such men. Then he tells what kind of dispositions they are of: they are those that resist the truth—men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith. And so others that are drawn aside by their own lusts: 2 Peter ii. 18, speaking of false teachers, 'For when they speak

great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from those who live in error.' It is a very remarkable scripture, and much concerning our times; and saith he in ver. 19, 'While they promise them liberty, they themselves are servants of corruption.' False teachers, that speak great swelling words, you shall have them have no religion but words, to amuse people withal, that people do not understand; and people think that there are great matters in those great words which they have, but they are but a bladder swelled up with wind; do but prick them, do but examine them, and there is nothing in them—they are swelling words of vanity. You may have some cause of suspecting when you hear them preaching, or otherwise a great hanc-basted words, as I may so speak—words that seem to have great things in them, and yet when they come to be examined, are but mere vanity and emptiness. And 'they allure through the lusts of the flesh.' There is more strength in the suitableness of what they speak to men's lusts, than there is of the evidence of truth in what they say. They allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness: 'those that were clean escaped'; the word is 'really escaped.' So it is apparently spoken of men that are drawn aside into errors. 'While they promise them liberty,' they tell them much of liberty, that they shall be delivered from such and such bondages, and no more be kept in a legal way of bondage: 'They promise them liberty, but are themselves the servants of corruption.' Oh, hence the many errors of our times do prevail from the uncleanness of the hearts of men, and from thence comes apostasy from the truth. The best way, then, to keep ourselves from the errors of the times, it is to keep our hearts clean. Purge your hearts, walk before God in uprightness, and the Spirit of God shall guide you then into all truth; and when you are required to know God or his mind in anything, oh make it a great part of your work to cleanse your hearts first, for otherwise you will mistake, when you are about asking of counsel, what the mind of God is! Oh I would fain know what the mind of God is! Be sure you come with a clean heart to know it, or otherwise I say it is a hundred to one but you miscarry. How many are there that seem to desire to know the mind of God, and yet in the

First place, it is not through any willingness, but they cannot tell how to help it, they must inquire. And then,

Secondly, When they do inquire, they are loath that such things should be true; they are loath that the mind of God should go such a way that is against them. And oh they would fain have the mind of God come to them, rather than to have their hearts

come to the mind of God. Here is uncleanness of the heart in these two. And,

Thirdly, When they are inquiring concerning the mind of God there is a principle in their spirits that doth turn their hearts, and sets them strongly another way. And hence it is so hard to convince men of the mind of God, if it be that that is against the bias of their hearts. And then,

Fourthly, They are unwilling upon that to examine thoroughly anything that is presented to them. When a thing is presented to them that they are afraid will make against them, they will turn away their thoughts from it, and are loath to examine it, and are very desirous to have anything they can to object against it—and all this through the uncleanness of their hearts. Now it is just with God that these should not be blessed; that they should never see God, that they should never see his ways. Oh, take heed of this! Come with plain, naked hearts. Whatsoever my thoughts have been, whatsoever my justification is, whatsoever would be suitable to my ends, let God reveal his truth; and here I am ready to yield to it with a pure and plain heart. But when God sees men have cunning hearts and devices, and propounding their ends, and they will have this and the other thing wrapped in it, I say it is just with God that they should never see God in any way of his, but that they should be blinded. The way to know the mind of God, it is to cleanse your hearts. Many there are that will say, Well, I desire to know what is God's mind. Did I but know what were the mind of God in such a business, God knows I would do it; and the Lord knows I would not do anything that were apparent against God's mind. Well, now, do you find that in your hearts that you can freely yield up your own ends, and counsels, and ways, whatsoever your hearts have been set upon before? And shall any evidence of truth be entertained, though it be never so much cross to your own minds and thoughts? Then it is like you shall know God's mind; but if you say that you would fain know the mind of God, and yet have a corrupt heart, which is so much opposite to God, the mind of God, never expect to know it. But that is the clean heart that yields to it, though never so contrary to what it had in its heart before. Ay, 'Blessed are these, for they shall see God.' That is the next note.

Observe, That the sight of God depends not upon the sight of men's natural understanding, but upon their cleanness of heart.

Poor Christians think, oh, how shall I be able to know God!—to know the mysteries of God that are revealed in his word; I cannot tell, how to reach unto them. Be of good comfort if thy heart be clean. Keep but a clean heart from vile lusts, entertain no lusts within thy heart, and this is a promise made to

thee, 'That thou shalt see God.' The sight of God depends not upon man's natural understanding, but depends upon the cleanness of the heart. When the great Rabbis of the world shall be blinded, when they shall never see God savingly, God shall reveal himself to thy soul, having a clean and pure heart; for the sight of God depends upon the revelation by Jesus Christ, the great prophet of his church, and he can instruct one of weak parts as easily as one of the strongest parts of all; and God delights to make himself known to such. When one hath a clean and pure heart, and desires to know truth, what God is, and what his truth is, when he is ready to embrace it, and yield up himself to every truth, and will entertain whatsoever God reveals of himself or his ways—oh, the Lord takes delight and pleasure to make himself known to such a one. But the main point that we come now upon—'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,'—is this:

The sight of God is man's blessedness. That is our point.

By the sight of God, in the opening we shewed you, it was meant the understanding both God and his counsels, and ways and will; and those things concern our enjoyment of him. The sight of God, I say, is man's blessedness. I have read of a philosopher, Eudoxius, that was so desirous to have a full sight of the sun, that he professed if he might but come near it any little time, and be but enabled to look upon it, to see the nature of it, and the motion of it, he would be willing to be burnt by it presently.* He thought there was so much excellency in the knowledge of that one creature. Oh what excellency is there in the knowledge of God himself, in the sight of God! It was a speech of Philip unto Christ, in John xiv. 8, 'Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us,' saith Philip. Do but shew us the Father, let us see God, and it sufficeth us, we have enough, whatsoever becomes of us; oh, may we but see the Father, it is enough. And the great desire that Moses had in Exod. xxxiii. 1, 18: he said, 'I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.' Let me but see thee, and it is enough for me. Oh the sight of God, it is a blessed thing! The sight of the infinite and glorious first-being of all things—that is, the fountain of all good—oh, how blessed is it! Men love to see such as have been great instruments of good. Oh what flocking would there be to see them! As in former times, when we heard that great things were done by such a man as Alexander—if such a man were alive, who would not but press hard to see him; and of late such a one as the king of Swethland; and now Sir Thomas Fairfax, or those men that God hath made public instruments of good, every one would see such a man. Oh then to be ad-

mitted to the sight of the first-being of all things, that hath been the cause of all the good that ever hath been, or shall be—to have the sight of that principal, it must needs be an infinite blessedness. If a man had never seen his father or mother, but had lived in another country since his birth to his man's estate, oh, what a desire would he have to see the woman out of whose bowels he came, and father from whose loins he came. But oh the blessed sight of God, who is the first-being of all things, our Creator! This is that that only the rational creature is capable of. The reasonable creature is not satisfied, as the sensitive creature is, merely to have a sight of that that pleases the sense for the present; but the rational creature inquires presently at the cause of its being. Here is such an excellency; from whence is it? What is the cause of it? And when he sees that, then he inquires after the cause of that, and then the cause of that; and if he understands that, why then he would know the cause of that; and so he gets up a link higher. Such is the nature of the understanding of a rational creature, to look from the effect to the cause, and then that other's cause; and so higher and higher, and never leaves till it comes to the supreme cause, the highest cause of all things: now 'they shall see God.' This is man's blessedness.

They shall see God, and shall see his counsels and will—all those counsels of God that do concern their eternal enjoyment of himself. That is the meaning: shall see God, and know his mind; and they shall see God as their God. That must be taken into these three things:

First, See God, the first-being of all things.

Secondly, Know the mind and the very heart of God; his will concerning them and their eternal estate.

Thirdly, They shall see God as their God, as having an interest in God, in all that good and excellency and glory they see in God; they shall see it as theirs, as having a propriety in it. There is a great deal of difference between a queen's looking upon the king sitting upon his throne, and a stranger's; a stranger comes and sees the king with his crown upon his head, his sceptre in his hand, upon his throne, with all the nobles about him; and it is a glorious sight for a stranger to see. But now if the queen, or the king's eldest son, should look upon her husband, and he upon his father, as he sits upon the throne with all his glory about him; the queen she looks upon all this glory as her glory, it all reflects upon me, I have an interest in all this glory; and so the prince looks upon all this glory as his glory, as his inheritance; this is my father that is in this glory. Why, so the promise must be understood, 'They shall see God,' they shall see the excellency, and glory, and majesty, and greatness of God—that is, the first-being

* Plat. Mor. v. 90.

of all beings, and the cause of all things—and know his mind and heart; and then thy shall see all this as their good. Here is my excellency and my glory, my happiness it is in this God that I now behold. This is the promise, 'They shall see God.'

Now God reveals himself and fulfils this promise many ways. By an immediate revelation of himself to the soul; for the soul of man it is capable of an immediate joining with God.

You will say, God's being and essence is infinite, and man's soul is but finite. Ay, but yet there may be an immediate conjunction between an infinite and a finite thing. As now, the soul of Jesus Christ, that was God-man, why, his soul was but a finite thing, a creature; and yet what a conjunction had the soul of Christ with the divine nature; for there was a hypostatical union between both soul and body of Christ and the divine nature. Therefore now the finiteness of the soul of man doth not hinder an immediate touch, as I may so speak, with the infinite being of God himself, and it is capable of a more immediate revelation of God himself than we are able to express or conceive; but that shall be most hereafter, the immediate revelation of God. Only for the present there is somewhat of that glory that there shall be in heaven—it is begun here in the world; as now, the union with God, or the communion with God that shall be in heaven, there is some degree of it here in this world. And so the beatifical vision of God, the very touch and close of the soul with the essence of God that shall be in heaven, there is some degree of it even here in this world, in the sight of God, but we are not able to express it. As the eye of a man, though it sees other things, yet it cannot see itself; so the soul of a man, though it act upon God, yet it cannot tell the way of its acting. They cannot tell how they see God; but this they know, that they see God other ways than ever they did. As that poor man said, 'This I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see; so many poor Christians that are mean, and women of weaker parts, and others that are of stronger parts, why, before this purity of heart now, if you asked them what God was, they would say, God was a spirit, and he must be worshipped in spirit and truth. They would tell you God was eternal, and God was almighty, and God was the creator of heaven and earth, and God was infinitely wise and infinitely holy; and many that had good strong parts, they could discourse of the attributes of God. But yet, when their hearts come to be cleansed, and God revealing himself unto them, if you should ask them, What do you know of God now more than you have done? they are not able to express, only this. We can say, We were blind, but now we see—we do see God in another manner than ever we have done.

And besides this more immediate revelation of God

to the soul, one that is pure in heart sees God in his works, in the beholding of the great works of God in the glass of the creature, in the heavens and earth and seas; it beholds God in another way than ever it did before. Oh, the glory of God that appears, when it looks upon the rising of the sun, and the moon and stars, and the vastness of the seas, and the body of the earth! Perhaps such days as these, after sermon is done, many of you will be walking up and down the fields; but what do you see? Why, you see the green grass, and other men walking up and down, and you see trees; but what of God do you see here? Now, if you did walk merely to contemplate of God appearing in his works, then it were another matter. A spiritual heart, when it looks upon the works of God, it gets through the work presently to God; it looks up to heaven, and sees the God of heaven, and the God of the earth and plants. And this is my God; and the glory of God that appears in all the creatures, it is the glory of my God. Indeed, when he goes abroad he may see more land than his own; ay, but I cannot see more land than is my Father's.

And though God shines much in his works, yet he appears more clearly in his word. And it is a good argument of one that is spiritual, that can see more of the glory of God in the word than in all the great works that ever were done in the world. If the Lord should carry a man or woman over all the world, and shew them all the countries in the world; yea, carry them up to heaven, and shew them the sun, moon, and stars, and enable them to understand all the motions of them, and shew them the seas, and be able to understand the motion of the seas, the ebbings and the flowings, and all the vastness of that creature; and so if he were able to understand all the nature of the plants, as Solomon did, and the mysteries of all arts and sciences; yet when he hath done all, coming to read the word, he shall say, 'Well, I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy word is exceeding broad,' Ps. cxix. 36; I see more in thy word than I do in all the book of nature. A few lines of thy word doth discover more unto me than all the book of nature besides. Ay, this were a good argument of purity of heart. A pure heart goes and reads in the word, and doth not read it as other books, but sees the wisdom of God there, the purity of God there, the authority of God there; the word is not a sealed book to such a soul, but it is open to it. And then it sees God in all his ordinances; they are the glasses by which he sees God. Likewise the ministry of the word and sacraments, and all other ordinances; God comes into the soul, and the soul finds those but as glasses to represent God unto it. And it sees God again in the saints; in the saints there is the image of God. There is the picture of God in the creature; but in the saints there is the lively image of God, as the image of the father is in

the child. The men of the world, they see little of God in the saints; but now, when their eyes come to be opened, and their hearts purified, they cannot look upon any godly men or women but they see much of the glory of God in them; and it is this that makes them so love the communion of the saints, because so much of God appears in them. Yea, and they see God in their own spirits more than ever before. There was nothing but darkness in their own spirits before; but now, being sanctified, there is the presence of God within them—they see God within them in their own hearts. But above all that that is here in this world, they see God in the face of Jesus Christ; there they see the glory of God, those that are of pure hearts or spirits. In Heb. i. Christ is said 'to be the character and engraven form of the image of God, the brightness of his glory.' You have not such an expression of all the angels in heaven nor men in the world. It is true, man was made according to the image of God; ay, but Christ is said to be the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of his person, the express image of the person of God, and therefore Christ saith that no man can know the Father, but they must do it by him: John xiv. 6, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me. If you had known me, you should have known the Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.' There is no knowledge of the Father but it is by Jesus Christ, by the understanding of Jesus Christ: 'No man knows the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him,' Col. ii. 3. 'In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge:' and ver. 9, 'For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' A very strange expression; it would not have beseeemed the mouth of any man, no, nor beseeemed any angel, to have had such an expression as this. 'In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;' it is in Christ; the glory of God appears in Christ. If we may make a comparison of low things with high: as now, you cannot look upon the sun in its glory, as in the firmament, but when the sun shines upon the water, there you may see the lustre of the sun. So take God as in himself considered, as infinite creator of all things. As we are here in this world, our eyes do dazzle to behold God's essence; we cannot behold it, or not able to express it at least: but in Jesus Christ we come nearest to the beholding of God; in Jesus Christ as God-man, there we may come to behold very much of the glory, yea, of the face of God; and therefore you find that in the gospel we are said to behold God with open face: 2 Cor. xiii. 18, 'But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord.' He speaks of it in way of distinction from the law; we could understand but little of God then. And then, indeed, in the Old Testament we find such an expression as this,

'No man can see God and live.' But here, in the New Testament, you find such an expression, that 'we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord.' With open face; not needing a veil, as Moses had, but with open face we behold the glory of God; but it is as in a glass. The word is one glass, the ordinances are another glass, and then the creatures, which is the thickest glass. There is the word, the ordinances, the saints, our own spirits, but the bright glass of all is Jesus Christ. And therefore in 2 Cor. iv. 6, it is said, 'That God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness. All the knowledge of God that man hath before his conversion, it is but as darkness; and God, when he comes to shew himself to the soul, he doth as great a work as when he made the world—he did then command light to shine out of darkness. And what is the fruits of it? Hath shined in our hearts; not only in our heads, but hearts, and it shines there to give light, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. Mark these gradations: he hath shined in our hearts to give the knowledge of God; to give the light of the knowledge of God; to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God; and all this in the face of Jesus Christ. Oh the blessedness of the pure in heart, that comes to see God in the face of Jesus Christ! This is a mystery that none can understand, like the white stone, Rev. ii. 17, but those that have it; those that do see God in Christ, they know what it is to see God in Christ, and they would not for ten thousand worlds lose any one sight that they have of God in the face of Jesus Christ; but it is impossible for them to express it to others. Oh blessed are they that do thus see God! It is a good thing to see the light, saith Solomon. Suppose that God had made us that we had had but four senses, only the hearing and smelling, the feeling and tasting, and had left out the sense of sight. Now I say, if this had been that God had made only four senses, and afterwards, in our days, had been pleased to add to the beauty and excellency of man's nature a fifth sense—that is, sight—oh what a glorious thing would it have been to us! As now, a man that had lived in a dungeon all the days of his life and never had seen light, if this man, after he is grown up in years, should be let out of this dungeon and come to see this glorious sun, what a glorious thing would it be to such a one! Or further, the beast, who have only the sight of the light, if God should add unto them understanding, to be able to conceive of things, why, what a glorious change would there be there! But now, when God gives us a spiritual sight of himself, there is as great a change, and that is abundantly more glorious, and more blessed it would

be than the adding of seeing to a man that never had such a sense, or the adding of reason to the beasts. It is a blessed thing to see God, and that we find in Scripture set out to us many ways.

As, first, It is made to be the fruit of the covenant of grace, howsoever men may think light of it that do not know it. As the beasts that know not what reason is, they are not troubled for the want of it; and if we had not known what the sense of sight meant, we should not have been troubled for the want of it: so the world is not troubled for the want of the sight of God, because they know no more what it means than the beast knows reason, or a man that had had the four senses could have known what a fifth had meant. But the Scripture makes it to be a fruit of the covenant of grace. In Jeremiah, mark how the Lord expresses himself, chap. xxxi. 34, 'They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more.' It is a fruit both of the covenant of grace and of the pardon of sin, that is the special mercy in the covenant. The reason why there are so many of you that know not God, it is because your iniquities are not forgiven; but God remembers your sin. You are not in covenant with God. When God brings you into covenant with himself, and forgives your sin, he makes you to know himself.

Secondly, For God to reveal himself; it is a great fruit of love, of the love of God to the soul, for God to manifest himself to it: in John xiv. 21, 'He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him.' How will that be manifested? 'and will manifest myself to him.' Christ's manifesting himself to the soul is a fruit of his love, and of his Father's love. Yea,

Thirdly, It is the blessedness of the glorious church. When the Lord shall raise his church to the greatest height of glory, one of the special blessednesses that shall be then, shall be the sight of God: in Rev. xxii. 4, 'And they shall see his face.' There were many things named to set forth the excellency and glory of the state of the church, but this is the special, 'And they shall see his face.' The truth is, in comparison of what shall be hereafter, we see little or nothing at all; we see the back parts of God. But there is a time for the church to enjoy so much of God, and it is spoken of a time in this world; for the chapter before shews that it is a time when the kings of the earth shall bring their glory to the church, they shall not bring it to heaven, and they shall see the face of God.

Fourthly, The sight of God here is the beginning

of life, yea, the beginning of eternal life. 'This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent into the world,' John xvii. 3. Men do not live till they come to know God. Men in the world are dead carcases; but when they come to know God, they come to live, yea, they begin to live the life of eternity. Oh blessed are they!

Fifthly, It is the glory of heaven for the saints to see God: I John iii. 2, 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is,' saith the text. Now, the seeing him as he is, we speak not to for the present. I only mention this text now to shew that it is a very blessed thing to see God; for it is that whereby the blessedness of the saints in heaven is expressed by the Holy Ghost. 'We shall be like him.' Why? How? 'We shall see him as he is.' That will be the happiness we shall have when we come to heaven, that we shall see God.

Sixthly, It is the happiness of the angels. Not only the saints, but the angels, have not a higher happiness in heaven than the sight of the face of God; and therefore, in Mat. xviii. 10, where we read of a description of the happiness of the angels—the words are, 'In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.' Christ here doth forewarn men of taking heed of offending the little ones; for their angels do always behold his Father's face.

Seventhly, Yea, shall I say further, it is the happiness, as I may so speak, even of Christ himself, to see the Father: that you have in John x. 15, 'As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father,' saith Christ. Christ would set forth his excellency here. 'Why,' saith he, 'the Father knows me, and I know the Father.' It is that that Jesus Christ doth glory in himself, that he knows the Father. Now he promises this happiness to the pure in heart, that they likewise shall see God.

But wherein doth it appear to be such a happy thing? It appears many ways. I will name one or two now.

First, Oh it is a blessed thing to see God! It is the perfection of man's understanding. God hath given to man an understanding of such large capacity that it is able to be conversant with everything that is true, that is, truth in general; and therefore nothing can perfect the understanding till it come to have that that is the principal truth discovered to it.

Secondly, And an infinite satisfaction it is to the understanding; they two must needs go together; for in the perfection of a thing there must needs be the satisfaction and rest of it. Suppose all the beautiful things that ever were in the world were put into one object, that would be a beautiful thing to behold. Why, now all beauty, all excellency, all glory in all

creatures are all in God. And in the sight of God the soul sees all things that are excellent, and therefore must needs be a kind of infinite satisfaction. Saith David, in Ps. xvii. 15, 'As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.' It is a psalm that David made, it is very like, when he was driven from Saul's court. Now, as if he should have said, Well, I cannot behold the face of the king; he hath hard thoughts of me. Ay, but as for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness, and I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. There is an infinite satisfaction to the mind of man. Many of you seek to satisfy yourselves in base and brutish lusts. If you can be fine and gay, and eat and drink, and be unclean and filthy, there is your satisfaction. Oh the difference between the satisfaction of a soul in the sight of an infinite God, and the satisfaction of a soul in a base, brutish lust! Blessed are they that do see God, they shall be satisfied. In Ps. xxxiv. likewise, saith the psalmist there, speaking but of the sight of God, even in his house, 'How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.' Why so? 'For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.' Hence comes the satisfaction, hence comes the rivers of pleasure, hence is the fountain of all good unto them. 'For in thy light shall we see light.' They come to see God by God, as a man comes to see the sun by the light of the sun. The sun sends his beams upon the world, and by those beams of light that the sun sends down upon our eyes we come to see the sun itself. So in thy light shall we see light. The light of God shall shine upon the souls of the saints that are pure in heart, and so they shall come to see that God which is the fountain of all life. And oh the drawing of the soul to God then.

Thirdly, It is made in Scripture the very spring of all grace in the soul, being made partaker of the divine nature, and of the transforming of the soul into the very image of God: 2 Pet. i. 2, 'Grace and peace be multiplied unto you.' How? 'Through the

knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.' All grace and peace it comes through the knowledge of God, and Jesus our Lord; 'According,' saith he, 'as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness.' How? 'Through the knowledge of him that hath called us.' Oh, the knowledge of God is a fountain of good indeed unto the soul! 'Whereby,' saith he, '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;' and all this still 'through the knowledge of God.' 'Whereby,' saith he—that is, by the knowledge of God 'we come to be partakers of the divine nature.' And that fore-named place in 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'We beholding as in a glass, with open face, the glory of the Lord.' What follows? 'We are changed into the same image, from glory to glory.' The sight of God doth change the soul into the very nature of God, so far as can be. What is it that makes the saints in heaven to be so like God? it is by the sight of him; saith the Holy Ghost there, 'We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' So that the sight of God in heaven as he is, doth transform the souls of the saints, so as they come to be like God. They have the image of God perfectly in them—they see God perfectly; and according to the measure that any soul doth see God in this world, so they come to be transformed into the image of God. Oh blessed are they that see God then, for by the sight of him they come to be transformed into the likeness of him. Is it not a blessed thing for the creature to be raised to that excellency, as to be made like to God himself? This comes through the knowledge of God. Oh that men would be but in love with this sight of God; thereby they would come to know that there is another kind of excellency for mankind than to wallow in the lusts of the flesh. Alas! poor creature, while thou art satisfying thy flesh, what dost thou see? Thou seest thy money, or thy cups, or full dishes. Oh, what is this sight to the sight of God! thou hast an impure and unclean heart, and therefore thinkest there is nothing better than the beholding of these things. 'But blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.'