

may form their notions into better order than the serious godly man. These are useful in the church, as a dead post may support a living tree, or as negroes and slaves dig in the mines to bring up gold to others. But alas! with all their learning they may be thrust into hell: 'They received not the love of the truth, whereby they might be saved.'

[3.] There is a higher degree of speculative knowledge beyond this, and that is, when men have some kind of touch upon their hearts, but it is too slender and insufficient to break their lusts or to stand out against temptations.

Use. Well, then, let us seek after this saving knowledge, to see and know Christ as we ought to know and see him, with a renewing, transforming knowledge: Eph. iii. 10, 'And that ye put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.' It is but hearsay knowledge. Think every notion lost that doth not invite your minds to the saving knowledge of Christ, and secure your practice against error and temptations; therefore beg the Spirit; he teacheth us to know things so as to have them impressed upon our hearts: Eph. iv. 21, 22, 'If so be ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.'

SERMON XI.

Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.—1 JOHN iii. 7.

THE apostle had hitherto reasoned against the committing of sin; he now persuadeth them to the contrary, the practice of holiness. As there is a positive part in religion as well as a privative, so a bare abstinence from sin is not enough, but we must also exercise ourselves unto godliness, or walk in newness of life: 'Little children, let no man deceive you,' &c.

In the whole verse observe these things—

1. A caution against error.
2. A description of a righteous man. First, He is described by his own practice; secondly, By his conformity to Christ: 'Even as he is righteous.'

Let me open these branches.

1. The caution against error, 'Little children, let no man deceive you;' this is premised, because such mistakes are suited to the corrupt heart of man: we may be deceived ourselves, or suffer ourselves to be deceived by others.

[1.] That we may not deceive ourselves; frequent warnings are given against this deceit: 1 Cor. vi. 9, 'Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor

drunkards, shall inherit the kingdom of God ;' 1 Cor. xv. 33, 'Be not deceived ; evil communication corrupts good manners : awake to righteousness and sin not.' So Gal. vi. 7, 'Be not deceived, God is not mocked ; for what a man soweth, that shall he reap.' Once more, Eph. v. 6, 'Let no man deceive you with vain words ; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.'

[2.] Not deceived by others. There were false teachers in the apostle's days, that said a man might be righteous and yet live in sin. Simon Magus taught that bare profession of faith, without a strict life, was enough to salvation, which poison was also sucked up by others, the Basilides and the Gnostics.

2. The description of a righteous man ; he is described—(1.) By his ordinary practice ; (2.) By his conformity to Christ.

First, By his ordinary practice : 'He that doeth righteousness is righteous.' In which proposition there is—

1. The subject, 'He that doeth righteousness.' This needeth to be explained, because many boasted that they were righteous who yet did not live righteously.

Here I shall inquire—(1.) What is righteousness ; (2.) What it is to do righteousness.

[1.] What is righteousness ? Righteousness is sometimes taken strictly for that grace which inclineth us to perform our duty to man, with all the acts and duties thereunto belonging. So Eph. iv. 24, 'The new man is created after God in righteousness and true holiness ;' where righteousness referreth to man, holiness to God : Luke i. 75, 'In holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life ;' where there is the same reference. So 1 Tim. vi. 11, 'Follow after righteousness, godliness.' Which words comprise the duties of the first and second table. Sometimes more largely for all newness of life, or all those holy actions which are required of a christian. So Mat. iii. 15, 'It behoveth me to fulfil all righteousness ;' that is, whatsoever is required by the law or commanded by God. In this large sense it is taken here.

[2.] What it is to do righteousness. It is to love righteousness, or to carry on a constant tenor of all holy and righteous actions ; for to do righteousness is opposed to committing sin ; therefore it supposeth us to lead a godly and righteous life, or that we exercise ourselves unto and be fruitful in all good works.

2. For the predicate, 'Is righteous.' Here we must inquire in what notion the term 'righteousness' is used ; for a man may be said to be righteous in a twofold respect—either with respect to sanctification or justification. In the first sense it is taken morally for an upright disposition of heart and mind ; in the second sense, legally and judicially, for a state of acceptance, or the ground of a plea before the tribunal of God.

[1.] The righteousness of sanctification, 'He is righteous ;' that is, a holy and upright man : 1 Peter iii. 12, 'The eyes of the Lord are towards the righteous ;' 1 Peter iv. 18, 'If the righteous be scarcely saved ;' 2 Peter ii. 7, 8, 'He delivered righteous Lot ;' and again, 'that righteous man vexed his righteous soul.'

[2.] Righteousness is taken for a forensical or court righteousness, as it belongeth to justification: Rom. v. 19, 'As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be made righteous;' that is, deemed as such, counted as such, rewarded as such. Now the question is, which of these senses is to be chosen here. For the first, the case is clear, that a holy and upright man is known by his holy and righteous ways and actions, or he showeth the truth of his regeneration by his godly life, 1 John ii. 29. In the close of the former chapter, which is the beginning of this whole discourse, the apostle said, 'If ye know that he is righteous; every man that doeth righteousness is born of him.' But for the second sense, as the term 'righteous' respecteth justification, I cannot see why it should be excluded; for the sanctified are also justified; and what a respect and subordination there is of the moral righteousness to the judicial, we shall see by and by. Certainly these are deemed by God, accepted by God, rewarded by God as righteous. Mark but these two scriptures, Luke i. 6, where it is said of Zachary and Elizabeth, that 'they were both righteous before God, walking in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless.' Mark, that they having their conversations without blame, they were righteous, and righteous before God. So Acts x. 35, 'He that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.' There the righteousness is one ground of acceptation with God.

Secondly, By his conformity to Christ, 'As he was righteous.' He was righteous in his nature and practice, for he obeyed God perfectly, and ever did the things that pleased God: Heb. i. 9, 'Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; and therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.' Christ's doing righteousness is said to be righteous. Now when christians do so, they resemble Christ, and are like him, though not equal with him; so are the children of God, who are adopted into his family, which is the thing the context laboureth to prove.

Doct. That he, and he only, who doeth righteousness, is the christian righteous man, and as such is accepted by God.

I shall prove it by the two former acceptations of righteousness.

I. In the way of sanctification, he, and he only, is the upright gospel christian that doeth righteousness.

1. Because this is the great end wherefore God changeth his heart, and infuseth grace into him; not barely that he may have it, but use it, and live by it; it is a talent, the choicest talent wherewith the sons of men are intrusted: Gal. v. 25, 'If ye live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit.' Surely where there is life there must be actions suitable; and if there be a spiritual life, there must be a spiritual walking: this gift is not given in vain. When Christ speaketh of giving the Spirit, John iv. 14, he saith, that 'the water that I shall give him shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life;' and John vii. 38, 'Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.' The Spirit is given in order to action. A christian is not to keep his graces to himself, to fold up his talent in a napkin; this water is a living spring, always springing up; this conduit is so filled that it must burst or flow forth; and the grace that is in his heart is always

to be in act and exercise. The apostle telleth us, Rom. vi. 4, that we are raised up with Christ by the mighty power of God, that we should walk in newness of life; not to lie idle and still, but to walk, and to walk as becometh those who have a new and holy nature.

2. Grace is of such an operative and vigorous nature, that where it is really planted and rooted, it cannot be idle in the soul, but will be breaking out into action; as sin is not a sluggish idle quality, but always working and warring: 'Sin wrought in me all manner of concupiscence,' saith the apostle; 'And I see a law in my members, warring against a law in my mind,' Rom. vii. 23. The habit of sin, though it be not *peccatum actuale*, yet it is *actuosum*. So grace puts forth suitable operations: 2 Peter i. 8, 'If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall not be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Where graces are in any good degree of life and strength, there a christian cannot be lazy, but his conversation will be fruitful. Grace will not let a man alone; he shall have no rest and quiet within himself unless he both busy and employ himself for God. Faith will show itself in an open and free profession of Christ, both in word and deed: 2 Cor. iv. 12, 'We having the same spirit of faith, believe, and therefore speak.' A spirit of faith cannot be suppressed, neither can the work of faith, 1 Thes. i. 3. Hope is a lively hope, 1 Peter i. 3; and love hath a constringing force and efficacy, 2 Cor. v. 14. Men cannot hide their love, no more than fire can be hidden. Graces suffer a kind of imperfection till they produce their consummate act: 1 John ii. 5, 'But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.' Well, then, a christian is not to be valued by dead and useless habits, but operative graces. In vain do men persuade themselves that they have righteousness buried and sown in their hearts, when unrighteousness wholly possesseth their hands, minds, eyes, and floweth forth into their actions.

3. We have no way to distinguish ourselves from hypocrites but by performing actions which become real converts. When John suspected the scribes and pharisees, on their submitting to his baptism, he presseth them to evidence their sincerity by a suitable conversation: Mat. iii. 8, 'Bring forth fruits meet for repentance;' and the apostle persuadeth the gentiles to repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance, Acts xxvi. 20. Call them works, or call them fruits, they must be such acts as become the change wrought in us. The new heart is known by newness of conversation, and a change of heart by a change of life. Repentance is an inward thing, but the fruits appear outwardly in our actions; the sap is not seen, but the apples appear. Our dedication is known by our use, our choice by our course, and our resolution by our practice. Acts discover the habits, and what we do constantly, frequently, easily, showeth the temper of the heart. It is true God chiefly requireth truth in the inward parts, without which all external holiness is but a mere show, and loathsome to him; yet none should flatter themselves with that holiness which they imagine to have within, unless the fruits of it appear without, and they labour to manifest it in their daily carriage and course of life. If a candle in a lanthorn be lighted, it will not be confined there, but shine forth; so if there be grace in the heart, it must show itself by all holy con-

versation and godliness. We judge of others by their external works, for the tree is known by its fruits, and we judge of ourselves by internal and external works together. If there be a principle of grace within, there will be a love of God, and a hatred of evil, and a delight in holiness, and a deep sense of the world to come; and all this be discovered in a holy and heavenly conversation without. Then this completeth the evidence, and breedeth in us the testimony of a good conscience: 2 Cor. i. 12, 'For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that, in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world;' Heb. xiii. 18, 'For we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.' If a man would make a judgment of his own estate, he must take a view of his obedience and daily carriage towards God. If there be a course of close walking, and the main endeavour be to please him, we may take comfort in it, and it will make up an evidence in the court of conscience.

4. It is for the honour of God that those which live by him should live to him, and, when he hath formed a holy and righteous people for himself, they should glorify him by doing righteousness. We are as new creatures, to bring forth fruit unto God: John xv. 8, 'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit;' Ps. xi. 7, 'For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright;' 2 Thes. i. 11, 12, 'Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power; that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you.' By internal grace we approve ourselves unto God, by external holiness we glorify him in the world. With respect to God's approbation we must be righteous; with respect to God's honour we must do righteousness, that so we may bring him into request in the world. He is concerned much in our answerable or unanswerable walking.

II. He that doeth righteousness is righteous with the righteousness of justification. This seemeth the harder and more difficult task, but to a considering and unbiassed mind all is easy, and to him that will be determined in his opinions by the word of God or the gospel of our Lord. Therefore, for more distinctness' sake, I shall show you—(1.) What is the righteousness of justification; (2.) What respect the holy life hath to it.

First, What is the righteousness of justification? It may be interpreted either with respect to the precept or sanction of the law.

1. With respect to the precept of the law, and so the legal righteousness is opposite to *reatus culpæ*, to the fault; and so, if it were possible, we may say that he that fulfilleth the law is righteous; that is, he is not faulty; but alas! we are all sinners. But, however, suppose it for method's sake, as the apostle doth; so it is said, Rom. ii. 13, 'Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.' That is a truth if it is rightly understood; but then the law may be fulfilled either in the sense of the covenant of works or in the sense of the covenant of grace.

[1.] In the sense of the covenant of works. A man that exactly fulfilleth the law in every point and tittle, without the least alteration and swerving, is righteous; but this is impossible to the fallen crea-

ture: 'Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight,' Rom. iii. 20; and Gal. iii. 21, 22, 'If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness had been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.' But—

[2.] With respect to the law of grace. May not the precept be said to be obeyed, not perfectly, but sincerely? And if so, what hindereth but he that doeth righteousness is righteous? that is, evangelically justified and accepted by God, as one that hath kept the law of grace. I know no incongruity in this; yea, I see an absolute scriptural certainty in this doctrine, if the world would receive it, and determine their opinions by the simplicity of the gospel, rather than by the dictates of any faction which the late janglings of too many in Christendom have produced. Indeed, I know no other way how to reconcile the two apostles Paul and James. Paul saith, 'We are justified by faith, without the works of the law;' and James, that 'we are justified by works, and not by faith only.' Justification hath respect to some accusation. Now, as there is a twofold law, there is a twofold accusation, and so by consequence a twofold justification—by the law of works and the law of grace. As we are accused as breakers of the law of works, that is, as sinners, obnoxious to the wrath of God, they plead Christ's satisfaction as our righteousness apprehended and applied by faith, not by works of our own; but as we are accused as breakers of the law of grace, that is, as rejecters or neglecters at least of Christ and his renewing and reconciling grace, we are approved, accepted as righteous, by producing our faith and new obedience, for thereby we prove it to be a false charge; and though we cannot plead as innocent, yet we may plead as sincere; and so it is said, Mat. xii. 37, 'By thy words shalt thou be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned;' and James ii. 12, 'So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.' But I have interposed my judgment too soon, before I have further cleared up matters: all that I desire now is this, that this notion may be marked. Righteousness consists in keeping the law, for the law of grace may be kept, and some plea must be made thence, or we are undone for ever.

2. Righteousness may be interpreted with respect to the sanction, which is twofold—the threatening and the promise.

[1.] With respect to the threatening, and so righteousness is opposite to the *reatus pœnæ*, the guilt or obligation to punishment; and so a man is said to be righteous when he is freed from the external punishment threatened by God, and due to him as a breaker of the law. To this end observe that place, Rom. i. 16–18, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.' Mark, there are two revelations which are opposed to each other; there is the law covenant, in which the wrath of God is revealed, and the gospel covenant, in which the righteousness of God is revealed, or the way to escape that wrath. In the law, the wrath of God is revealed and denounced against those that have broken it; and broken it we have in every table by our ungodliness and unrighteousness, yea, in every

point and tittle; yet the law of grace or of faith hath appointed us a remedy in Christ how we may be righteous, and freed from this wrath and vengeance by him, by the righteousness of God, or of Christ revealed by faith. And more particularly in the commination and threatening two things are considerable—the sentence and execution.

(1.) As the commination importeth a sentence or respects a sentence, so we are justified or made righteous when we are not liable to condemnation: Rom. v. 18, 'As by the offence of one judgment came upon all to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all to the justification of life.' Now who are made partakers of this privilege? Surely the penitent believer; that is his first qualification: John v. 24, 'He that believeth in Christ shall not come into condemnation.' And new obedience is also considered: Rom. viii. 1, 'There is no condemnation to them who live a holy and godly life, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' So that it may be said, he that doeth righteousness is righteous, hath an interest in Christ, is not subject to condemnation.

(2.) As the commination respects execution, so to be justified or made righteous is not to be liable to punishment, or not to be punished; so the apostle saith, Rom. v. 9, 'Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.' The penalty is remitted and taken off. Thus is the godly upright man justified also, for in the last judgment it is said, Mat. xxv. 46, 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.' And the righteous there are such as do righteousness, or are fruitful in good works; these are not punished, but rewarded.

[2.] We come now to the other part of the sanction or the promise; and so our judicial and legal righteousness, with respect to it, is nothing but our right to the reward, gift, or benefit, founded not in any merit of our own, but only in the free gift of Christ; partly in the merit of another, the free gift of God, and the merit of Jesus Christ. So they are said to be justified and made righteous who have a title to eternal life: Rom. v. 18, 'By the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all to the justification of life;' Titus iii. 7, 'Being justified by his grace, we are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.' Now who have a right but they that do righteousness, and therefore are righteous in the justifying sense? Rev. xxii. 14, 'Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.' The same right that believers have to their adoption, John i. 12. Well, then, the privilege of them that do righteousness is not inconsiderable, or a matter of small moment; our whole welfare and happiness dependeth on it, our freedom from the curse and title to glory. It is such a righteousness as exempts them from the present condemnation; and at length, when others are doomed to everlasting destruction, they shall be accepted to eternal life.

Secondly, What respect hath holiness to this being righteous?

1. All will grant it to be a predication of the adjunct concerning the subject, or a sign concerning the signation of the thing signed. It is if any man work righteousness, it is a sign and evidence that he is righteous, that he is one of those who are justified and accepted of God; and so they think the justified man is described by his insepar-

able property, the practice of holiness, or doing righteousness. I refuse not this, for this includeth all the justified, and excludeth all the workers of iniquity; and this well followed will engage us more to the fear of God and working of righteousness than we usually mind and regard; for would you know that you are exempted from condemnation, and appointed unto life by Christ? You can never be clear in it till your faith be warranted by your holiness. It is said in one place, that 'God hath no pleasure in the workers of iniquity,' Ps. lv. 5, and in another, Ps. xi. 7, 'The righteous Lord loveth the righteous.' These are those he approveth, accepteth, delighteth in, and, finally, whom he will take home to himself.

2. But there is more than a sign; it is a condition of our right and interest in Christ's righteousness, and the consequent benefits thereof. Our qualification is a part of our plea that we are sound believers. To understand this, let me tell you that the righteousness of the new covenant is either supreme and chief, and that is the righteousness of Christ, or secondary and subordinate, the righteousness of faith and obedience. As to the first, a right faith; as to the second, a continued obedience is required.

[1.] The supreme principal righteousness, by virtue of which we are reconciled to God, is Christ's obedience unto death: Rom. v. 19, 'By the obedience of one many shall be made righteous.' This is our great righteousness, by which the wrath of God is appeased, his justice satisfied, by the merit of which all the blessings of the new covenant are secured to us.

[2.] The subordinate righteousness, or the condition by which we get an interest in and right to this supreme righteousness, is faith and new obedience; but for a distinct use, as to our first entrance into the covenant of God, faith is required: Rom. iv. 3, 'Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.' As to our continuance in this blessed privilege, new obedience is required; for it is said, 'He that doeth righteousness is righteous.' Thereby his interest in Christ is confirmed and continued. Our first and supreme righteousness consisteth in the pardon of all our sins for Christ's sake: Rom. iii. 23, 'Justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ;' and we are 'accepted in the Beloved,' Eph. i. 6, and by him have a right to impunity and glory, 1 Thes. i. 9, 10. Our second and subordinate righteousness is in having the true conditions of pardon and life. In the first sense, Christ's righteousness is the only ground of our acceptance with God. Faith, repentance, and new obedience is not the least part of it. But in the second, believing, repenting, obeying, is our righteousness in their several respective ways, namely, that the righteousness of Christ may be ours, and continue ours.

Use 1. Is the caution of the text, 'Let no man deceive you;' nor do you deceive yourselves in point of sin or righteousness.

First, Sin. As we are pronely bent to commit sin, so we are apt to seduce our hearts by many pretences to continue in sin. The usual deceits are these three: that sin is no sin; that they shall escape well enough though they sin; or that their sins are but petty slips or human infirmities.

1. Though they live vainly and loosely, yet they think they do not

sin. To convince these, we must bring them to consider their rule, their end, their pattern. Their rule is the law or word of God. What! live in a state of vanity under this strict rule? and have you no sins to repent of and reform? Surely men are strangers to the law of God, otherwise they would have more knowledge of sin. David having admired first the beauty of the sun, the light of the visible world, then the purity and perfection of the law, which is the light of the intellectual world, concludeth all with this prayer or meditation, Ps. xix. 12, 'Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret sins.' But slight and careless people, that the ell may be no longer than the cloth, make a short exposition of the law, that they may have a large opinion of their own righteousness, and so live a carnal life, without check or restraint. So to consider their great end, as a christian should do nothing inconsistent with it, so not impertinent to it; for so far we are out of the way. Consider your words and actions, what do they? Alas! we fill up our lives with actions that are a mere diversion from our great end; this will make them serious, for a man's end should be known all the way. Then for his pattern, 'He that doeth righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous.' Is this life you lead like the life of Christ? If we do not consider our pattern, no wonder we are vain and light. The efficacy cometh from beholding, 2 Cor. iii. 18, or 'looking unto Jesus,' Heb. xii. 2.

2. That they shall escape the judgment though they live in sin. Though it be as plain as the sunshine at noon-day, that they that live in gross sins are in a state of damnation, yet men are apt to delude their own souls, thinking they may be saved, notwithstanding their profane life, with a little general profession of Christ, and a formal invocation of his name, though their lives tend to hell. Oh, no! 'Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity,' 2 Tim. ii. 19. The causes of this presumption are non-attendance to or non-application of scripture threatenings: 'No man saith, What have I done?' Jer. viii. 6. Their abuse of God's patience, and transforming him into an idol of their own fancy: Ps. l. 21, 'Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself.' No; he is a holy and jealous God. Do not say he will not be so strict and severe. It is an abuse of God's mercy to say his patience suffereth all things, and his mercy will be no let to his judgment: Ps. lxxviii. 19-21, 'But our God is a God of salvation, yea, our God is a God of salvation. But he will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of all them that go on in their iniquities.' Christ came to save sinners from their sins, but not in their sins, Mat. i. 21. So they abuse the doctrine of justification. Oh, Christ is their justification. Ay! but you must mind the subordinate righteousness by which the supreme righteousness is imputed to you; and where Christ is made unto us righteousness, he is also made to you sanctification, 1 Cor. i. 30. They believe in him, but true faith is not consistent with an evil and sinful life, for it purifieth the heart, Acts xv. 9. These are some of the spiders' webs whereby they trust, those sorry fig-leaves wherewith they hope to cover themselves, that their nakedness do not appear, those sandy foundations which they build upon, the untempered mortar which they daub with.

3. That their sins are but petty slips, and small sins, mere human infirmities ; that no man can be perfect ; that the purest saints have fallen into as great faults. But those are not infirmities which you indulge and allow, and study not to prevent and mortify, or retract not with grief and shame ; besides, infirmities continued in prove iniquities, which by their frequent lapses are rather strengthened than weakened in you.

Secondly, Let no man deceive you in point of righteousness, 'He that doeth righteousness is righteous.'

1. Not he that heareth and talketh of it only doth show himself righteous ; not strict opinions with licentious practices, not a bare approbation, not approving without doing : Luke xi. 27, 28, 'Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and do it.'

2. It is not only an intention of mind and purpose. No ; we must actually perform the will of God : 'He that doeth righteousness is righteous ;' Acts xxvi. 20, 'That they should repent and turn to God, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.' Repentance is a change of mind, but there must be works meet.

3. Not barely good desires. Many please themselves with this, that a desire of living holily sufficeth. No ; the soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing. It is not he that desireth to be righteous, but doeth righteousness ; sluggish desires are easily controlled. Where is the effect, the pressing towards the mark ? Phil. iii. 14. If it were strongly, seriously desired, we would address ourselves to this work, and in some good measure prevail. The building went on when the people had a mind to the work, Neh. iv. 6.

4. It is not doing a good action now and then, but throughout our whole course ; we must fear God, and work righteousness : Ps. cvi. 3, 'Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times ;' and if he falleth, he returneth by a speedy repentance.

Use 2. Is to persuade us to look after this righteousness, which is the drift of the text. To this end consider—

1. We shall shortly appear before the tribunal of God, where every man's qualification shall be judged, whether he be righteous or unrighteous. How soon it may come about we cannot tell ; this day surpriseth the most part of the world, and taketh them unprovided. The word *found* is often used with respect to this day : 2 Cor. v. 3, 'If so be we shall not be found naked.' 2 Peter iii. 14, 'And found of him in peace ;' Phil. iii. 9, 'And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness.'

2. For God's judgment ; nothing but God's righteousness will serve the turn. The law which condemneth us is the law of God ; the wrath and punishment which we fear is the wrath of God ; the glory which we expect is the glory of God ; the presence into which we come is the presence of God ; and therefore the righteousness upon which our confidence standeth must be the righteousness of God. Rom. iii. 22, 'Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith in Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all that believe.' That which God hath appointed, and God will accept.

3. The righteousness of God is principally the death, merit, and satisfaction of our Lord Jesus Christ ; for it is said, 2 Cor. v. 21, 'He was

made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.'

4. None have the benefit of this righteousness of Christ but those that believe in him; for the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, Rom. i. 17. Now this faith is nothing else but a broken-hearted and thankful acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour.

5. None have this faith but those that depend upon him as a Saviour, and give up themselves with a hearty consent of subjection to be guided, ruled, and ordered by him as their Lord. For dependence: Eph. i. 13, 'In whom ye trusted, after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.' Subjection: Col. ii. 6, 'As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.'

6. None give up themselves to him as their Lord but those who make it their scope and work to please, glorify and enjoy him: 2 Cor. v. 9, 'Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.' None but those that purify themselves as he is pure, and are righteous as he is righteous.

SERMON XII.

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.—1 JOHN iii. 8.

HERE is a new argument against living in sin, backed and confirmed with two reasons. The argument is, that they who live in sin are of the devil; it is confirmed with two reasons, the one taken from the disposition of Satan, the other from the design of Christ. The one proveth the thing asserted, the other showeth the detestableness of it. The thing is proved, that he that liveth in sin belongeth to the devil, 'For the devil sinneth from the beginning.' The other showeth how unbecoming it is for them that profess themselves christians to have the gospel in their mouths and the devil in their hearts. In short, the one reason showeth our danger, the other our remedy and help; our danger, 'The devil sinneth from the beginning.' It is his work to promote sin; he doth not only sin himself, but instigateth others to sin. Our remedy for this purpose, 'The Son of God was manifested,' &c.

There is a double argument couched in it. You make yourselves an opposite party to Christ, and so build again what he came to destroy; or at least you do not improve the help and remedy offered. Let me open these things more particularly.

1. The argument itself, 'He that committeth sin is of the devil.' The argument is, that they who live in sin are so far from being the children of God, that they are the children of the devil; for so must that 'of the devil' be interpreted; for it is presently added in the 10th verse, 'In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of