

only to their duty, but to their nature; not only to their rule without, but their conscience within, or the law written upon their hearts: Heb. viii. 10, 'I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.'

[4.] They have tasted of all waters, the bitterness of sin and the sweetness of grace, the terrors of the Lord, and the sweetness of the mercy of God and the grace of Christ; and shall they give way to sin and folly?

[5.] They are posting to a better estate, and preparing for it: Col. i. 12, 'Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.' Therefore for them to walk in works of darkness is more blameworthy, as if the way to hell would bring them to heaven.

*Use.* Remember it often to your humiliation, lest God permit you to remember it to your confusion. Those whose sins are pardoned may to their sense have their guilt raked out of its grave. It is possible the wounds of an healed conscience may bleed afresh, when we walk not humbly and cautiously. Though God doth not recant his sentence of pardon, yet the sin may occur to us, and ghosts haunt us of those who were long since buried.

## SERMON IX.

*For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth.—Eph. v. 9.*

THESE words do show both how and why we must walk as children of the light; and so are both an explication and confirmation of the former exhortation. An explication, what it is to walk, or how we must walk, 'in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.' A confirmation, or new reason, as the causal particle, 'for,' showeth. The apostle had argued from their profession of being christians. Now from the grace by which they were made christians; they were regenerated by the Holy Ghost. To be light in the Lord and to be renewed by the Spirit is all one thing; and if you be enlightened and regenerated, the fruit of this must be 'All goodness, and righteousness, and truth.'

In the words we have—

1. The author, the Holy Spirit.
2. The fruits of his sanctifying operations enumerated, 'All goodness, and righteousness, and truth.' This is the conversation that may be called 'Walking as children of the light.'

The three words may be taken in a more general sense, or in a more limited and restrained sense. In a general sense: Rom. xv. 14, 'And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness.' So goodness is taken for all saving graces; and righteousness for a preparedness to discharge our duty to God and man. As Zacharias and Elizabeth were both righteous, 'Walking in all the com-

mandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless,' Luke i. 6. And truth for sincerity, called elsewhere 'The girdle of truth,' Eph. vi. 14. Or in a more limited sense, so goodness is that grace whereby we are inclined to do good to others to the uttermost of our power: Gal. vi. 10, 'Let us do good to all men, especially to them that are of the household of faith.' This goodness is reckoned among the fruits of the Spirit: Gal. v. 22, 'Gentleness, goodness, faith.' Righteousness implieth justice in our dealing, which giveth every one his due: 1 Tim. vi. 11, 'Follow after righteousness.' Truth signifieth fidelity in our speech and actions, when we live free from lying and dissimulation. Now which sense shall we prefer, the general or more limited? It mattereth not much which of them we prefer, for they are not contrary, but subordinate. But that you may conceive aright of the words, let me give you these expository observations—

1. The apostle, for example's sake, mentioneth some parts of the holy life, not to exclude, but imply the rest; for there is a secret 'and such like' understood. When he saith, 'This is the fruit of the Spirit,' you must not think it is all. When we bring a sample of a commodity, we bring a little to show the quality of the rest, not as if that were all we had to sell; so these graces are mentioned, but not to exclude the rest.

2. He instanceth in such graces as concern the second table, kindness, justice, and fidelity, as is usual in such cases. The world is most capable of knowing and approving these things, but they suppose higher graces; for all our goodness, justice, and truth must come from love and obedience to God, and faith in Christ, as their true and proper principle, or else they are but moral virtues, not christian graces: Job i. 1, 'There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and that man was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed evil.' And Joseph of Arimathea was a good man and a just man, 'who also himself waited for the kingdom of God,' Luke xxiii. 50. When they are accompanied with these higher graces, then these things are good. Sometimes the new creature is described by the state of the heart, as it standeth affected to God and the world to come; so other graces, as fruits of the Spirit, are mentioned: 2 Tim. i. 7, 'For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.' Sometimes the Spirit is spoken of as it fitteth us and frameth us for our duty to man, as here in the text. There is not a more benign thing, that doth more fit us to live peaceably and usefully in human society, than the gospel spirit; and the world looketh to these things, and chooseth these things.

3. These are spoken of as in combination. We must not so follow after one as to neglect the other. Goodness must not make us neglect justice, nor justice, goodness; and in the acts of both we must be sincere and true. Some divide these things: Rom. v. 7, 'For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die;' for one really performing what he pretends to do. Our duty to our neighbour is either negative, not wronging them; or positive, promoting their good. Justice bindeth our hands, and keepeth us from doing hurt to our neighbour, but goodness inclineth us to seek their good by all ways possible. And truth commendeth both. Righteousness keepeth us from the wrong that is done them by open violence,

and truth keepeth us from the wrong that may be done them by fraud and deceit. Goodness inclineth to seek our neighbour's good and benefit, and truth bindeth us to seek it sincerely, not in word and tongue only, but in deed and in truth: 1 John iii. 18, 'My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.'

4. I observe that there is a note of universality joined to the word goodness, 'All goodness,' to show this is of chief regard, and that we must not be good in one sort or kind only, but 'fruitful in every good work,' Col. i. 10. A christian should be made up of goodness; his very constitution and trade must be goodness.

5. I observe that these are called fruit, not only by a Hebraism, who are wont to express the works of a man by the term 'fruit;' for man is, or should be a tree of righteousness; but there is a distinction: Gal. v. 19, 22, now the 'works of the flesh' are manifest, but 'the fruit of the Spirit;' so also here compare the text with ver. 11, 'Unfruitful works of darkness.' But why is it called 'fruit?' Partly to show it is the native and genuine product of the Spirit in our hearts, as fruit groweth on a tree; and partly to show that sin is an unprofitable drudgery, but holiness is fruit. There is toil, here benefit: Rom. vi. 21, 22, 'What fruit had you then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now, being made free from sin, and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.' There is no fruit in sin; the work is drudgery, and the reward is death; but holiness is fruit, for it is the way to eternal life.

6. All these graces, and duties consequent, are fruits of the Spirit. The Vulgar read *lucis*; some Greek copies, *τοῦ φωτός*; most, *τοῦ πνεύματος*. The Holy Ghost produceth this fruit in us; he worketh and dwelleth in the hearts of all those who are light in the Lord.

7. He speaketh of habits, not of acts: 'Walking as children of the light,' relateth more to the acts or exercise of the grace which we have received; but here the apostle speaketh of goodness rather than good works, of justice rather than just works. The habits give facility and easiness to all acts. When the soul is thus constituted, it is hard to do otherwise. So in opposition to the 'Works of darkness' there is 'Putting on the armour of light,' Rom. xiii. 12. The habit is opposed to the act, because the work will follow, when once the heart is framed and fitted for these things.

8. These are ascribed to the Spirit by the apostle for two reasons—

[1.] Partly because of man's incapacity to produce these things of himself. We are not only defective in the duties which concern our commerce with God, but also in the lower hemisphere of duties, those which concern our dealings with men. None is good of himself, but only God: Mat. xix. 17, 'Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God;' that is, originally good. As all the stars derive their light from the sun, so do we receive every good and perfect gift from the Father of lights, James i. 17. God is originally good, but we are good by participation. This was true of man in innocency; but there is another reason for man in his fallen estate, for there we were altogether bent on evil: Ps. xiv. 3, 'There is none that doeth good, no not one.' Surely in that estate, whatever good we do is from the Spirit

of God : Acts xi. 24, 'Barnabas was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith.' We are made so by the Holy Spirit, not born so ; none of us love good, and hate evil, and sincerely set ourselves to do that which is holy and righteous, till he hath framed us for this use. Therefore all true goodness and righteousness is from him.

[2.] And partly because all the effects carry such a resemblance with the Spirit. The fruit must be correspondent with the root or nature of the plant on which it grows. If you are made light in the Lord by the Spirit, you will bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. Goodness ; the Spirit is called the good Spirit : Ps. cxliii. 10, 'Teach me, for thou art my God ; thy Spirit is good ; lead me into the land of uprightness ;' Neh. ix. 20, 'Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them.' Now this operation is accordingly ; he maketh us good, kind, to love all with a love of benevolence, and our fellow-christians with a love of complacency. So for righteousness, or justice in all our dealings, giving every one his due ; this is the fruit of the Spirit ; for, Eph. iv. 24, 'The new man is created after God in righteousness and true holiness.' God hath done so much to demonstrate his righteousness, that christians have not the spirit of their religion if they be not righteous. So for truth or fidelity, whereby we carry ourselves sincerely, and free from all hypocrisy and craft. The Spirit is often called the Spirit of truth ; and that holiness which he worketh in us is holiness of truth, or true holiness : 'Therefore put away lying,' Eph. iv. 25 ; it is a sin contrary to the new nature.

9. This Spirit God hath sent among us by the preaching of the gospel ; for when he saith, 'Ye are light in the Lord,' it implieth both the knowledge of the gospel and the illumination of the Spirit ; the one as concomitant with the other, and settling the belief of it in our hearts. The doctrine of Christ bringeth the Spirit to us, and we receive it by faith : Gal. iii. 2, 'Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith ?' John vii. 39, 'But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.' We receive the Spirit more plentifully by the gospel than by the law, and we receive it by faith in Christ. Having made this way, I come now to propound a particular point.

*Doct.* 1. That the Spirit which we receive by the gospel worketh all goodness in the hearts of believers.

To illustrate this point, I shall show—(1.) What is goodness ; (2.) How this is the product of the Spirit of the gospel.

I. What is goodness ? I answer—Goodness is either moral or beneficial.

1. Moral goodness is our whole duty required by the law of God, whatever is just and equal for us to perform : Deut. xxx. 15, 'I have set before you life and good, death and evil.' Holiness is called good, and sin evil ; and the whole duty of man elsewhere is called good : Micah vi. 8, 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee ?' The *totum hominis*, the whole duty of man, is *bonum hominis*, the whole good of man.

2. There is beneficial goodness, which is a branch of the former, and implieth a readiness to do good to others to the utmost of our capacity ;

for all good is communicative of itself: Heb. xiii. 16, 'But to do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.' This duty must not be forgotten nor neglected, because it showeth the due impress of our religion upon us. Well, then, the first sort of goodness is holiness, the second beneficence.

II. That this is the fruit and product of the Spirit by the gospel.

1. Let us see what the gospel doth to promote this goodness in the world.

2. Upon what grounds we may expect the Spirit to co-operate therewith.

First, What the gospel doth to promote this goodness in the world.

1. By the laws and precepts of it, or the duties it requireth; it requireth us to be good, and to do good.

[1.] To be good; for we are first made good before we can do good: Luke vi. 45, 'A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.' Every man hath a treasury or storehouse within him, from whence all his actions are brought forth. He that hath an honest heart, or a repository of good purposes and resolutions, in short, whose whole heart is set upon doing good on all occasions, he bringeth forth from thence good actions. Now the design of the christian religion is to make men good and to cure them of all evil; it not only inviteth and persuadeth men to be good, but offereth grace whereby they may become good: Eph. ii. 10, 'For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.' It offereth grace, whereby men may be changed; and being naturally bent to evil, may be disposed and inclined to good. This religion would not have us do good by accident, but by nature, as having our hearts set towards it; and to work not occasionally, but from a habit and a principle of goodness in ourselves, as being thus constituted and framed that we may do it easily and with delight; yea, it is a force if we do the contrary.

[2.] To do good, both as to God and men.

(1.) As to God, the great duty is love; that we should love him, and obey him as our rightful Lord and chief good and happiness. This was our primitive duty, which we owed to our creator; and Christ came not to dissolve, but to establish it. He never intended to rob God of a creature when he made any man a christian; for he 'redeemed us to God by his blood,' Rev. v. 9. That we might love him and serve him; love him with all our hearts, and serve him with all our might, Mat. xxii. 37. Oh, what a good religion is this, where our principal work is love and delight in him whom we serve and worship! We begin our happiness in our duty and love to God, that we may be beloved of him. Whole christianity is but an holy art to teach us the way of loving and enjoying God.

(2.) To do good to men. Certainly that religion is good which only employeth men in doing good, and obligeth us to seek the welfare of others as we would do our own. It enjoineth us 'to do good to all, especially to the household of faith,' Gal. vi. 10. We cannot take delight in all, for some are an offence to the new nature which is in us; but we must do good to all, and seek their happiness. The love

of benevolence or good will is opposite to the hatred of enmity, and the love of complacency and delight to the hatred of aversation and offence. We cannot take pleasure in sinners, but yet must do them good. Suppose they have disoblged us, yet enemies are not excepted: Mat. v. 44, 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you.' None can be such enemies to us as we were to God in our natural estate. Now it is the duty of a christian to revenge injuries with courtesies: Rom. xii. 14, 'Bless them which persecute you; bless and curse not; and ver. 21, 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.' This doing good God expecteth from men in every capacity and relation. The magistrate is 'the minister of God to thee for good,' Rom. xiii. 4. He is not so much to mind his own greatness as the public benefit. The minister is to seek the good of souls, 'to impart some spiritual gift,' Rom. i. 11, to be an instrument of increasing light or life. Fellow-christians should seek to do good one to another, and value all their talents, not by possession, but use: Luke xvi. 8, 'The lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely.' People in an inferior quality, as servants: Eph. vi. 8, 'Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.' If they make conscience of doing good in their callings and relations, and go about these duties as service to God, and profitable to men, it is a good thing, and accepted by the Lord. Thus the gospel requireth we should still be doing good, something that conduceth to the glory of God and the benefit of others.

2. By the discoveries it maketh. The greatest, truest, and fullest prospect of God's goodness to mankind we have in the gospel. There 'the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared,' Titus iii. 4. When God was displeased for the breach of the first covenant, and man had fallen from his primitive holiness, and brought himself irreparably under guilt and a curse, the Lord took occasion by his misery to open a door of hope to us by Christ, and hath set up a new covenant of righteousness and life founded on the death of his Son, where grace taketh the throne, and the judge is Christ, and the rule is the gospel, and pardon and salvation is offered to all those who with a ready and thankful mind are willing to return to their obedience to God; and God standeth with open arms to receive all those that run for refuge to this covenant, and take sanctuary at this grace, as willing to bestow upon them all kind of mercies and grace to help. Surely this word may well be called 'the good word of God,' Heb. vi. 5, and 'the glad tidings of good things,' Rom. x. 15, the best news that ever was brought to man's ear. Now the impress should be according to the seal; a good religion should breed a good people. When such wonders of goodness are discovered, it should make us more ready for our duty to God and man.

[1.] To God. The love and goodness of God in Christ is the great engine of the gospel, and the great motive and encouragement to persuade us to our duty: 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, 'For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again.' God would be obeyed by his people, not as slaves, but as children, and

would have the spring and rise of our obedience to be love and gratitude ; therefore doth he oblige us at so high a rate, and carry on the tenor of his grace and mercy in such an astonishing and wonderful way, that none of his commandments might be grievous to us, being sweetened by his love. He will be served, not as an imperious sovereign, but as the God of love ; not with a grudging mind, but with delight and readiness ; not as doing good by force, but as encouraged with a deep sense of this goodness.

[2.] To men. Surely we will imitate what we prize and esteem. No man can be thankful to God who is not merciful to his brother ; so much goodness demonstrated will breed goodness in us. When the apostle had asked a contribution to the necessities of the poor saints at Jerusalem, he useth this argument, 2 Cor. viii. 8, 9, 'I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love ; for ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.' Christians can want no motives to goodness when they consider the liberality and bounty of God to them in Christ, and those riches of grace provided for them. If they sincerely believe these things, they will have somewhat in their own bosoms that will strongly persuade them not to be wanting to occasions and opportunities of doing good.

3. The examples it propoundeth to our imitation, not mean and blemished ones, such as we may find among our fellow-creatures, but the high and glorious examples of God and Christ himself. There is a good God set before us, that we may not take up with any low pattern of goodness. He is represented to us as all goodness : Ps. cxix. 68, 'Thou art good, and doest good.' He is good in his nature, and his work is agreeable to his nature ; nothing is wanting to it, or defective in it. Nothing can be added to it to make it better. *Ὁ ὄντως ὄν τὸ πρῶτον*—Philo. The first being must needs be the first good. As soon as we conceive there is a God, we presently conceive that he is good, as being both the fountain and pattern of all the good that is in the creatures.

[1.] As to his nature, he is originally good, good in himself, and good to others ; as the sun hath light in himself, and giveth light to all other things. Essentially good ; not only good, but goodness itself. Goodness in us is an accessory quality or superadded gift ; but in God it is not a quality, but his essence ; as a vessel that is gilded with gold, and a vessel that is all gold ; the gilding or lustre is a superadded quality ; but in a vessel all of gold, the lustre and the substance is the same. God is infinitely good ; the creature's good is limited, but there is nothing to limit the perfection of God, or give it any measure. He is an ocean of goodness without banks or bottom. Alas ! what is our drop to this ocean ! God is immutably good ; his goodness can never be more or less than it is ; as there can be no addition to it, so no subtraction from it. Man in his innocency was *peccabilis*, afterward *peccator* ; but God ever was and is good. Now this is the pattern propounded to us, but his nature is a great deep. Therefore—

[2.] As to his work, he doeth good. What hath God been acting

upon the great theatre of the world but goodness for these six thousand years? Acts xiv. 17, 'Nevertheless he hath not left himself without a witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.' He left not himself without a witness, ἀγαθοποιῶν, not by taking vengeance of their idolatries, but by inviting benefits. Now this is propounded to our imitation, that our whole life may be nothing else but doing good: Mat. v. 48, 'Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.' It is in Luke vi. 36, 'Be ye therefore merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful;' that is, learn of God how to exercise and show forth your goodness, not in a confined way to friends only, but to enemies; not in a scanty measure, but in full proportion. The other example is Jesus Christ, or God incarnate: Acts x. 38, 'How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power, who went about doing good;' that is, to the bodies and souls of men, giving sight to the blind, limbs to the lame, health to the sick, and life to the dead. Christ did nothing by way of malice and revenge, he used not the power that he had to make men blind, or lame, or to kill any; no, not his worst enemies, when he could easily do it, and justly might have done it. No; he went up and down doing good. He rebuked his disciples when they requested him to destroy those that had contemned them by calling for fire from heaven, telling them, 'They knew not of what spirit they were of,' &c., Luke ix. 55, 56. It was unlike his spirit and design; all his miracles were acts of relief and succour, not pompous nor destructive, bating only his blasting of the unfruitful fig-tree, which was an emblematical warning to the Jews, and suffering the devil's entering into the herd of swine, which was a necessary demonstration of the devil's malice and destructive cruelty, who, if he could not afflict men and destroy men, would enter into the herd of swine that the poor creatures might perish in the sea. I say nothing now of his abundant grace discovered in our redemption. Surely if it be true religion to be like what we worship as God, we must be like this God and this Christ. Certainly goodness should wholly possess us, and dispose of our lives and actions; a religion that holdeth forth such a good God and a good Christ should breed a good people.

4. The arguments by which it enforceth this goodness, or the rewards and encouragements which it offereth, which is the supreme blessedness or the chief good. We all desire good; any good will serve a carnal brutish heart: Ps. iv. 6, 'There be many that say, Who will show us any good?' but the sober and thinking part of mankind will not be put off so; they are groping and feeling about for an eternal good; and grope they may, but still fail of what they seek after, till they come to the gospel to find it. There God hath showed man what is his chief good and proper happiness, or the greatest good that can be attained or imagined, for beyond God there is nothing. And the happiness which the gospel offereth is—

[1.] God reconciled.

[2.] God finally and fully enjoyed. Our happiness by the way consists in reconciliation with God, but at the end of the journey, in the vision and fruition of God; this is happiness indeed.

(1.) Our reconciliation with God through Christ, as soon as we



enter into his peace. This is that which we only are capable of here, and the good we are now only admitted unto: Rom. v. 1, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' As soon as ever we turn to him by faith and repentance, he giveth us the pardon of all our sins, and accepteth us in Christ. The sentence of death is reversed, and we are delivered from wrath to come; and not only so, but are also made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. We have a right for the present, though not the possession; and there is a long train of blessings which we enjoy by virtue of this right, as a comfortable sense of the love of God, peace in our own conscience, an interest in the care of God's providence, the audience of our prayers, the moderating and sanctifying of all our afflictions. Now all these should mollify and soften the heart, and melt it into love to God and man. Shall God be so good to us, and we so evil? Surely such a lively sense of God's love and grace should highly and potently promote goodness in the world.

(2.) The vision and fruition of God in the heavenly glory, that is the great good offered to us, when our nature shall be perfected, and by its most perfect acts be employed about the most perfect objects, and God shall be all in all, giving out the fullest communications of his grace, and that for ever. The soul shall be perfect without spot or blemish, and this vile body made like Christ's glorious body, and we shall for ever remain in the sight and love of God; and what is sweeter than his presence? Ps. xvi. 11, 'In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.' And this without fear of change: 1 Thes. iv. 17, 'And so shall we ever be with the Lord.' If anything be good, this is good, to live for ever in the sight of God, and to love him, and be beloved of him. Now should not all this make us good? and should we not train up ourselves in a way of loving and rejoicing in God now, that in our very work we may have a foretaste of our reward and end? The object of our love and service is good, and what floweth from him but goodness? and what do we expect from him but such goodness as our hearts cannot sufficiently conceive of?

Secondly, Upon what grounds we may expect the Spirit to co-operate herewith.

1. Because God worketh congruously, as with respect to the subject upon which he worketh, so with respect to the object by which he worketh. The subject is the heart of man, and therefore he 'draweth us with the cords of a man,' Hosea xi. 4. The object is the gospel, a good word, or the good knowledge of God, and therefore a suitable means to work goodness in us. There we have good precepts and good promises, and an account of God's wonderful goodness and love in Christ; and 'therefore the fruit of his Spirit is in all goodness.' As the seal is graven, so the wax receiveth the stamp. The seal is the word, the wax is our heart, and the hand that applieth it is the Spirit of God; he is the principal cause, and maketh the gospel effectual to produce in us a frame of heart answerable to the scheme and structure of the word. In short, the good Spirit, by the good word, maketh us good, and so all suiteth.

2. The Spirit produceth this effect as a witness of the truth of the

gospel, which being a supernatural doctrine, needed to be attested from heaven, that the truth of it might be known by the mighty power of God which doth accompany it, working in our hearts effects suitable to the tenor of the word. Whatever doctrine can change the soul of man, and convert it to God, is of God, and owned by God. When such a holy doctrine sanctifieth us, we see the truth of it: John xvii. 17, 'Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.' When such deliverance is published, it maketh us free indeed: John viii. 32, 'And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' When such a heavenly doctrine breedeth in us a heavenly mind: 1 Cor. ii. 12, 'For we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.' When such a spiritual doctrine bringeth in more of the Spirit: 2 Cor. iii. 8, 'How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious?' Such a wise doctrine will fill us with wisdom; such a doctrine of grace and goodness breedeth all goodness in us, and so we have God's attestation to his truth.

3. That thereby God may signify his peculiar and elective love to his people. When he worketh all goodness in their hearts by his Spirit, they come to discern that he loveth them by a special love. Love or hatred cannot be known by anything that is before us, any outward dispensation whatsoever, Eccles. ix. 1; but when by the good Spirit of the Lord we are made like God and like Christ, and have the prints of the good word upon us, then we know his love to us: 1 John iv. 13, 'Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.' And what spirit is that but a Spirit of love and goodness? for 'God is love,' ver. 16. Then we transcribe our pattern, and are brought into a conformity to God.

4. God maketh an offer of his grace to invite us to seriousness in attending on this gospel. He excludeth none in the offer, and therefore we must not exclude ourselves. None miss it but those that neglect and forfeit it through their carelessness, and disobedience, and ingratitude. If you would observe the seasons of his sanctifying motions, it would be much better with you: Prov. i. 23, 'Turn ye at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.'

*Use 1. Is information.*

1. It informeth us how false the prejudices of the world are, who think the life of godliness a severe rigid thing, as if men did put off all good nature as soon as they enter upon the practice of it. No; 'The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness.' There cannot be a more delightful spectacle, unless it be to a man blinded with malice and prejudice and brutish lusts, than to see such a good man as is described in the word of God; for he is one that seeketh to do good to all, and hurt to none; looks for no great matters for himself in the world, bustles not for honour and greatness, but gives place, or at least due respect to all; he condescends to the meanest, envies none, revenges himself on none, but is courteous to all, beneficial to all according to his ability and opportunity. As to God, his business is to love him and live to him; he counteth it his happiness to live with him, and is careful to keep up a due remembrance of him by daily invocation and

worship; always rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and liveth in obedience to the motions of the sanctifying Spirit, so that his life is not tainted with the blot of any heinous sin. He is still encouraging himself with the promises of another world, levelling and directing all his actions thither. This is the true good man; and can spite and infidelity object anything against it? You will say, There are few such in the world. *Ans.* The more the pity, when so many helps and means to effect it. It is the fault of the men, not of the rule. But many such there are; yea, all the children of God are such in some measure. The world seeth it and hateth them, because their holy and heavenly life upbraideth their flesh-pleasing and carnal course.

2. It informeth us that the children of light should be full of goodness, or else they do not improve their advantages. We have a good word to direct us, after we had lost the knowledge of God, and of the world to come, and the way thither; that all this should be revealed to us by Christ clearly and plainly. And not only so, but we have a good Spirit to imprint this knowledge upon our hearts, and to give us a heavenly mind and life. Now what remaineth but that we should be good also? for what should a bad people do with a good religion? This good word, that assureth us of God's readiness to do mankind the greatest good; this good Spirit, whose great office it is to regenerate and make us good. But alas! many are more forward to talk of the word than live by it, and not so careful to walk in the Spirit as to boast of it.

3. That all the goodness that is in us is the fruit of the Spirit; he infuseth the graces, he exciteth the acts; therefore the glory of all that we have and do must be transferred to God. God hath a greater share in all the good that we do than we ourselves. We may say of our best actions, as Augustin of his illegitimate child, 'I had nothing in him but my sin;' nothing is ours but the defect, the good is God's. Again, on Ps. cxxxvii. he saith, *Opus tuum vide in me, Domine! non meum, &c.*—Regard, O Lord, in me, not my works, but thine own: if thou regardest my works, thou damnest me; if thine own, thou crownest me: since whatsoever good I have, I have it from thee, it is therefore rather thine than mine. Thus humbly and thankfully should we be affected. God is good of himself, good in himself, yea, goodness itself; there is no good above, or besides, or beyond him; it is all from him, if it be good, and therefore to him be all the glory.

*Use 2.* To exhort us to increase in all goodness. (1.) Moral goodness, which is holiness. Now holiness is the glory of God, and therefore must needs be our excellency: Exod. xv. 11, 'Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?' So that to be holy is to put on the royal robe of the king of all the earth. Surely the more a man partakes of the nature and image of God, the more excellent he is. (2.) Beneficial goodness, or kindness and mercy; this is the first and chiefest name of God. So God told Moses, Exod. xxxiii. 19, 'I will cause all my goodness to pass before thee,' when he proclaimed his name: Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, 'And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for

thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin ;' Ps. xxxiii. 5, 'The whole earth is full of thy goodness ;' Ps. cxlv. 9, 'The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.' This doth first insinuate with us, and command our respect to him. The first temptation that ever was, was to weaken the conceit of his goodness. Now this is that which we are to imitate, to be good to all, and to do as much good as possibly we can.

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## SERMON X.

*For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth.*—EPII. v. 9.

DOCT. 2. That one choice fruit of the Spirit wrought in the children of light is righteousness.

To explain this point, I will show you—(1.) What is righteousness ; (2.) That this is one of the fruits of the Spirit ; (3.) That it is a choice fruit because of the benefits which accrue to us thereby.

I. What is righteousness? Sometimes it is taken as largely as holiness, for that grace which doth incline us to perform our duty to God and man ; for there is a righteousness even in godliness, or giving God his due honour and worship : Mat. xxii. 21, 'Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.' More strictly it is taken for that grace which doth dispose and incline us to give every one his due, and is a branch of that love and charity which is the sum of the whole second table : Rom. xiii. 7, 8, 'Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. Owe no man anything but to love one another ; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.' There is a debt of justice that we owe to ordinary men, and of subjection to those whom God hath set over us, which must be discharged. One debt you must still owe to all men, and that is charity, and it must be so paid as that it be always owing. Now here the word 'righteousness' must be taken in a convenient latitude, mixed of both senses,—an inclination to do that which we know to be holy and just. Now this righteousness in christians is a fruit of the Spirit, and so a mark of their union with Christ ; and therefore it must be advanced to a higher degree of perfection than that justice in heathens which is the fruit only of a natural conscience in us. It must look like a thing that cometh from a nature renewed and healed, or a divine supernatural principle, which doth not only alter the kind, but advance the degree of it. To evidence which—

1. Let us see what is the office of righteousness.

2. To what an height christianity advanceth it above all other institutions in the world.

First, What is the office and part of justice and righteousness?

1. To seek the peace and welfare of the several communities and societies in which we live, or in preferring the public good before our own. We owe a debt of love to our country. God directeth his people to seek the good of Babylon while his providence continued them there: Jer. xxix. 7, 'And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace;' that is, in regard of their own interest in the common rest and quietness during their abode there; otherwise we are to pray for the downfall of Babylon. All passengers are concerned in the vessel wherein they are embarked. And if we are to seek the welfare of Babylon, much more are we to seek the welfare of Sion, where we live in christian society: Ps. cxxii. 6, 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.' A christian community is represented as a body, and in a body the members should have a care one of another, and for the whole: 1 Cor. xii. 15, 'If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?' Well, then, this is the first part and office of justice, to perform the debt we owe to our country, for public interests must be preferred before private.

2. To give to every man his due; to use faithful dealing in all the duties we owe to others, or in all actions wherein we are employed and entrusted by others. We must be just in our trading and bargaining, according to the value of the things; in paying our debts, and preserving the rights of others, and giving due honour to the eminently holy. Because it is endless to instance in all, therefore there is a general rule: Mat. vii. 12, 'Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.' The equity of the rule is built upon two grounds—the actual equality of all men by nature, and the possible equality of all men by condition and state of life. The actual equality of all men by nature, for they were all made by the same God: Job xxxi. 15, 'Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?' So Mal. ii. 10, 'Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? Why do we then deal treacherously every man against his neighbour?' So Neh. v. 5, 'Our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, and our children as their children.' The possible equality of all men by condition and state of life: we may be brought into the same state. All are alike subject to corruption and calamity. To corruption, therefore be not severe on the failings of others: Gal. vi. 1, 'Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.' To calamity: Heb. xiii. 3, 'Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.' You may be exposed to like calamities.

3. Fidelity in our relations is another part of justice; for all these relations imply a right which is due to others. So we must be just to superiors and inferiors. Magistrates must be just in governing: 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 'He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.' And it is said of David, 2 Sam. viii. 15, that 'he executed judgment and justice to all his people.' A good magistrate is *νόμος*

ἔμφυτος, a living law. And people must be just in obeying; inferiors in performing their duties to their superiors, children to their parents: Eph. vi. 1, 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.' There is a right depending there. Masters to servants: Col. iv. 1, 'Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal.' Wives to their husbands: Col. iii. 18, 'Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.' So proportionably to all other relations.

Secondly, To what a height christianity advanceth these things.

1. Because it deduceth things from a higher principle, the fixed principle of a nature renewed by Christ. There are in it three things — (1.) Another nature put into us, a fixed principle; (2.) And this by the Spirit's operation, and so it is a supernatural principle; (3.) This working after a kindly manner, by faith in Christ, and love to God in Christ, and so it is a forcible principle.

[1.] It is a fixed principle: Eph. iv. 24, 'And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.' When the heart is thus constituted and framed, that to be unjust, or to do anything unjust, is as unsuitable to them as it is for venomous berries to grow upon a choice vine. As it is said of such a one that he did good *quia aliter facere non poterat*, because he could not do otherwise, the same doth the new nature; it doth more than moral habits: 1 John iii. 9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' Now if the same grace that maketh us submissive to God maketh us also just and harmless to men, surely it is a great advantage when righteousness is another nature to us.

[2.] It is a supernatural principle. The mere motion of our own human spirit cannot enforce us, and incline us to righteousness so much as the Spirit of God: 'The gentiles do by nature the things contained in the law,' Rom. ii. 14. But here is a divine power, and so a more perfect principle. Take the human spirit as coming from God *ut author nature*, as the author of nature: Rom. i. 19, 'Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them;' or *ut author gratie*, as the author of grace, as God hath renewed them, and given them a new frame: Eph. ii. 10. 'We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.' But here is actual assistance: Ezek. xxxvi. 27, 'I will put my Spirit into you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments and do them.' The short is this, nature cannot do as much as grace, nor habitual grace infused so much as grace actually assisted by a divine and powerful assistance.

[3.] It is a forcible and kindly principle; for it is such a principle as worketh by the love of God, and hopes of glory; for 'Faith worketh by love,' Gal v. 6, as the apostle expresseth it. What will not such a principle do? faith representing what God hath done for us in Christ, and what he will further do. If we look back, what wonders of love doth faith represent to work us to an obedience to God's will! If we look forward, what hopes of glory and blessedness are set before us! Redemption by Christ and hopes of glory are more powerful and forcible principles than any reasons mere bare nature can suggest. No

wonder that they who never felt the force of faith and love to God upon their souls do so much cry up bare formality. Take faith as it representeth heaven to us, or our proper felicity in the vision and fruition of God, surely that doth establish righteousness upon sure terms, and advanceth it at a higher rate than all the arguments taken from our worldly interest and conveniences: Acts xxiv. 14-16, 'Believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets: and have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men.' Take the other principle, love to God. Indeed the immediate principle of justice is love to man, for all the second table is comprised in this, to 'love thy neighbour as thyself;' but love to man is but a stream from a higher fountain, which is love to God: 1 John iv. 21, 'And this commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also.' Our love to our brother must be both excited and measured by our love to God. We must love all mankind, and all his creatures which bear his image; his natural image in all men, his spiritual image in his saints.

2. Because it measureth and directeth things by a more perfect rule than the law of nature. Our rule is God's word, which is a more pure and perfect rule than so much of the law as remaineth written upon man's heart after the fall. As natural conscience worketh more coldly than a principle of grace or faith working by love, so it is a more imperfect rule and direction to us, and we have a larger understanding of our duty by what God hath revealed in his word than otherwise we could have. We are told, Prov. xv. 21, 'That a man of understanding walketh uprightly.' To be thorough in our duty there needeth to be a large, deep, and solid judgment, sufficiently informed out of the word of God. But what instruction doth the word of God give in this point? To tell you that were to transcribe the whole bible, so far as it concerneth this duty of man to man. But in the general—

[1.] It requireth to be just in all things; to keep a good conscience in the smallest matter; not only in our public and most momentous actions, but justice is to be observed in lesser things as well as in greater; for where heaven and hell are concerned, nothing is little: Luke xvi. 10, 'He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.' Many will be righteous in some things, but in others dispense with themselves; but the good christian is careful to avoid all evil.

[2.] It requireth us to be just at all times, always exercising righteousness as God giveth opportunity and occasion: Ps. cvi. 3, 'Blessed are they which keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.' Not for a fit or pang, but ever; when it is cross to our interests as well as when it befriendeth them. A christian is to be just to friends and enemies. Many will be just to their friends, but there is nothing so disingenuous, bad, and cruel, but they think they may say it and do it to their enemies; but we must deprive none of their right.

[3.] To be not only just, but strictly just in our dealings: Dent. xvi. 20, 'That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou

mayest live, and inherit the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.' It is in the margin, and so in the Hebrew, Justice, justice shalt thou follow; that is, exact justice: it should be done in such eminency, that it may appear that God's people are notoriously much better than other men are. If you be but as they, you harden the carnal world, and they think there is no great matter in religion: 1 Thes. v. 21, 'Abstain from all appearance of evil;' at least when the honour of religion lieth at stake. I shall not be shy in giving you an eminent example of justice, which Austin thought fit twice to commemorate in his sermons. 'I shall tell you,' saith he, 'what was done by a very poor man at the time when I lived at Milan; the man that I tell you of was so poor, that he was under an usher of a grammar-school, but a sincere and real christian. This very poor man, who had hardly wherewith to sustain his life, found a purse of two hundred crowns; but being mindful of that justice which God requireth of his people, he set up in some public place a bill, giving notice of what he had found, that if any man had lost such a sum, he should come to such a place, to such a man, and receive it again. He that had lost the money heareth of the bill, cometh to the man, and giving sure tokens that it was his, he fully returned what he had found, without any defalcation or diminution. The other rejoicing that he had heard of his money again, and willing to make some requital, giveth him the tenth part, twenty of these crowns; but he would not take it; he offereth him ten, but he refuseth; at length desireth him that at least he would accept of but five, still the man that found the purse refuseth it. The other seeing the honesty of the man, throweth him the purse, saying, I have lost nothing, if you will take nothing. O my brethren,' saith Austin, 'what a strife was here between an honest finder and a thankful rewarder! The world was the theatre of this conflict, the spectator God. The finder at length being overcome by importunity, taketh what was offered, but presently gave it all to the poor, not reserving one crown for his own use. Consider, my brethren, such a glorious example, and consider what God's law can do upon the heart of the obedient: Justice, justice shalt thou follow.' Thus far he.

[4.] It requireth us to be just, whatever temptation we have to the contrary.

(1.) Of riches and worldly ends, which easily blind the mind, and will tempt us to authorise our usurpations of another's right with fair pretences. But, 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10, 'They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil.' Indulge it, and it will soon make a breach upon your duty; but when the lust of wealth is mortified, temptations have the less power over you. A man that is governed and influenced by carnal interest can never have this habit and disposition of righteousness, to carry it so equitably and fairly in all his dealings; for he that mindeth nothing but his own interest will soon believe that whatever is profitable is lawful; might and force will be right to him. Therefore you are never safe till you have learned to prefer your duty before your interest.

(2.) Of friends, kindred, and relations. We are often tempted to be



unjust for their sakes, when it may be we are a little shy in our own case; for there conscience would boggle at it as too gross, but friendship puts an honest pretence upon it. I must love my friend, but *usque ad aras*; where religion forbids me, I must not keep friendship with men to break amity with God. He is our chief friend, and other obligations cease when his law interposeth by way of bar and restraint. Your friends may be dear to you, but truth and righteousness must be dearer: 2 Sam. xiii. 3, 'But Amnon had a friend, whose name was Jonadab, the son of Shimeah, David's brother; and Jonadab was a subtile man.' It was an abuse of friendship when Jonadab would countenance Amnon in his sin, and so his friend proved his greatest foe by his pernicious counsel; though he was a friend to his person or sin, yet a foe to his soul. True friendship is grounded in God and virtue; to do for our friend, where his law is in no danger to be broken, is true friendship: Prov. xxvii. 6, 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.' To reprove them, and cross them in their sins, is to promote their salvation. So it holdeth good as to our party. It is gross partiality to aggravate the faults of others, and spare them because they are of our combination and society; because then for interest you lose conscience, when we think all is right and well done by those whom we best like, and all wrong that is never so well done by adversaries. Or else we shall soon fall into gross unrighteousness; as Barnabas was led away by Peter's dissimulation. No; when Peter walked not uprightly, Paul withstood him to the face, Gal. ii. 12, 13. Otherwise we have a stone and a stone, a weight and a weight.

(3.) We must not be drawn to do an unrighteous deed by fear or flattery. Sometimes fear is an evil counsellor, and we run into a snare if we be not fortified against it: Prov. xxix. 25, 'The fear of man bringeth a snare, but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe.' Fear must be checked by a sure trust. God can bring us off from an inconvenience better than any injustice of ours. So by flattery many are enticed into evil, which otherwise they could not bring their hearts to commit: Prov. xxvi. 28, 'A flattering mouth worketh ruin;' Prov. xxix. 5, 'A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet;' that by worldly allurements or fair pretences and crafty insinuations draweth others into sin.

(4.) Do nothing unjust even for religion's sake. When men are secure of their end, they care not what means they use. Alas! we should not step out of God's way for the greatest good in the world. A good end will not warrant an ill action. God needeth not our iniquity to uphold his interest. Christ hath other ways to get up than upon the devil's shoulders. Nothing dishonoureth God more than when men deceive, lie, break oaths, rebel against lawful authority, or use any sinful means to secure and promote religion. It is flat unbelief, and making more haste than good speed, to ease ourselves of our burdens and discontents by any sinful shifts: Job xiii. 7, 'Will ye speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him?' God needeth not my lie for his glory: Rom. iii. 7, 'For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged a sinner?' He will have no honour tendered to him but by

lawful and approved means. It argueth our impatiency and ill thoughts of God when we seek, like Jacob, to get the blessing by a wile.

(5.) Not by opportunity. Be not tempted to be unrighteous or unjust when put into places of power and trust; such have an opportunity of being unrighteous. Many are innocent because they have no opportunity to be otherwise. It is said, John xii. 6, that 'Judas was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.' If we will find the sin, God may righteously find the occasion. And when corrupt affections and suitable temptations and objects meet, it is dangerous to the soul. Well, then, the scripture showeth that we must not depart from our rule and resolution of righteous and just dealing upon any temptation whatsoever. Many resolve to be just, but when the temptation cometh, their resolution is shaken. Oh, remember, the greatest gain will prove a loss and a hard bargain in the issue: Mat. xvi. 26, 'What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' He that seeketh to pleasure others, or help himself by unjust means, doth but consult shame to himself and his friends.

3. Because it referreth them to a more noble end, which is the glory of God: 1 Cor. x. 31, 'Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God;' Phil. i. 11, 'Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.' Now he that propoundeth to himself such an end is more exact and thorough in the use of means than another can be that only mindeth his own interest; for the baser the end is, the more base are a man's actions; but the nobler end he hath, he liveth at a higher rate than others do. That which is done for God must be done in a godlike manner, or as will become the excellencies of God.

II. That this is one of the fruits of the Spirit. It must needs be so, because it suiteth with his office and personal operations. The Spirit is to be our guide, sanctifier, and comforter. As our guide, he doth direct and enlighten our minds; as our sanctifier, he doth change our hearts; and as our comforter, he doth pacify, and clear, and quiet our consciences. Now this fruit of righteousness is conducive to all these ends, or agreeable with these offices.

1. As our guide, he doth enlighten our minds with saving knowledge; and no knowledge is saving but what endeth in righteousness; as here: 'You are light in the Lord: walk as children of the light; for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness;' Jer. xxii. 16, 'He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me, saith the Lord?' We have no true knowledge of God, either of his nature or of the will of God, till this knowledge influence the duties of our callings and relations; for God is no further savingly known than he is obeyed, and that in all things which belong to our duty.

2. As our sanctifier, he doth change our hearts; and the true fruits of repentance and change of heart are the works of righteousness: Isa. i. 16, 17, 'Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.' This is particularly insisted on as the proper fruit of their change. So Dan. iv. 27, 'Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor.' Repentance is a

breaking off our former course of sin. And to a king that was an open persecutor Daniel preacheth righteousness and mercy. They that continue in their former unjust courses never yet repented. So Zech. viii. 16, 17, 'These are the things which ye shall do, Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates: and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord.' God would have their repentance thus expressed. Thus in the general; but more particularly, the fruit and work of the Spirit tendeth to this end, to make us like God, and amiable to God, to fit us for communion with God, and to glorify God in the eyes of the world; and much of this is done by righteousness; certainly nothing is done without it.

[1.] By it we are made like God, and do resemble his divine perfections: Ps. cxlv. 17, 'The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.' There is a perfect holiness in his nature, and a decency in all his actions; and when our natures are sanctified, and all our actions are righteous and holy, we are framed after this pattern: Eph. iv. 24, 'And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.'

[2.] The work of the Spirit is to make us acceptable and pleasing unto God. Now the just and righteous man is an object of his complacency: Prov. xv. 9, 'The way of the wicked is abomination unto the Lord; but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.' The Lord loveth all his creatures with a general love, but with a special love he loveth those that bear his image. He doth not love any because they are rich and mighty, fair and beautiful, valiant and strong, but as holy and righteous. So it is said, Prov. xxi. 3, 'To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.' God hath required both, and men should make conscience of both; yet the one is to be preferred before the other, though the one be a duty of the first table, the other of the second; because moral and substantial duties are better than ceremonial. Internal duties are to be preferred before external, and duties evident by natural light before things of positive institution; as appeareth by this, that God doth accept of moral duties without ceremonial observances: 'In every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him,' Acts x. 35. But God never accepteth of ceremonial observances without moral duties; he still rejecteth their offerings when they neglected justice: Micah vi. 7, 8, 'Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' Again, he dispenseth with ceremonials and externals of religion when they come in competition with moral duties, even of the second table; as David's eating the show-bread when an hungered, Mat. xii. 3, 4. But he never dispenseth with moral duties. Well, then, how right and punctual soever we be in other things, unless we show mercy, and do justice, we are not accepted with God, though we are zealous for or against ceremonies, or are of the strictest party in religion. Indeed, we cannot say they are better than faith, and love, and

the fear of God, and hope in his grace; for these are the substantial duties of the first table. And compare substantials with substantials, first-table duties are more weighty; but compare internals of the second with externals of the first, moral duties of the second with the ceremonies of the first, duties natural and evident with the merely positive and instituted, these are more weighty. To conclude, let me add that of the psalmist: Ps. xi. 7, 'The righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.'

[3.] Righteousness fitteth for communion with God. True it is the righteous have an easy access to God, and are sure of audience: Ps. xvii. 15, 'As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness.' Saul will not see my face, but this comforteth me, that I can behold thy face. Lord, thou wilt look upon me, be gracious to me, and hear my prayer, because I desire to come before thee in righteousness. God will not hear the prayers of the unjust, nor accept their offerings, 'till judgment run down as a river, and righteousness as a mighty stream,' Amos v. 23, 24; and rejecteth the Jewish fast, Isa. lviii., because they did not loose the bands of wickedness, and undo the heavy burden, and let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke.

[4.] The work of the Spirit is to enable us to glorify God in the eyes of the world, which is very much done by righteousness; for this is very lovely and venerable in the eyes of the worst sort of men. A christian, if he had no other engagement upon him, yet, for the honour of God and the credit of religion, he should do those things which are lovely and comely in themselves, and so esteemed by the world. Natural conscience reverenceth righteousness: Mark vi. 20, 'Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and observed him.' When you give every one their due, you bring more honour to God and credit to religion; you can better hold up the credit of it against contradiction. Justice is so lovely a thing, partly as it is a stricture of the image of God; it is said, Prov. xii. 26, 'The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour;' for all excellency and perfection is determined by conformity to God. And partly because the welfare of human society is promoted by it; for 'these things are good and profitable to men,' Titus iii. 8. They are such good things as the world is most capable to know and own. There are some things which none but christians themselves approve, as the positive rites of religion, or the peculiar mysteries thereof. These the carnal world are no capable judges of. Acts xviii. 13-15, 'This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to law. And when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong, or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you; but if it be a question of words, and names, and of your law, look ye to it, for I will be no judge of such matters.' But there are other things which the world approveth; there are certain common principles wherein we agree. Nature approveth goodness, justice, and truth, as corrupt as it is, though not faith and sacraments. The unbelieving world reverenceth these things as good, and of a divine original.

3. The third office of the Spirit is to be a comforter. Now righteousness affordeth peace of conscience, and quietness and holy security: 2 Cor. i. 12, 'For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our consciences, that in simplicity and godly sincerity we have had our con-

versation in the world ;' Ps. xcvi. 11, 'Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart ;' Prov. xxix. 6, 'The righteous doth sing and rejoice ;' that is, whatever befalleth him, good or evil, much or little, in life or death. And he hath comfort in his portion, because what he hath he hath by the fair leave and allowance of God's providence ; if it be little, that little is better than more gotten by fraud and injustice : Prov. xvi. 8, 'Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right ;' Ps. xxxvii. 16, 'A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.' Suppose their condition be evil, yet still they have ground of comfort ; if scorned or neglected, yet he hath the comfort of his innocent dealing to bear him out ; as Samuel when he and his house were laid aside : 1 Sam. xii. 3, 'Behold, here I am ; witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed ; whose ox have I taken ? or whose ass have I taken ? or whom have I defrauded ? whom have I oppressed ? or of whose hand have I received bribes to blind mine eyes therewith ? and I will restore it you.' If opposed or maligned, as Moses : Num. xvi. 15, 'And Moses was very wroth, and said unto the Lord, Respect not thou their offering ; I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them.' If oppressed : Ps. cxix. 121, 'I have done judgment and justice ; leave me not to my oppressors.' Suppose death cometh : 'The righteous hath hope in his death,' Prov. xiv. 32 ; Isa. xxxviii. 3, 'And he said, Remember, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee, in truth, and with a perfect heart.' When he is going the way of all the earth, this will be a comfort to him, that he hath done no wrong, that he hath served God faithfully, and lived with men without guile and deceit. Oh, for the comforts of a dying hour ! The crooked, the subtle, the deceitful have them not, but those that walk with a simple plain-hearted honesty.

III. It is a choice fruit of the Spirit.

1. Because it conduceth so much to the good of human society. A christian is a member of a double community, of the church and of the world ; the one in order to eternal life, the other in order to the present life : in the latter he is considered as a man, in the former as a christian. Now the righteous are pillars of human societies, that keep up a spirit of truth and justice in the world, without which it would be but as a den of thieves, or filled with liars, deceivers, robbers, enemies. *Remota justitia*, saith Austin, *quid fiunt regna nisi magna latrocinia ?* 'The world cannot subsist without justice.' 'The king's throne is established by righteousness,' Prov. xvi. 12. The honour and reputation of any nation is kept up : Prov. xiv. 34, 'Righteousness exalteth a nation.' Never did the people of the Jews, nor any other nation whose history is come to our ears, flourish so much as when they were careful and exact in maintaining righteousness. And as to persons, all commerce between man and man is kept up by it. Surely it is God, and not the devil, that governeth the world, and distributeth the rewards and blessings of this life ; therefore the way to do well in the world is not lying, cozening, and dissembling, but a strict obedience to God's holy will.

2. Because of the many promises of God, both as to the world to come and the present life. As to the world to come, the question is put, Ps. xv. 1 (and it were well if we would put it oftener), 'Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle ? who shall dwell in thy holy hill ?' And

it is answered, ver. 2, 'He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.' Others are excluded: 1 Cor. vi. 9, 'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?' So for this world there are many promises. Take a taste: Prov. x. 2, 'Treasures of wickedness profit not; but righteousness delivereth from death.' How soon can God blow upon and blast an ill-gotten estate! Job xx. 12-15, 'Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue; though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth; yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of asps within him. He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly;' and ver. 26, 'A fire not blown shall consume him;' Job v. 3, 'I have seen the foolish taking root; but suddenly I cursed his habitation.'

*Use 1.* (1.) To show what a friend religion is to human societies, that placeth so much in righteousness. It preventeth all that is false, bad, unjust or cruel, and teacheth us to be tender, not only over other men's persons and estates, but names. Grace doth not abolish so much of nature as is good, but refine and sublimate it, by causing us to act from higher principles to higher ends, and maketh these duties doubly dear to us, in the flesh and in the Lord.

(2.) It showeth where the safety of christians lieth, in their righteousness. God is their protector: 1 Peter iii. 13, 'Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?' And there is a strong conviction in the consciences of wicked men: 1 Sam. xxiv. 17, 'And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.' Moral duties are not small things, when the glory of God, the safety of his people, and comfort of our sincerity lieth in them.

*Use 2.* To press you to get this fruit of the Spirit.

1. Propound to do nothing but what is agreeable to righteousness and honesty: Prov. xii. 5, 'The thoughts of the righteous are right, but the counsels of the wicked are deceit.'

2. Be always exercising righteousness: Ps. cvi. 3, 'Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.'

3. Teach it to your children: Gen. xviii. 19, 'I know Abraham, that he will command his children, and his household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do judgment and justice.'

[See more of this in Sermon on Ps. cxix. 121.]

## SERMON XI.

*Goodness, righteousness, and truth.*—EPH. v. 9.

DOCT. 3. That to make a christian complete in his carriage towards men, to goodness and righteousness there must be added truth.

Let me inquire here—(1.) What is truth; (2.) That it must be made conscience of by the children of light; (3.) Why truth must be added to goodness and righteousness.

I. What is meant by truth? *Ans.* Sincerity or uprightness in all our speeches and dealings with men. But because integrity of life, and uprightness in our commerce and dealings with others, is a great branch of righteousness, therefore here we must consider it as an opposite to falsehood or a lie in speech; yet not excluding either godly sincerity, which is the root of it: 'Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts,' Ps. li. 6; or internal integrity and righteousness: Jer. v. 1, 'Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth;' where truth is put for integrity of life. But here we take it chiefly for simplicity of speech, without lying and dissimulation; as also it is taken, Ps. xv. 2, 'He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart;' that is, maketh conscience of what he speaketh, ruling his tongue so as it may go with his heart. To understand this sort of truth, we must consider what a lie is. Men are said to lie when they do wittingly or willingly, and with a purpose to deceive by speech, signify to others that which is false. The matter of a lie is falsehood, the formality of it is an intention to deceive; the outward sign is speech. Gestures are a sign by which we discover our mind, but an imperfect sign; the special instrument of human commerce is speech. Now there is a twofold lying—a lying to God, and a lying to men.

1. A lying to God is the worst sort of lying, because it argueth not only falsity and evil hypocrisy, but misbelief or ill thoughts of God, as if he did not know the heart and try the reins, and is contented to be mocked with a false appearance. We lie to God when we put him off with a false appearance and show of what is not in the heart, as if he could be deceived with outsides and vain pretences: Hosea xi. 12, 'Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit;' meaning their false and deceitful pretences of repentance, because they relented a little, and did some outward acts that might be a sign and show of repentance, especially in a time of trouble: Ps. lxxviii. 36, 'Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.' Their hearts were not sincerely set against sin, whatever pangs of devotion they had for the present: Ezek. xxiv. 12, 'She hath wearied herself with lies, and her great scum went not forth out of her.' When the pot was over the fire, the scum came a-top, and seemed ready to be cast out, but it was swallowed up again; for all their pretences of repentance, they were not cleansed from their open and notorious sins. To this purpose also is another similitude: Hosea vii. 16, 'They return, but not to the Most High; they are like a deceitful bow.' They did not sincerely intend what they promised; as a man that shooteth, but doth not level right, or take care to direct the arrow to the mark. So they cast out promises to get rid of trouble, but do not seriously set their hearts to accomplish them; their repentance was but as a show, they aimed at nothing in it but to deceive God.

2. As to men; and so there are several sorts of lies. We may distinguish them thus—either from the matter, or the end, or the formality used in lying.

(1.) From the matter, and so a lie is twofold—assertory or promissory.

[1.] An assertory lie is when a man, in a matter that is past or present, reporteth that as false which he knoweth to be true, and that as true which he knoweth to be false. This is called in scripture speaking with a double heart: Ps. xii. 2, 'They speak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak;' or with a heart and a heart, as if he had one heart to conceive of the matter as it is, and another heart to furnish the tongue. Instances of this falsehood in our assertions, or untrue relating of things done, are frequent; as Ananias, who brought part of the money for which he sold his possession, instead of the whole: Acts v. 3, 'Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?' It was a lie, and a lie to the Holy Ghost, as being pretended to be done by his motion and inspiration, or because of his presidency in church affairs, where the Holy Ghost doth all.

[2.] A promissory lie is when we promise for the time to come what we never intend to perform; and this is the worse, because it doth not only pervert the end of speech, which is truth, but we also defeat another of that right which we seemed to give him in the thing promised, which is a further degree of injustice, as being not only against veracity, but righteousness. Vain and empty promises are a great evil, when we make show of kindness to others without any intent to do them good: Prov. xix. 22, 'The desire of a man is his kindness; and a poor man is better than a liar.' The meaning is, that which is desired of a man is his favour in such or such a business, wherein he hath power to help you. Now many great men, that covet the praise and reputation of doing a good office or kind turn, are very forward in promises, but fail in performance; and therefore Solomon, who had observed the course of the world, telleth you that a poor man that loveth you, and will do his best, is a surer friend than such great men as only give you good words, or sprinkle you with a little court holy-water, but will do nothing for you.

[2.] From the end; and so there are three sorts of lies—*mendacium jocosum*, the sporting lie, tending to our recreation and delight; *mendacium officiosum*, the officious lie, tending to others' profit; and *mendacium perniciosum*, the pernicious and hurtful lie, tending to our neighbour's prejudice.

(1.) The sporting lie, when an untruth is devised for merriment. I do not remember any instance of this in scripture, unless it may be intended in that place, Hosea vii. 4, 'They make the king glad with their wickedness, and the princes with their lies.' They stick not at any sin, so they may make the princes merry. But this I am sure of, that it is a sin to speak an untruth, and we must not make a jest of sin: Prov. xxvi. 19, 'So is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?' No; if a christian will be merry, he hath other diversions: James v. 13, 'If any be merry, let him sing psalms;' Eph. v. 4, 'Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks.' Let him not speak things against the sense of his own mind, especially by false representations traduce the godly, and make religion ridiculous, and say, I am in sport. Idle words are to be accounted for: Mat. xii. 36, 'I say unto



you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof at the day of judgment.' Let him use harmless recreations, without accusing his brother falsely, or shamming him with devised lies. Now to this sporting lie a fable or parable is not to be reduced, because it is an artificial way of representing truth; as when Jotham bringeth in the trees conferring and consulting about their king, Judges ix. 8. Nor yet such sharp and piercing ironies as we find used by holy men in the scripture; as when Elijah saith, 1 Kings xviii. 27, 'He is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey; or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked;' for this is a notable way to make truth strike upon the heart with the more force.

(2.) The officious lie, for the help and relief of ourselves or others. Instances we have of this in the scripture. Thus Rebecca teacheth Jacob to lie, that he might gain the blessing, Gen. xxvii.; and the Egyptian midwives saved the male children of the Israelites by feigning they were delivered before they came to them, Exod. i. 17, 18; unless it may be extenuated, that so it was sometimes, and they might send to them to use the help of other women. Though it be so, they feared God, and were rewarded by God. *Non remunerata est fallacia, sed benevolentia*—Not their lie, but their mercy was rewarded: their mercy was commended, but their infirmity pardoned. So Rahab saved the spies by telling the men of her city that they were gone, when she had hidden them under the stalks of flax, Josh. ii. 5–7. Thus Michal, to save David, feigned that he was sick, 1 Sam. xiv. 14; and David advised Jonathan to an officious lie for his safety, 1 Sam. xx. 6; and Hushai by temporising with Absalom, preserved David, 2 Sam. xvi. 17–19; and to divide his counsels, pretendeth hearty affection to him. But we are to live by rule, not by examples; and a good cause must be followed by lawful means; and courage and constancy will do more in these cases than dissimulation, and tend more to the glory of God, and the preservation of ourselves and others.

(3.) There is a pernicious lie, to the hurt and prejudice of others. Of this nature was that first lie by which all mankind was ruined: Gen. iii. 4, 5, 'And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.' And Jacob's children's lie concerning Joseph: Gen. xxxvii. 31, 32, 'This we have found; know now whether it be thy son's coat, yea or no.' And that of the Jewish elders concerning Christ, who said that his disciples stole him away by night, Mat. xxviii. 12–14. All lying is forbidden, but more especially this sort. I say, all these sorts are lies, for the scripture condemneth all without distinction: Eph. iv. 25, 'Wherefore put away all lying.' And all liars are shut out of the new Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 8. And again, Rev. xxii. 15, 'Whosoever loveth and maketh a lie' is cast into hell. They all violate the natural order which God hath appointed between the heart and the tongue, and the law which he hath given to preserve faith in the world. The sporting lie is unnecessary, for we have other honest recreations wherewith to divert our minds. And though officious lies are not to the hurt but good of others, yet they are to the hurt and prejudice of the truth. A man is not to lie for God, and therefore not for another

man; he hindereth a greater good, which is the truth of commerce between mankind, and he hurteth his own soul. Sin depriveth us of a greater good. And Augustin telleth us of one Firmus who was *firmus nomine* and *firmior voluntate*, who being interrogated by the persecutors about such a person or persons as he knew concealed, *respondit mentiri nec posse nec hominem prodere*, and suffered many torments, till he obtained a pardon both for himself and them. But of all lies, the pernicious lie is most pernicious. To deceive others with an untruth, or to lie to their wrong, is both horrible falsehood and injustice.

[3] A lie from the formality used in making it may be distinguished thus—

(1.) A lie committed in ordinary commerce, when we speak of things or persons otherwise than we know to be true. This is a lie; for our words ought always to be agreeable to our minds. Thus Job speaketh of his friends: Job xiii. 4, 'But ye are forgers of lies.' Because they accused him unjustly, though it were not in a juridical process. And Christ of the Jews: John viii. 55, 'And if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you;' and Ps. cix. 2, 'For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.' Thus impudent backbiters will in secret vent their calumnies and slanders, and avouch the most false things as truth; and so a good man is secretly hurt and wounded many times, and his reputation and service prejudiced when he knoweth it not.

(2.) A lie committed in courts of judicature; as Exod. xxiii. 1, 'Thou shalt not raise a false report; put not thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.' So ver. 7, 'Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not; for I will not justify the wicked.' Now this is the most heinous sort of lying, because it perverteth God's ordinance, appointed for the finding out of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, and turns a tribunal of justice into a record of iniquity: Ps. xciv. 10, 'He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?' Partly because witnesses are sworn; and perjury, a lie confirmed by an oath, is no small crime: 'God will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain,' Exod. xx. 7. Partly because they are bound to witness the truth, and the whole truth, concerning the fact in hand, which in ordinary commerce we are not bound to do. Indeed in ordinary speech our purpose should be to inform our neighbour, not to deceive him; but we are not bound to inform him in all things, or to make known all that is true in every matter of fact, but when we are called thereto by justice and charity. I must speak falsehood at no time, but I am not bound at every time to speak the whole truth; but in matters of testimony, I must speak all that belongeth to that fact in question, without fraud or collusion. Therefore this is the most criminal sort of lying. Partly because my neighbour is greatly wronged by it; he is wronged by privy detraction, but more evidently wronged by a false testimony in judgment; not only wronged in his reputation, but in his life or estate; not only before a few, but in the face of his country, before all who shall have notice of it; and wronged in a

solemn way, not by whispers, but by a sentence given by God's deputies and officers in the throne of judgment or seat of justice.

II. Why must it be made conscience of by the children of light, or those who are 'light in the Lord'?

I answer—For these reasons—

1. Because it is a sin most contrary to the nature of God, who is truth itself; it is not only contrary to his will but to his nature: Titus i. 2, 'In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.' He can do all things, but he cannot lie. What a case had the world been in if God could lie, or were not of undoubted truth! for then we could be sure of nothing; no sure direction by his word, nor comfort by his promises. Therefore lying is a sin that maketh us unlike God. God cannot lie, nor command us to lie. He can command us to take the life of another, for he commanded Abraham to offer Isaac; the life of all creatures are at his dispose. He can command us to take the goods of another, as when the Israelites spoiled the Egyptians of their jewels; for he is the sovereign Lord of all, and can transfer right and property as he pleaseth from man to man: but God cannot lie, nor give command for any to lie, because it is contrary to his nature. And there is an impossibility in the case: Heb. vi. 18, 'That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie;' as it is impossible for God to cease to be God, or to act contrary to his nature. Therefore there cannot be a greater deformity or unlikeness to God than to be given to lying.

2. Because when God was incarnate, and came not only to represent the goodness of the divine nature, but also the holiness of it as a pattern for our imitation, Jesus Christ, this God incarnate, was eminent for this part of holiness, for sincerity and truth: 1 Peter ii. 22, 'Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.' This was Christ's character, and therefore it should be ours; for this is true religion, to imitate what we worship. You know Christ's commendation of Nathanael: John i. 47, 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.' Why an Israelite indeed? Because he was like old Israel; for it is said of Jacob, who is also called Israel, that he was 'a plain man, and dwelt in tents,' Gen. xxv. 27. We may say of a plain-hearted christian, how weak soever he be otherwise, Behold a christian indeed, because he is like Christ. Therefore it is prophesied that in the days of the gospel: Zeph. iii. 13, 'The remnant of Israel shall do no iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth.' They shall be all like Christ. This prophecy intimateth both duty and event; it showeth not only what christians should be, but shall be, if they be true christians. Well, then, this is the essential commendation of a true christian. Some of God's saints may be famous for several graces, but all for truth; Moses for meekness, Phineas for zeal, Abraham for faith, David for devotion; but every one that is born of God, and accepted of God upon the account of Christ, for sincerity and truth. It is made the qualification of the pardoned to have no guile: Ps. xxxii. 2, 'Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.'

3. Nothing maketh us more like the devil, who is a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies: John viii. 44, 'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer

from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him : when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own ; for he is a liar, and the father of it.' All sins call him father, but chiefly a lie ; for he brought sin into the world by the way of lying at the first. And therefore to be given to lying argueth too much prevalency of the satanical nature. The disposition to lie is the image of the devil, the act is the work of the devil : Acts v. 3, 'Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?' and should the children of light be like the father of lies?

4. It is a sin most contrary to the new nature wrought in the saints, and seemeth to offer more violence to it than other sins. The new nature may be considered doubly, either as to mortification or vivification ; the sins we put off, or the graces it produceth : both from the one and the other consideration the scripture reasoneth against lying. From the 'corrupt nature' which is put off : Col. iii. 9, 'Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds ;' that is, never suggest or say any false thing to the injury of another, since this is a principal part of that corrupt nature which we have put off, and course of life which ye have all renounced. Naturally we are all full of guile and falsehood ; now as a battered vessel must be new cast before it be brought into any frame, so till the heart be renewed we are crooked, perverse, deceitful. Now what the new nature renounceth and destroyeth must not be cherished again. Sometimes from the 'new nature' which is put on ; as Eph. iv. 24, 25, 'And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness : wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour ; for we are members one of another.' Therefore this is a very odious and unseemly sin in a christian, and inconsistent with the grace which he hath received, or contrary to that sincerity and true holiness which is the fruit of regeneration. Therefore God presumeth that his people will hate and abhor this sin : Isa. lxiii. 8, 'For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie.' He expecteth that his children will not deal falsely, nor circumvent and deceive others, since he hath framed them for this very thing, cured and set straight the crooked spirit in them, and disposed and fitted them to deal sincerely, or to do all things as in his sight, according to his will, and for his glory.

5. It is a sin most contrary to human society. Man is by nature *ζῶον πολιτικόν*, a creature fitted for society. Now all society is founded in truth ; take away truth and you destroy all human converse, and there could be no living, nor trading, nor dwelling together ; for if there be no truth, we are unfit to be trusted, and so it overthroweth all the commerce of the world. If it were lawful to vend counterfeit money without any restraint, how suspicious would men be, and cast away true gold and silver as suspecting all? Now money, which is the material instrument of commerce, is not so necessary as truth and fidelity, which is the root and foundation of it. Therefore God, as for other reasons, so for the good of mankind, hath condemned all lying, that mutual commerce may not be destroyed. Much more doth this hold good where the community is not only human, but christian, and so we all belong to the same mystical body ; so the apostle

urgeth it: Eph. iv. 25, 'Speak every one truth with his neighbour, for we are members one of another.' Members should seek one another's welfare as much as they do their own; and it is monstrous for one member to deceive and defraud another; therefore the Lord commandeth truth, and the Holy Spirit worketh this truth in us, that we may be heartily and really serviceable and faithful one to another, as members of the same body.

6. Lying is a sin very hateful to God, and against which he hath expressed much of his displeasure. Partly by express declaration of his mind. A lying tongue is reckoned among those six things which God hateth: Prov. vi. 17, 'A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood.' Nay, that it may not be forgotten or lost in the crowd, it is again mentioned in ver. 19, 'A false witness that speaketh lies, and him that soweth discord among brethren;' so again, Prov. xii. 21, 22, 'There shall no evil happen to the just; but the wicked shall be filled with mischief: lying lips are an abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight.' Now certainly we should hate what God hateth, and love what God loveth; for to nill and will the same things is true amity and agreement. Partly by his threatenings of destruction, both in this life and in the life to come: Ps. v. 6, 'Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing;' Prov. xix. 5, 'He that speaketh lies shall not escape;' first or last God will cut them off as unfit for human converse. The first remarkable instance of God's vengeance in the new testament was for a lie: Acts v. 5, 'And Ananias hearing these words, fell down, and gave up the ghost; and great fear came on all them that heard these things.' And in the life to come: Rev. xxi. 8, 'All liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.' Now, when God is so express in denouncing his judgments against such kind of sinners, all that have a tender heart will tremble.

7. It is a sin shameful and odious in the eyes of men. The more common honesty any man hath, the further he is from it, especially the more he hath of the spirit of grace: Prov. xiii. 5, 'A righteous man hateth lying; but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.' All men hate a liar, because they suspect him; this is that they gain by lying, that they are the less credited, and not believed, even when they speak truth. Therefore it concerneth God's children to keep up the full value of their testimony, and to carry it so that all their words may be received with respect and reverence. Christ used such plainness in his converse as a man, that his word was enough: John xiv. 2, 'If it were not so, I would have told you.' The Persians had such a respect for truth, that he that was three times convicted of a lie was never more to treat or speak in public affairs. Indeed men most guilty of it cannot endure to be charged with it. Zedekiah smote Micaiah on the cheek when he told him of his lying spirit, 1 Kings xxii. 23, 24. Those that do not abstain from it as sinful count a lie shameful. Though they have no conscience to make a lie before God, yet they count it a disgrace to take the lie from men, because thereby they are judged unfit for human society, or useless, if not dangerous to others.

III. Why this must be added to goodness and righteousness.

1. Because they cannot be preserved without it. Not goodness, for

it will only be a counterfeit show, that endeth in empty words, and promises or pretences of kindness when there is hatred in the heart: 'Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth,' 1 John iii. 18; and again, Rom. xii. 9, 'Let love be without dissimulation; abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.' Many pretend in their professions, speeches, and promises, a great deal of goodness, but in their hearts intend it not, but seek to get loose upon all occasions. Men live by interest more than by conscience; so righteousness cannot be preserved except there be truth; they are seeking some fair pretence for an unjust and wrongful course. When once the heart is hardened in lying, it is fit for all manner of injustice; for a liar will stick at nothing, and most of our injurious practices are covered by a lie: Prov. xii. 17, 'He that speaketh truth showeth forth righteousness; but a false witness, deceit.' They that make no conscience of lying will stick at no manner of unrighteousness; but when their interest leadeth them, will swallow perjury as well as lying, or purloin and overreach others when they have an opportunity. There is no hold of them; for when there is such a gap opened in the conscience, what sin will be kept out? If the laws restrain them from violence, they will do injury to others by deceit, which is so natural to them. And so the security of the world is not sufficiently provided for till truth be joined to the other graces.

2. The life of goodness and righteousness lieth in truth, and so they cannot be thoroughly exercised unless truth be added. Sincerity runs through all the graces. As to the upper part of religion, truth enliveneth all our worship. Where God is sincerely loved and worshipped, he is more thoroughly served and obeyed: Isa. xxxviii. 3, 'Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight;' 1 Chron. xxviii. 9, 'And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind.' Sincerity doth its best. So in the lower hemisphere of duty, truth maketh us more exactly righteous and industriously good. It maketh us more exactly righteous. There are many cases arise about what is just and equal, and surely it is very profitable to have a deep, solid, and large understanding, and where we are at a loss ourselves, to consult with others; but the best resolver of hard questions, next to the Holy Ghost, is in our own bosoms. Sincerity will sooner interpret our duty; it is fleshly wisdom which breedeth all or most of our perplexities. A sincerely righteous man hath that within him that inclineth him to righteous things: Prov. xii. 5, 'The thoughts of the righteous are right;' Ps. xxxvii. 31, 'The law of God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.' So it maketh us industriously good. A man truly good is much directed by the inclination of his own heart: Isa. xxxii. 8, 'But the liberal man deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things he shall stand.' They are always seeking out occasions of doing good: Heb. vi. 10. 'Ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.' And he speaketh there of a labour of love. There needeth not much ado with the sincere, for their hearts are inclined to these things.

*Use 1.* To reprove many, because they make so little conscience of

truth. Lying is a more general and common sin than we imagine. Those expressions intimate it: Rom. iii. 4, 'Let God be true, but every man a liar.' The phrase intimateth, that though there be none in God, yet there is much falseness and unfaithfulness in men; and it is said, Ps. lviii. 3, 'The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.' Falsehood and lies are kindly sins to a natural heart, they break out early; before they go, they went astray; the seed of these sins is in them, as if they began to lie as soon as they came out of their mother's womb. And as it is an early sin, so it is universal: Ps. xii. 1, 2, 'The faithful fail from among the children of men, they speak vanity every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.' This is the general disposition of mankind. The most sacred bonds will not bind or hold them to any truth and righteousness; and a man knoweth scarce who to believe, the simplicity of commerce being almost lost in the world.

*Use 2.* It showeth how much they give suspicion that they are not children of light who have not this truth wrought in them. Some good men may lie, as the scriptures show, but they are not given to lying. The very act is a foul sin; but every lie doth not argue a graceless estate. It is a sin more contrary to sincerity than other sins, yet some few acts are not altogether destructive of it. David prayeth, 'Remove from me the way of lying,' Ps. cxix. 29; that showeth he was too prone to it, he had been too faulty in that kind. How many acts show the habit is very hard to determine; and in so weighty a case as the assurance of salvation, we should not leave the matter suspicious and questionable. He that will sin as often as may stand with saving grace shall never have assurance of his sincerity till he break this course and way of lying by repentance; and for the present there is a bar against his actual entrance into heaven, or a present unfitness, till his reconciliation be made with God.

*Use 3.* See that ye be found in this grace also, as well as in goodness and righteousness. God is truth, and requireth truth, and delighteth in truth: Ps. li. 6, 'Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts.' It is your strength, as a girdle to your loins: Eph. vi. 14, 'Having your loins girt about with truth.' It is your comfort, downright honesty breedeth rejoicing: 2 Cor. i. 12, 'For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.' Therefore we should make great conscience of truth, putting away all lying.

The means are these—

1. Get your hearts healed and renewed by the Spirit. Till we have a right spirit, we may speak truth out of interest, or for other reasons; but we are always in danger of being crooked and deceitful, for the old heart is inclined to lying and deceit. It is called the 'old man, which is corrupt according to his deceitful lusts,' Eph. iv. 22. There are swarms of lusts will put us upon it, malice, envy, pride, vainglory, worldly affections.

2. Let us hate it as a horrid sin; do not think it a venial matter: Ps. cxix. 163, 'I hate and abhor lying, but thy law do I love.' A slight hatred is not sufficient to guard us against it.

3. Remember your spiritual conflict. You never give your enemy so great an advantage as by falsehood and guile of spirit. Satan's weapons against you are wiles and darts: 'wiles,' Eph. vi. 11, and 'fiery darts,' ver. 16. Against his darts or blasphemous thoughts you oppose faith, and against his wiles your strength lieth in downright honesty. Righteousness is your breastplate, and truth your girdle, ver. 14. This will guard you against his temptations, and give you strength and courage in the day of sore trial; it is strength against him both as a tempter and an accuser.

4. Heedfulness, or a constant watch over your tongue: Ps. xxxix. 1, 'I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me;' Ps. cxli. 3, 'Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.' And this watch is quickened by the fear of God, in whose sight and hearing we always are.

5. Avoid the causes of lying. I shall mention some of them—

[1.] Pride and self-esteem. We all affect to seem better than we are, and what we want in real worth we make up by lying and foolish boasting. The 'lying tongue,' and 'the tongue that speaketh proud things,' are joined together, Ps. xii. 3.

[2.] Flattery, or a desire to ingratiate ourselves with great ones: Ps. xii. 2, 'With flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.' A self-seeker is apt to flatter and fawn upon all that is rich and great and mighty, and to smooth them up with falsehoods and applauses. Flattering and tale-bearing is many men's trade.

[3.] Fear of men and distrust of God. This puts many upon their shifts to avoid their displeasure: Deut. xxxiii. 29, 'Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee;' that is, feignedly submit themselves to thee.

[4.] Covetousness: Prov. xxi. 6, 'The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.'

[5.] Doing that which we are ashamed to own; as naughty children and servants commit faults, and then cover them with a lie. Now it is dangerous to stand in need of a lie to help us out; the devil hath a tie upon you.

## SERMON XII.

*Proving what is acceptable to the Lord.*—Eph. v. 10.

THE apostle goeth on further to declare what is required of them that walk as children of the light. Our duty consists of two parts—eschewing evil and doing good. How to do good is shown in this verse; what eschewing evil is required of us, the next verse showeth.

In the words observe—

1. The act, *δοκιμάζοντες*, 'Proving.'

2. The object, *τὸ εὐάρεστον τῷ κυρίῳ*, 'What is acceptable (or well-pleasing) to the Lord Christ.'