

whereby we cry, Abba, Father.' So that a man is another man to God than he was before. He hath holy longings after him, delights much in converse and communion with him, especially in prayer: Zech. x. 12, 'I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications.' And Paul is an instance of this; for as soon as converted, he falleth a-praying. God's children have a childlike love to God, and it endeth in a childlike obedience to him, and a childlike dependence upon him for daily supplies: Mat. vi. 32, 'Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.' They likewise depend upon him for an everlasting inheritance: 1 Peter i. 3, 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath, according to his abundant mercy, begotten us to a lively hope.' A child looketh for a child's portion. The soul loveth God, mindeth him in all things, inclineth to the ways of God, and delighteth in them as they tend to God, that he may get nearer to him, and be fitted and prepared to love him, and enjoy him for ever.

3. A holy conversation, and suitable walking: 1 Peter iv. 14, 15, 'As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts of your ignorance: but as he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.' A sincere endeavour of keeping all your Father's commands, and devoting yourselves wholly to his work, is the best way to demonstrate yourselves to be truly the Lord's children: Eph. v. 1, 'Be ye followers of me, as dear children.'

---

## SERMON IV.

*And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.—1 JOHN iii. 3.*

WE have showed you—

1. That the love of God, in acknowledging us for his children, cannot be sufficiently considered and admired by us.

2. That though God hath admitted us into the glorious estate of his children, yet little of this glory is seen in our present condition in this world.

3. That though the glory of adoption be now obscured, yet we are certain that at the appearing of Christ we shall see him as he is, and be like him.

Now having showed what knowledge and certainty of it we have for the present, the apostle comes here to show how this hope worketh; and so this first argument receiveth new strength. If God hath made us children, and children that may expect so great a happiness for their portion, we should endeavour to purify ourselves more and more, that we may both be like our heavenly Father, and also show our thankfulness for so great a privilege: 'And every man that hath this hope in him,' &c.

In the words observe three things—

[1.] That a christian is described by his hope, and that hope specified or restrained to the tenor of the christian faith, 'Every man that hath this hope in him.'

[2.] This hope is described by the effect of it, 'He purifieth himself.'

[3.] And this effect by the pattern of it, 'Even as he is pure,' that is, Christ.

From which I shall make this observation—

*Doct.* That the hope of this blessed estate hereafter should put us upon a serious endeavour after purity of life, and a more exact conformity to Christ here.

In the handling of this I shall observe this method—

1. I shall discourse something concerning this hope.

2. Of the purity or likeness to Christ, which is the effect of it.

3. The respect or connection between both these, or how the one is inferred from the other.

I. A christian is described by his hope. Hope is a special act of the new life, and an immediate effect of our regeneration: 1 Peter i. 3, 'He hath begotten us to a lively hope.' As soon as we are made children, we begin to think of a child's portion. The new nature was made for another world; it came from thence, and carrieth the soul thither. The animal life fits us to live here, but the spiritual life hath another aim and tendency; it inclineth and disposeth us to look after the world to come, and the happiness which God hath provided for us in the heavens. All men hope for something as their happiness. The new creature liveth upon things future and unseen; for our happiness now consists not in fruition, but hope, and hope carrieth us to something beyond this life, which is our comfort and support during the absence and want of the chiefest good, and the troubles we meet with by the way. Men are as their potent principle is, flesh or spirit: Rom. viii. 5, 'They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.' The flesh inclineth us to present things, the Spirit to future things. I shall a little open the nature, and show you the necessity of this hope.

1. The nature of it; it is a certain and desirous expectation of the promised blessedness: the promise is the ground of it; for hope runneth to embrace what faith has discovered in the promise: Titus i. 2, 'According to the hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, hath promised before the world began.'

[1.] The expectation is certain, because it goeth upon the same grounds that faith doth, the infallibility of God's promise, backed with a double reason, both of which do strongly work upon our hope. First, The goodness of Christ; he would never proselyte us to a religion that should undo us in this world, if there were not a sufficient recompense appointed for us in another world: 1 Cor. xv. 19, 'If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.' Surely religion was never intended to make us miserable, but happy. The design of true religion is to persuade us of God's being and bounty. Secondly, The simplicity, and faithful and open plainness which Christ ever used; this is pleaded, John xiv. 2, 'In my Father's house are

many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you : I go to prepare a place for you.' His disciples, that were intimately acquainted with him, knew his fidelity, that he told them all things as they really were, and would never flatter them into a vain hope. All his disciples that live now may be confident of it as well as they ; he lets us know the worst of the case at first, and doth not allure the senses and court the flesh, but telleth us, that, if we will follow him, we must row against the stream of our natural desires : Mat. xvi. 24, ' If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me ; ' and Luke xiv. 20, ' If any man come to me, and hate not father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.' Therefore the believing soul, finding so much goodness and plainness in Christ, doth certainly expect what he hath promised. Those that conversed with him in the flesh had abundant proof of it ; and we that read his doctrine may observe the same goodness and mercy, and also the same simplicity and plainness of heart. And so, upon the solemn declarations of this word, which he has left in pawn with us, we may be confident of that life and immortality which he hath not only brought to light in his doctrine, but assured us of in his covenant and promise.

[2.] The expectation is earnest and desirous, because it is as great a good as human nature is capable of. To see and enjoy God, and to be made like him, what can we desire more ? Now to have such a happiness in view and prospect, must needs make us lift up our heads, and wait, and look, and long, till it comes. On this account the saints are said to ' look for his appearing,' Titus ii. 13, and ' long for his appearing,' 2 Tim. iv. 8, or love it as the most desirable thing that can befall them. With respect to this double property of our expectation, as it is certain and earnest, confident and desirous, you may discern in believers several contrary affections and dispositions of heart ; as—

(1.) There is both rejoicing and groaning : Rom. v. 2, ' We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God ; ' 2 Cor. v. 2, ' We groan earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. They rejoice because they are under hope, they groan because they have not yet attained. We rejoice because the state to come is so excellent and glorious, and offered to us upon such sure and gracious terms ; we groan because the present state is so mean and miserable, mean as to our sight of God and conformity to him ; and miserable because of the afflictions incident to us : ' Being burdened, we groan,' 2 Cor. v. 4. We rejoice because the estate is so sure and certain ; we groan because we are yet conflicting with difficulties, and but making our personal title and claim. We rejoice because at length we shall see God and be like him ; and where this hope is lively and strong, it is such a pleasure and such a joy as none but that of actual possession can exceed. ' We rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory,' 2 Peter i. 8. We groan because nothing can be so great a burden as the relics of the old nature to a renewed heart : Rom. vii. 24, ' Oh, wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from this body of death ? ' Afflictions are against our carnal interest, but the remainders of sin are against our nature, that new nature which God hath implanted

in us, and which hath a tender feeling of what is displeasing to God ; therefore it is the sorest burden that can be felt.

(2.) There is another seeming contrariety of effects ascribed to hope, and that is, desiring and waiting, longing to enjoy, yet patient in tarrying God's leisure till we do enjoy. Hope is described by both ; earnest desire, which showeth our esteem of the benefit, Phil. i. 23, and yet patient, tarrying the Lord's leisure : Rom. viii. 25, ' If we hope for it, then do we wait with patience for it.' Both are consistent, as in 2 Peter iii. 12, ' Waiting for and hastening to the coming of the Lord.' Contrary words, tarrying and hastening, and different effects, but coming from the same grace. Hope would fain enjoy, yet there is a time for labours, difficulties, and troubles ; there is a longing expectation, yet a patient waiting ; the time seems long, but the reward is sure. There are desires which quicken us to use all means to attain it, that is hastening ; yet we are with patience to tarry God's leisure, while we are exercised with difficulties, that is waiting. They are glorious blessings we expect, when God will open the door, and let us into the enjoyment of them ; but we must stay our time, and therefore with patience we submit to God's pleasure.

2. The necessity of this hope, which is twofold—

[1.] To support us under our difficulties ; how else could we subsist under the manifold troubles of the present life ? Hope is compared in scripture to two things—a helmet and an anchor. Both signify the great use and service of it, as to the encountering our present troubles. As you would not go to sea without an anchor, nor to war without a helmet, so you cannot live in the present world without hope : 1 Thes. v. 8, ' Take to you the helmet of salvation, which is hope.' Among the pieces of the spiritual armour, faith is compared to a shield, which covereth the whole body, but hope to a helmet, which covereth the head. This makes a believer hold up his head in all straits and difficulties. The policy of the devil is to darken or weaken the hope of eternal life, and then he knows he shall the sooner overcome us. Therefore the care of a christian should be to keep on his helmet, to keep the hopes of his blessed estate lively and fresh, and this will make him bold and undaunted in all oppositions and troubles. Again, it is compared to an anchor : Heb. vi. 19, ' Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.' As the anchor holds a ship in a tempest, so doth this hope keep the mind in a constant temper amidst the stormy gusts of temptations. Oh, how would a christian be tossed up and down, and dashed against the rocks, if he were without his anchor ! He that knoweth not what shall become of his soul when he dieth, whether he shall go to heaven or hell, cannot endure great afflictions with patience and comfort, but he that knoweth death to be the worst that can befall him in the most troublesome times, can possess his soul in patience ; he knoweth what he is born to, and what he shall enjoy when he comes home to God, and therefore his heart is calmed and quieted within him.

[2.] To quicken our diligence, and put life into our endeavours and resolutions, that we may not faint in the way to heaven : Acts xxiv. 16, ' Herein ' (or hereupon ; upon what ? upon this encouragement) ' I have hope towards God, that there shall be a resurrection both of the just

and unjust.' So Acts xxvi. 6, 7, 'Unto which promise our twelve tribes, serving God instantly day and night, hope to come.' Certainly the happiness is so great, that it deserves our best labours; and so sure, that our labour will not be in vain in the Lord; and so near, that it is but a little striving more, and looking longer, and we shall obtain: therefore surely we should follow our work close, night and day. All the world is led by hope; it is the great principle which sets every one a-work in his vocation and calling. The merchant trades in hope, the husbandman ploughs in hope, and the soldier fights in hope. Why doth the merchant travel to and fro, and run through all the known parts of the world? Hope of gain invites him, and the improvement of his stock by traffic with several nations. Why doth the husbandman till the ground, and continue his labours with such diligence and assiduity, in heats and cold, by night and by day, in showers and fair weather, and so carefully ply his business in all seasons? The harvest, and the hope of a good crop, wherewith he and his family may be sustained, engageth him. What allureth the soldier to the burden and toil of war, to expose himself to the long watches of the night, the wounds and death of the camp, and the manifold inconveniencies of that sort of life? Hope of prey and booty, or of honour and reputation overcometh all. So what sets the christian a-work, notwithstanding the difficulties which attend his service, the temptations which assault his constancy, the calamities which attend his profession, but only hope? You see to what to turn your eye, and direct your pursuit; it is the everlasting fruition of the ever-blessed God. Those that do not look for any great matter, no wonder if their endeavours be remiss and sluggish: 2 Peter iii. 14, 'Wherefore, beloved, seeing you look for such things, be diligent that you may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.' No labour and care can be too much to approve ourselves to God, to get the soul to be without spot, and the life without blame, that we may be every way qualified, and found of him in peace, and so admitted into the joy of our Lord.

Secondly, This hope: it is not said he that hath hope in him, but he that hath this hope; it is not a sensual enjoyment which is propounded as our blessedness, but seeing God as he is, and being like him; if our hearts be set upon the vision and likeness of God, we will be purifying ourselves more and more. It is not a sensual paradise, but a pure sinless state. All religions propound a hope, but none such a hope as the christian religion doth: so pure, so sublime, so adequate and full to the wants and desires of the creature. Mahomet, like a man absolutely engulfed in the dissoluteness of the flesh, did accordingly propound a suitable happiness to his followers. He telleth them of a paradise watered with fair and delightful fountains, which shall flow as gently as if they were of liquid crystal; and that they shall repose themselves under the shadow of stately thick-leaved trees, which of their own motion shall entwine themselves into pleasant bowers; where they shall eat all sorts of delicious fruits in their season, and be recreated with the melody of birds warbling among their branches; where they shall be attired with magnificent apparel, bedecked with jewels and pearls, and have wives transcendently beautiful, and be feasted with rich banquets and

wines served in large goblets of gold. I am loath to rake further in this puddle. In all this do you hear, christians, the voice of a beast or a man? With these baits of wantonness and carnal pleasure he sought to inveigle the minds of his followers. This is a hope fit to make brutes of us, and turn us wholly into flesh: but Christ hath propounded another manner of hope; we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; not only a state of perfect blessedness and glory, but a conformity to Christ in purity and holiness, which is begun here, and perfected there. We shall see the Lord whom we have served, loved, and pleased, and shall be like him; *similes, non pares*, not equal with him, but like to him; you shall be pure and holy, as he is holy. This is the hope which Christ propoundeth, and wherewith a believer comforteth himself; this is a hope that doth not debase the spirit of a man, but raise it to the greatest excellency and perfection it is capable of.

Thirdly, This hope in him. If we expect to receive it from God, we must receive it upon God's terms, and according to his manner of promising it. Now he promiseth it not absolutely, but conditionally, to the pure and holy, and to none else; for it is said, Mat. v. 8, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' Now the pure in heart are they that hate sin, and love righteousness. And again, Heb. xii. 14, 'Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' To see God is to behold his glory, the privilege reserved for us in heaven, where all unspeakable joys and eternal delights are communicated to us by the sight of God. Now we can never hope for this from God's hands, without holiness, or some conformity to him begun here; this is absolutely, and indispensably required of us. Hope in him is hope according to his word, such as he alloweth and warranteth, and raiseth in our hearts; for he doth not speak of an imaginary hope, but a solid hope, such as is justifiable by God's promises; not a lazy, but a lively hope.

Fourthly, Observe the quantity of the proposition; it is not particular nor indefinite, but it hath an expression of universality affixed; every man that hath this hope. It is not spoken of some eminent saints, who shall have a greater degree of glory than the ordinary sort of christians, but of all who have any interest or share in it. You might imagine else, that common christians might get through in the throng, though they be not so careful of exact purity and holiness as others are. No; every man that hath this hope; which is to show that our hope is groundless and fruitless if we be not always purging both heart and life; it is a dead, not a lively hope, a hope that hath neither comfort or virtue in it, if it doth not run out into holiness, and a continual endeavour to mortify and subdue sin. Some wicked men live in a direct counter-motion to their hopes; they hope well, that that God that made them will save them; but they live as if they fled from heaven and salvation, and were galloping apace to hell. They abandon the company of God, as if his sight were a trouble, and his presence a burden to them, and the everlasting sabbath they shall keep with God were a misery, and not a blessedness. For these to hope, it is as if they went to heaven backward, with their backs turned upon it. And if any presume upon their good estate, and grow remiss and negligent in holy

duties, they cut off their claim ; for this is the constant universal rule of all that have this hope, that they are always purifying and cleansing themselves from sin, and using the means that conduce to the obtaining what they hope for ; otherwise it is a hope that will leave us ashamed : Rev. xxi. 27, ' There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth.' No unclean thing, no loathsome and filthy creature can enter into heaven.

II. The purity and likeness to Christ, which is the effect of this hope ; he purifieth himself as Christ is pure.

1. Here is an act done on the believer's part, he 'purifieth himself,' or a serious endeavour of purity and holiness. God giveth the new nature, first infuseth the habits of grace, and then exciteth them ; and being renewed and excited by God, we set ourselves to seek after holiness and purity in heart and life. It is God's work to cleanse the heart ; but we must not be idle. We are said 'to cleanse ourselves,' 2 Cor. vii. 1, to 'purge ourselves from these,' 2 Tim. ii. 21. How can a man that is unclean by nature, purify himself?

*Ans.* (1.) No question it is our duty, and must be charged upon us to purify ourselves. I say, this debt of duty lieth upon us, and we must discharge it as well as we can. 'Wash you, make you clean,' Isa. i. 16 ; and 'cleanse your hands, ye sinners ; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded,' James iv. 8. The scripture calls upon man to cleanse his own soul.

(2.) God hath promised to purify the souls of his people : Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness.' God giveth the Holy Spirit to cleanse us, to abide in us as a living spring : though the waters of the fountain be muddy, yet the living spring worketh itself clean again. Christ purchased it for us, Eph. v. 25-27, Titus ii. 14.

(3.) Though God be the author and supreme agent, yet we are to act under him, and by the strength and power of his grace to go on with the work. First he worketh upon us, and then with us and by us : he doth not work upon us, as a carver upon a dead stone ; he gave the grace, but we having life, must use it and act by it.

(4.) We have the more encouragement, having not only internal principles, but many outward helps. The ordinances : John xv. 3, 'Ye are clean, through the word which I have spoken to you.' Providences : Isa. xxvii. 9, 'By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away sin.' He suiteth his providences and afflictions to the improvement of our spiritual condition. Well, then, we must purify ourselves in a true and proper sense, mind this work, implore the Lord's grace, and improve the appointed means.

2. It noteth a continued act ; it is not he hath purified, but, he purifieth himself ; he is always purifying, making it his daily work to clarify and refine his soul, that it may be fit for the vision of God, and the fruition of God. By nature we are altogether become filthy and abominable, Ps. xiv. 2 ; and after grace received, 'Who can say, My heart is clean ; Prov. x. 9. There is a great deal of corruption still remaineth. By grace we cease to be wicked, but we do not cease to be sinners. Indeed, time will come when we shall have no sin, but now

we cannot say that we have none: the old corrupt issue that hath long run upon us, is not yet dried up; and therefore we must be still purging and purifying the heart. And for the life, our Lord telleth us, John xiii. 10, 'He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet.' Though God's children do not wallow like swine in the puddle, yet by walking up and down in a dirty world they defile their feet anew. Again, where this likeness to God is begun, the soul purifieth itself till it attains the perfection thereof, and must never be satisfied till it gets more of it. Though you be not perfect, yet you must live as those that aim at, and would be so. Therefore a sincere, hearty, and constant desire of inward cleanness, both to have, and keep it, and increase it, is the fruit and effect of this lively hope. And these being the months of our purification, we must still be following our work, 'Cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God,' 2 Cor. vii. 1. Perfection in holiness is our mark to aim at, as well as complete happiness, and all our actions and endeavours must be levelled at this mark and scope.

3. It noteth a discriminating act, 'He purifieth himself.' It is not said, should purify of right, *de jure*, but *de facto*; he is, and will be in this work. It is not laid down here by way of precept, or as a rule of duty, which yet would be binding upon us, but as an evidence and mark of trial, whereby the heirs of promise are notified and distinguished from others. Indulgence to sensual pleasures, or a liberty of sinning, hath no consistency with this state of blessedness; and if any should let loose the reins upon the pretence of his assurance of the love of God, and confident hopes of eternal life, he showeth that his hope is but a presumption or a groundless hope. The main business of the apostle here is to distinguish the children of God from others. All his children resemble their Father in purity and holiness, which was the proposition to be proved.

4. It noteth an unlimited endeavour, 'He purifieth himself.' He doth not say from what, he leaveth it indefinitely, because he would include all sin, and exclude none. There must be an endeavour after universal purity. A man may purify himself from wantonness, and leave covetousness behind; from sensuality, and leave pride and envy behind: James i. 21, 'Wherefore lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness.' Many serve their lusts in a more cleanly manner than others, but yet they serve them, and so become inapt for the sight and fruition of God. Therefore the true believer purifieth himself from carnal vanities, worldly affections, sensual inclinations, envious detractions, proud imaginations. We must not distinguish; a habit of purity worketh out all—all malice, all guile, all hypocrisy, all envious evil-speaking, 1 Peter iv. 1. If you will have me descend to particulars, let me warn you of two things—first, fleshly lusts, 1 Peter ii. 11; and, secondly, worldly lusts, Titus ii. 12.

[1.] *Fleshly lusts.* Some run into excess of riot, polluting themselves with gluttony, drunkenness, uncleanness, and do not keep their vessels in sanctification and honour. Now these that are all for sensual satisfactions, or fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, are wholly strangers to such a hope. Is that soul clarified for the sight and likeness of God that is only employed to cater for the body? or is that body fit to be



made like Christ's glorious body which is only used as a strainer for meat and drink to pass through, or as a channel for lusts to run in, that is not kept in sanctification and honour? 1 Thes. iv. 4, 5. Surely these wallow in the mire, and bid defiance to this pure hope.

[2.] Worldly lusts. It is 'pure religion to keep ourselves unspotted from the world,' James i. 27. Then a man's heart is pure when it is firmly fixed upon and principally aimeth at the chief good and last end, which is eternal happiness in the enjoying of God; when it desires and intends it so as to be able to command and control all other desires. Any inordinate adhering to the creature, so as to rejoice in it apart from God, is a defilement to the immortal and high-born soul, that was made for God and blessedness to come. Alas! to many a poor despicable wretch worldly vanity is more than the sight of God.

5. This purity is described by the pattern of it, 'As he is pure.' Christ is our pattern in the glorious state, and therefore also in the sanctified and renewed state: Rom. viii. 29, 'That we might be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might have the pre-eminence in all things.' First in grace, then in glory. Hereafter 'we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.' Therefore now we must purify ourselves as he is pure. Besides, he is the perfect pattern and example of all purity; all other patterns of godly men will fail us in something or other, but Christ will fail us in nothing, when we set his pattern before our eyes; 1 Cor. xi. 1, 'Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ.' Besides, there should be no disproportion in the mystical body; the head and members should be all of a piece: 1 Peter i. 15, 'Be ye holy, as he that hath called you is holy, in all manner of conversation.' You would take it as a great dishonour if your face should be pictured, and set to the body of a swine or any filthy beast; a monstrous disproportion in Nebuchadnezzar's image, where the head was gold, the breast silver, the thighs brass, and the feet part iron and part clay. The world should know from us that we have a pure and holy saviour; but alas! we represent a strange Christ to them.

III. I now come to the connection between both these.

1. You may take notice of the suitableness of our heart to the object, or the things believed and hoped for. That which we hope for is conformity to Christ, a pure immaculate state of bliss. Men are as their hopes are; if they pitch on carnal things, they are carnal; if upon worldly things, they are worldly. Our affections assimilate us into the objects they fix upon. Thus the psalmist saith of idols, Ps. cxv. 8, 'They that make them are like unto them, so are all they that put their trust in them;' brutish, senseless, a sort of stocks and stones, as the idols themselves are. A Turkish paradise might breed a brutish spirit in us; but if we look for a pure estate, to love God with all the heart, and to serve him without spot and blemish, the temper of our souls and hearts will be answerable; such a meetness and worthiness will be found in us, Col. i. 12. If it be good to be pure and holy and without sin, why do not we set about it?

2. It is the condition indispensably required of us; it is not an indifferent thing whether we will be holy, yea or no, but absolutely necessary. Heaven is the portion of the sanctified, Acts xxvi. 18. Many things are ornamental that are not absolutely necessary; as, for instance,

wealth, and wisdom with an inheritance, which make us helpful and useful; so for gifts of learning, knowledge, and utterance. Many have gone to heaven that were not learned, but never any went to heaven without holiness. No; it will not be had at a cheaper rate. As to the wicked, that will not submit to these terms, nor leave their sins, the Spirit says of them, Rev. xxii. 11, 'He that is filthy, let him be filthy still.' It is not a permission or persuasion, but a dreadful commination, and denunciation of as sad a judgment as can light upon a poor creature.

3. It is the beginning of our blessedness; it is begun here, or it will never be perfected there. And how is it begun? Why, in such a sight of God as produceth an endeavour after purity and holiness. A man 'that sinneth hath not seen God, nor known him,' 1 John ii. 11; and 'he that doeth evil hath not seen God,' 3 John 11. And it is carried by the renewing and purifying the inner man: 2 Cor. iv. 16, 'The inner man is renewed day by day.' A present gradual participation of the divine likeness is the surest pledge of everlasting blessedness, and the greatest justification of your hopes you possibly can have.

4. Out of gratitude since God hath advanced us to so great a privilege: 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!' Hath God put such honour upon us that we should be his children, provided such a blessed estate for us hereafter, and shall not we prepare to receive it? 1 Thes. ii. 12, 'That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you to his kingdom and glory;' 1 Thes. iv. 1, 'Furthermore then, we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.' In gratitude we are bound to consider what will please or displease God. If we expect our happiness from him, it is our concernment to serve and please him.

---

## SERMON V.

*And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, as he is pure.—1 JOHN iii. 3.*

I come now to the application.

*Use 1.* To show the misery of those men that could never endure this purity of heart and life.

1. Do you count it a happiness to see God and be like him? If you do, why do you not desire it, and endeavour it now? Nothing can be the object of our eternal delight and satisfaction but what is the object of our present desires and endeavours. It is impossible that the soul can be satisfied with any delight and complacency in anything which formerly it was not desirous of. If you desire it not, God doth you no wrong to deny it you; he will not receive any into his blessed presence to whom it will be a burden. Satisfaction is the fulfilling of

our desires and the rest of our motions. If you desire it, why do you shun God's presence now, and no more endeavour to be like him? Answer this question which way you will, it will either cut off your future hopes, or else condemn your present practice as altogether unsuitable and inconsonant thereunto.

2. Are you in a posture to meet with God? Joseph washed himself when he was to come before Pharaoh; so did the Israelites when they came to God to hear the law. Pray what have you done to prepare for this solemn interview? Every one of you must shortly appear before God, and will you appear as a shame to your Redeemer? How will you then look him in the face with this proud, vain, carnal heart or worldly affections? Are you fit to go among the blessed spirits that are made perfect? Do I expect to tread Satan under my feet shortly, and shall I give him entertainment in my heart now? to have sin wholly subdued, and yet cherish it? to be a follower of the Lamb to all eternity, and now walk according to the course of this world? When you are wallowing in your filthiness, is this purifying yourselves as Christ is pure?

*Use 2.* To press us to endeavour after this purity. I must enforce it upon all sorts, young and old. First for the young: Ps. cxix. 9, 'Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.' He doth not say direct and order, but 'cleanse his way.' We are from our birth polluted with sin. A child is not like a vessel that cometh out of the potter's shop, indifferent for good or bad infusions; but the vessel is fusty already, hath a smatch of the old man, and must be cleansed. But then, secondly, for the old, because these are hastening into the other world apace, and therefore must hasten their preparations, and be more diligent in purifying their souls, being shortly to appear before the holy God: 2 Peter iii. 14, 'Let us give diligence, that we may be found of him in peace, without spot and blame.' I must press it upon persons of a public relation, as the apostle doth upon the officers of the church: 1 Tim. iii. 9, 'Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.' Soundness of religion is best retained there where there is not only a clear head but a pure heart, as we put precious liquors in a clean vessel which are apt to be corrupted in a foul one. And also upon all christians in a private station, for without purity of heart no man shall see God, which is the common felicity of all the saints. And therefore purity of heart and life is their common character and qualification: Ps. lxxiii. 1, 'Truly God is good to Israel, to such as are of a clean heart.' All are not Israel who are of Israel: the Israel of God are those that are clean of heart. So high and low, rich and poor. God doth not respect men according to their outward condition, but their purity and cleanness of heart. The question is put, Ps. xxiv. 3, 4, 'Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in his holy place?' And it is the most important question that can be put. And the answer is, 'He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.' Every one is not promiscuously admitted into heaven, and brought into his blessed presence, but only such as have clean hands and hearts. Zion hill is a figure both of the church and heaven.

But let me a little more closely show how everything in religion obligeth us to the purifying ourselves yet more and more.

1. With respect to the God, whom we serve in the Spirit, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

[1.] Our God is pure: Hab. i. 13, 'He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity;' that is, and let it go unpunished, however men please themselves in it. We should never think of him, but be ashamed of the inward remainders of corruption. The saints always express a deep abhorrency and sense of their own impurity when they have to do with God: Isa. vi. 5, 'Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the Lord of hosts;' Job xlii. 5, 6, 'I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself in dust and ashes.' When God manifested himself in a way of grace, thus were the saints affected, and deservedly. God is the most holy, pure being, and the fountain of all purity and holiness; so pure, that in comparison of him the greatest purity of the creatures is but pollution: Job iv. 18, 'Behold, he puts no trust in his servants, and his angels he chargeth with folly. How much less on them that dwell in houses of clay?' Job xv. 15, 16, 'Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints, and the heavens are not clean in his sight: how much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh in iniquity as water?' The angels were never defiled with sin, yet because of the mutability of their nature, they are not clean in his sight. God cannot absolutely trust them. Oh, how much more should we confess ourselves to be vile and abhorred, who are actually defiled with sin, and do so often show what dregs and dross remain in our hearts! But though God be so good and holy in himself, yet may he dispense with the unholiness of others? No; this purity, as it implieth an exact holiness in God, and freedom from spot and defilement, so a hatred and aversion from all that is so; for none can have communion with this holy God unless they be pure and holy also: Ps. lxxiii. 1, 'God is good to such as are of a clean heart;' Ps. xviii. 26, 'With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure, and with the upright thou wilt show thyself upright.' Well, then, if God be most righteous, pure, and holy, and the angels cover their faces in his presence, and do proclaim him as only holy, and we at our best, since sin hath invaded our nature, have but a ragged, tattered holiness (Isa. lxiv. 6, 'All our righteousnesses are but as filthy rags,') it highly imports us to purify ourselves for the sight and fruition of this blessed, holy, and pure God.

[2.] Look to God incarnate, the second person in the Trinity, our Redeemer and Mediator, he also is pure and holy; and it doth more enforce this purifying ourselves as Christ is pure, so it is said in the text; whether you consider his person, or the design of his coming into the world. For his person: Heb. vii. 26, 'Such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners.' This was he who is to bring us to God, and who was set up as a pattern of holiness in our nature. He was pure and holy in his conception, birth, life, and death; as innocent and harmless as the new-born child, never tainted with the least sin; being more like God, and nearer to him, than any creature possibly can be; who chose not a monkish sequestration, but a free life of conversation with men, yet never was defiled, and made partaker in their sins. And shall we be so un-

like him as we are? Certainly if our hearts and lives be spotted with envy, malice, lust, ambition, affectation of greatness, and esteem in the world, and an excessive use of the pleasures thereof, to live a life so unlike to Christ is to contradict and defy our profession, and to be called christians to Christ's dishonour; for his design in coming and dying was to cleanse, and purify, and sanctify us: Eph. v. 25-27, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish.' The Lord Jesus, when he undertook the recovery of lapsed mankind, wanted not love to intend us the greatest benefit, nor wisdom to choose it, nor merit and worth to purchase it. But what did he intend, choose, and purchase, but that he might sanctify and cleanse us? Herein he showed the fervency of his love, the wisdom of his choice, the value of his purchase. He saw that our great misery was that we were polluted and unclean by sin, and so made loathsome to God. Therefore, as the fervency of his love inclined him not to loath us, but to seek our good, so out of the infinite wisdom of his choice he did pitch upon the most proper and necessary benefit for us; and because of the value of his sufferings, he despaired not to get us made clean, and accordingly pursueth that work till it comes to its final perfection, and he at length takes us home to himself, as fully pure and perfect, without any spot or remnant of sinful defilement. Now this being Christ's design, unless we would directly cross it, we are obliged to purify ourselves yet more and more.

[3.] If you look to God the Spirit, still the argument returneth upon you with the more force and efficacy; the Spirit is to make up the match between us and our Redeemer, and to bring us to Christ, as Christ to bring us to God. Now the Spirit is a holy Spirit: Eph. i. 13, 'Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.' The sanctifying of our natures, and the purifying the heart by grace is his great work. If you look into the scriptures, you shall find that the soul is purified by the Spirit and for the Spirit.

(1.) By the Spirit; and therefore he is called 'the Spirit of sanctification,' Rom. i. 4. And sanctification is called 'the sanctification of the Spirit,' 2 Thes. ii. 13, because he is the great agent sent into our hearts, to begin and promote this work. He converteth us as a Spirit of holiness; he quickeneth us as a Spirit of holiness; he comforteth and sealeth us, and marketh us out for God, as a Spirit of holiness; so that if we purify not ourselves, we obstruct and hinder his special work. Indeed, the main business of a christian is to obey his sanctifying motions: 1 Peter i. 22, 'Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit.' The Spirit is always counselling, directing, persuading us to purify ourselves by some notable truth or other; and as we yield to these motions, this work is carried on and prevaleth more and more.

(2.) As our souls are purified by the Spirit, so they are purified for the Spirit, that they may be made temples for the Holy Ghost to dwell in; the place of his abode and residence must be kept pure and clean: 1 Cor. iii. 16, 'Know ye not that ye are the temples of the Holy Ghost,

and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.' The temple of old was consecrated to God, and there was his symbolical presence. Whoever did bring in any unclean thing, he did pollute it, and was to be punished. So it is a known truth, which none ought to be ignorant of, that the soul of a christian is God's spiritual temple, wherein he manifests his spiritual presence; to defile it is to dishonour God, and contract a great guilt upon ourselves. Surely every dirty lodging is not fit for so noble a guest; he will not dwell in an impure, an unclean heart. Where he dwelleth, he must dwell commodiously and according to his own liking. Now this consideration should the rather prevail upon us, because the dwelling of the Spirit in our hearts is the earnest and pledge of our dwelling for ever with God, and beginneth that vision and fruition of God which is perfected in heaven: 2 Cor. i. 22, 'Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit into our hearts.' Thus with respect to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

2. With respect to the ordinances.

[1.] The word of God which is given to us to purify and cleanse us: Ps. cxix. 140, 'Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it.' He that looketh upon an axe will soon see that this is an instrument made to cut; so upon the word; it is fitted to cleanse and purify the souls of men from their sinful spots and stains. The precepts require this purity, the promises and threats enforce it, and the Spirit blesseth this means as appointed and chosen by Christ. The precepts call upon us everywhere: Jer. iv. 14, 'Wash thy heart from wickedness; how long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?' and in many other places: 'Wash you, make you clean,' Isa. i. 4. The promises enforce it. There are promises of purity, and promises to purity. Promises of purity: Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you: a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh.' And promises made to purity: Ps. cxix. 1, 'Blessed are the undefiled in the way.' The pure are blessed, and shall be blessed: 2 Cor. vii. 1, 'Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' The threatenings enforce it also, for the impure are cut off from this happiness: Rev. xxi. 27, 'There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth.' The Holy Ghost blesseth this means: John xvii. 17, 19, 'Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified through the truth.' He doth not join the powerful operations of his Spirit with any other doctrine, that it may be known to be his word; he will honour and own it by the concomitant operation of his Spirit: Gal. iii. 2, 'Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?' Now they that profess to believe this word, and do accept of it for the cure and health of their souls, are highly obliged to purify themselves yet more and more.

[2.] Prayer; it is to a holy God we pray, and from whom we expect our answer. Now a holy God expects they should be a holy people

that are thus familiar with him, and beginning the acquaintance which shall be perfected in heaven: 1 Tim. ii. 8, 'Lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting;' and Zeph. iii. 9, 'I will turn to them a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord.' None are fit to call upon God but those that have a pure lip; and therefore the apostle, when he speaketh of drawing nigh to God, presently speaketh of purifying, James iv. 8, showing that the greatest intimacy of converse is between the holy God and a holy people.

[3.] Baptism, which engageth us to purify ourselves, and assureth us also of the purifying virtue of the Lord's grace; for if I do my part, God will on his part give grace, whereby your hearts may be purified and cleansed. It is the visible act by which we profess the acceptance of the gospel covenant; and it is but a nullity and an empty formality if this be not done. It signifieth the washing away of sin: Acts xxii. 16, 'Arise and be baptized, for the washing away of thy sins;' and in Titus iii. 5, 'The washing of regeneration.' It alludeth to baptism, wherein water is used, which by its nitrous quality doth purge and cleanse; and it is the rite used at your first dedication to God. Now the external application is nothing without the internal effect, or the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Unless the soul be purged and washed, what will the washing of the body do you good? 1 Peter iii. 21, baptism is called 'the answer of a good conscience towards God.' Carnal careless christians forget their baptismal covenant: 2 Peter i. 9, 'He hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.' But few regard it; others renounce it, but these forget it. There was water sprinkled on their bodies, but the Spirit is not sprinkled on their souls.

[4.] The Lord's supper, which supposeth purity of heart in all that come to it, because *in foro ecclesie* they must be baptized before they can communicate. Christ washed his disciples' feet before he would admit them to his table, and flatly telleth Peter, John xiii. 8, 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.' As no part in Christ, so no part with him, no admittance to spiritual communion. Now, as it supposeth it in some degree, it promoteth and advanceth it to a further degree, as we remember Christ's blood, 'which cleanseth us from all sin,' 1 John i. 7, and bind ourselves anew to purge out all sin, 'and keep the feast not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.' In this holy ordinance we partake more of the sanctifying Spirit, and are encouraged to pursue after holiness in a confidence of this blessing.

Thus much with respect to the ordinances.

3. With respect to graces, we must purify ourselves yet more and more. I will instance in the three great graces of faith, hope, and love.

[1.] Faith: Acts xv. 9, 'Purifying our hearts by faith,' partly as it is an assent to the truths of the gospel, for it is a strong assent which enliveneth all truths, and maketh them effectual. They work not unless they be mingled with faith in the hearing: 1 Thes. ii. 13, 'The word of God which ye received of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh in you that believe.' There are so many cleansing truths in

the gospel, that if they be received and improved by faith, we cannot but set upon purifying. Partly as in the use of means. It dependeth on the blood of Christ for this sanctifying virtue, which was purchased thereby, John xvii. 19. And partly as it worketh by reflection, and so it is the same with love, Gal. v. 6. As it representeth our future hopes, so it is the same with hope in the text; but certain we are that if faith be in any considerable strength, it will produce purity and holiness.

[2.] Hope doth the like, as here. Hope is a desirous expectation; for can a man hope for that he careth not for? Hope for it as good, and fly from it as evil, it cannot be. If we hope for anything, it is a sign we love it and like it, and as much as we can would get it into our hands; so if we hope to see God, and be like him, if this be our blessed and satisfying hope, we will be purifying ourselves for the present, and resemble God as much as we can for the present; for it is a contradiction that a man should be afraid of his hopes, and keep at a distance from his hopes. No; but he will pursue after them, and hasten for them.

[3.] Love will set us a-purifying. Love to God begets hatred of sin: Ps. xcvi. 10, 'Ye that love the Lord hate evil.' The one is as natural to the new nature as the other; and the one is inferred out of the other. Now where there is a hatred of sin, there will be an extermination of it; not a scratching at the face, but a digging at the root of it; not a little faint resistance, but a striving to get rid of the being of it; or else a groaning under it as a sore burden: Rom. vii. 24, 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Therefore nothing puts us upon this perfecting holiness so much as love.

4. Our felicity and state of blessedness to which we are invited is pure and holy: 1 Peter i. 4, 'An inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved for you in the heavens.' And it is elsewhere called 'the inheritance of the saints in light,' Col. i. 12. It must needs be so, for it is nothing else but the Lord himself to be enjoyed to all eternity. Now holy men are only fit for holy things. These are the months of our purification, as Esther purified herself when she was to come into the presence of Ahasuerus, Esther ii. 9.

Secondly, Having given you reasons, let me now give you some directions about the nature of this purity that ye must seek after.

1. Let it be a universal purity, beginning at the heart, and flowing from thence into the conversation. It must begin at the heart. The prophet, to cure the brackishness of the waters, casts salt into the spring; and the scripture speaketh of a pure heart as the fountain of all godliness: 2 Tim. i. 5, 'The end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and faith unfeigned.' Now a pure heart is such a disposition or constitution of soul as consists in a hatred of sin and love to righteousness; and till this be in us, there is no purity. The operation of the Spirit beginneth at the soul, and from the soul it is derived to the outward man; for from the polluted fountain of the heart floweth all the pollution of life: Mat. xv. 19, 20, 'Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false-witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man.'



Now as pollution began there, so doth purity also: Mat. xxiii. 26, 'Thou blind pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.' First purify the heart within, and then purity of life will follow of its own accord; yea, if we should be defiled where the constitution and settled disposition of the heart is for purity, you will sooner recover your state; as a living spring, when the waters are mudded and troubled, will work itself clean again. But, on the contrary, the apostle telleth us that 'some who had escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, were again entangled and overcome,' 2 Peter ii. 20. The constitution of their hearts was not altered, but they lived in secret love with their sins, while they seemed for a while to avoid some grosser shameful acts. Therefore the temper of your souls must be altered, that you may not delight to wallow in this muddle like swine in the mire. But it may be a thing hateful to you to sin, not only contrary to your interest, but your very nature. But then the temper of the heart being changed, you must look to the operations of the thoughts, words, and actions: Prov. xv. 26, 'The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord; but the words of the pure are pleasant words.' There is a defect in both parts of the proverb, to be supplied from the former branch to the latter, and the latter branch from the former; thus as the thoughts of the wicked, so their words are abominable to the Lord; and as the words, so the thoughts of the godly are pure and acceptable. The words depend much on the thoughts, as the thoughts do on the constitution and frame of the heart. The tap runneth according to the liquor with which the vessel is filled. We are responsible to God for thoughts, therefore our hearts should be good and holy. So also for words; the impurity of the heart bewrayeth itself much in rottenness of speech. Therefore, as the heart must be pure, so must the tongue and lip. The prophet saith, Isa. vi. 5, 'I am a man of polluted lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.' Faultiness in this kind is very frequent, and not without difficulty avoided. Then for our actions, and first for sacred ones: 2 Tim. ii. 22, 'Call on the Lord out of a pure heart;' and Mal. i. 11, 'They shall bring a pure offering.' So for ordinary conversation: Prov. xxi. 8, 'The work of the pure is right.' A man that is pure must be pure throughout, that there be no blot upon him, or spot that is not as the spot of God's children.

2. Let it be an increasing growing purity, that every day we may be more holy and undefiled: 2 Cor. iii. 18, 'Changed into the image and likeness of Christ, from glory to glory.' God having appointed us to be like his Son, fits us by degrees; and Christ by his Spirit is sanctifying and cleansing us more and more, that 'there may be no spot and blemish in us,' Eph. v. 27. And let us also be 'perfecting holiness in the fear of God,' 2 Cor. vii. 1. The more progress we have made, the more we are fitted to make a further progress, as having received more grace, and being more confirmed in a state of holiness. Sin is a deep stain that can hardly be gotten out. Ye have purified your souls to the obedience of the truth; and you must purify still, and persevere in this work, improving all advantages: be not satisfied with any low degree of purity.

Thirdly, About the means and helps: how shall we get this clean heart, and purify ourselves as Christ is pure? (1.) Consider what God hath done; (2.) What we must do.

1. What belongeth to God.

[1.] Certain it is that none can change his own heart: Job xiv. 4, 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?' There is no sound part in us to mend the rest. Our pollution is so universal, that there is no principle of operation left untainted; mind, will, affections, sensual appetite, all is corrupt, and the deepness of the pollution showeth it, as well as the universality. It is not a slight tincture, but a deep dye, like cloth dyed in the wool: Isa. i. 18, 'Though your sins were as scarlet,' or like the spots of a leopard, Jer. xiii. 13; not spots accidental, but natural; not of an external adherency but engrained, belonging to the constitution. Therefore it is God must begin to purify the heart, as the principal efficient cause. He challengeth it as proper to himself: Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 'I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean.'

[2.] What God doth he doth by Christ; he is the great remedy that God hath provided for healing and cleansing of mankind; his blood is the fountain opened for uncleanness, Zech. xiii. 1, with 1 John i. 7. And it is said, 'He hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,' Rev. i. 5; and the saints are washed in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. vii. 14. More literally and plainly we have it, Titus ii. 14, where it is said, 'He hath redeemed us from all iniquity.' There was the price paid for the washing of our guilty and sinful souls, both for renewing and reconciling grace, that we may recover both the favour and image of God.

[3.] What Christ doth, he doth by the Spirit; and without the Spirit we can never cleanse and purify ourselves: 1 Cor. vi. 11, 'And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;' and Titus iii. 5, 6, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.'

[4.] What the Spirit doth he doth by the ordinances. There are certain ordinances and duties appointed by Christ for the purifying of our hearts, especially the word and sacraments: Eph. v. 26, 'Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word.' Well, then, if we would be made clean, we must go to God; but God without Christ will not look towards us, but being propitiated by him, he is willing to give us grace. God sendeth us to Christ, in whom alone he is well pleased; and Christ sendeth us to the Spirit, and his Spirit we hear of in the ordinances, which are solemnly appointed and blessed by Christ to this end: 'Ye are clean through the word spoken to you,' John xv. 3.

2. What we must do. It was Naaman's error that he would be cleansed of his leprosy and sit still, and Elisha must do all; but the prophet biddeth him go and wash; he must wash himself if he would be whole. Yea, in the general law for cleansing of the leper, after the

sprinkling of the priest, the man was to wash himself, Lev. xiv. 6-8, to show that there is some work required on our part.

But what must we do? Certainly we are to make conscience of this work of purifying and cleansing and preparing ourselves for our great hopes; for it is we that repent, believe, strive, watch against sin, though still by the power of his grace.

In short, we must earnestly deal with God about it: 'Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean,' Mat. viii. 2. You must depend upon the all-sufficiency of Christ's merit and satisfaction, for the saints washed their garments in the blood of the Lamb.' You must obey the Spirit's sanctifying motions: Rom. viii. 13, 'If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live; 1 Peter i. 22, 'Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit,' &c. You must lie at the pool. All that conscientiously use his ordinances, have some help for this holy work. It is you must keep the purifying graces, faith, hope, and love, in lively act and exercise; it is you must be careful to keep yourselves from the pollutions of the world, to prevent all sins of infirmity, and be sensible of them, and to mourn for them; and it is you must crucify the flesh more and more, check the pleasures of sin, by balancing them with your great hopes, and lament that the satisfying of the desires of the flesh have so sweet a relish. It is you must remember your baptismal vow. In short, you must get a greater hatred of sin, and a more universal care and study to please God in all things.

---

## SERMON VI.

*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is a transgression of the law.—1 JOHN iii. 4.*

IN the words we have a new argument to persuade to holiness. He had reasoned before from the dignity of our adoption; now from the indignity or base nature of sin, which is an act of rebellion and disloyalty against the sovereignty of God; it is in effect to proclaim war, or to break out into open rebellion against his laws: for 'whosoever committeth sin,' &c.

In which words observe—

1. A proposition concerning the danger of committing sin, 'Whosoever committeth sin.'

2. The proof of it from the proper definition of sin, it 'is a transgression of the law.'

The proposition respects the state of the sinner, the proof is taken from the nature of sin; the proposition showeth who is in the state of sin, the proof what is sin.

1. Who is in the state of sin; and so every transgressor of the law, even according to the new-covenant interpretation of it.

Observe here—