

the mother following the bier of her son, and the life-giving command, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise,"—these reflect the boundless compassion of the Lord. His gracious love embraces within its ample range all the sons and daughters of affliction; and every believer knows, that this great High Priest is touched with a feeling of his infirmities; but that Divine affection is disclosed to us with a touching gentleness when we stand beside the tomb of Lazarus and see that "Jesus wept." And do we not find the truth, that THE LORD IS INFINITE IN HOLINESS, reflected in that steadfast resolution which Jesus maintained to accomplish the mission for which He came—in His stern repugnance at every form of evil—and above all, in the sacrifice which He offered on the Cross? We have here the consummation of his great undertaking. In the scene on Calvary, were all the comprehensive principles of the work of redemption luminously displayed. Our Lord, we cannot doubt, looked to His death as a bright manifestation of the Divine holiness, when He said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify Thee."

And let it not be forgotten that, for the discernment of the truth thus reflected, it is requisite that there be the exercise of a lively faith. Unless the record be believed, the facts which it contains convey no instruction as to hidden and higher truth. There is ample room for the exercises of faith, in receiving the lessons which the visible is calculated to teach; in rightly reading the life of the Man Christ Jesus, and penetrating into the deep meanings with which His history abounds; in rising from the Lake of Galilee or the streets of Jerusalem, to the abode of a Divine uncurtained glory.

II. It is by the means of this discernment of the reflected glory of the Lord, that the sanctification of believers is promoted; and I now proceed to inquire, in the second place, into the progressive development of sanctification in those who, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.

Shall it be affirmed, that sinners in their unregenerated state are possessed of qualities which enable them to look in the mirror of the Gospel, and thus to behold in a glass the glory of the Lord? Can this power be exerted while the heart has not yet been in the slightest degree renewed, and the disposition to love and to practice iniquity remains unchecked? My friends this cannot be. The first glimpse that had been obtained of the glory of the Lord, as it is reflected in the Gospel, has, of necessity, been accompanied by deliverance, in some degree, from the power of sin. If only one link of the chain has been broken, the perception of the Divine glory will be dim and limited; but even as the admission of one streak of day's dawning

light makes some invasion on the universal darkness in which sun, and earth, and ocean had been clothed, so the most limited view of the glory of the Lord gives unquestionable assurance that the empire of sin within the heart has begun to be invaded.

This truth lies at the foundation of the statement, that believers, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image. The state of mind that rests satisfied with a mere knowledge of the qualities which Christ displayed, and of the transactions which make up the history of redemption, is not of necessity accompanied by this commencement of holiness. The man who has not yet received any disposition to renounce sin, and to cultivate pure and heavenly affections, may be able to form some conception of the humility and patience, and meekness, and unwearied love by which the life of Jesus was uniformly pervaded. But this is not to behold us in a glass the glory of the Lord, to have a comprehensive discernment of redemption-blessing in its revelations of the justice, holiness, truth, and mercy of God. It is this kind of discernment which sin obstructs. Like a dark curtain it hides from the sinner the face of God. To a certain extent this curtain is withdrawn as soon as the attainment of holiness has begun; and, then, the foundation having been laid, the believer is enabled in thankfulness to declare, "He brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay; and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings;" for he has now the assurance of having reached the right position for being constantly changed more and more into the image of the Lord. By the application of a very simple law, this resemblance is attained. It is the law by which every one acquires the qualities which he contemplates with deep interest and increasing admiration. In this spirit, the believer, as soon as his sanctification has commenced, cultivates more minute acquaintance with the character of Christ, and the graces which He displayed; and as he sees the glory of the Lord ever more clearly reflected, he acquires a greater resemblance to that image into which he is predestinated to be conformed. He looks, for example, to that love which Jesus manifested; and marking its deep and gentle tenderness, the more fully he sees and spiritually discerns this love, the elements of the same kind of love are planted more deeply in his heart; and in its strength and benevolent activity, it is ever more completely attained. And when he traces the beautiful reflections of that glorious holiness which transcends all reach of conception; and, while it stamped with its peculiar character every word and action of our Lord, gleamed forth in lines of ever-enduring light amid the deep humiliation and sufferings of the cross, the assimilating process which had commenced, extends also to this high attainment; and he begins to think it possible to