

things of his soul: "I have set The Lord," says he, "always before me,"—Psalm 16. 8,—intimating with what earnestness and sincerity of heart he always studied to approve himself to God, as desiring to be found faithful of Him, in the last and great day of accounts, through the merits and mediation of the Saviour who was to come. Another expression in the words of the text, that requires to be explained, is this, "I have walked in Thy truth." Truth is a word of very extensive meaning, and may be understood in various senses, according to the nature of the subject it represents. Truth, in general, is opposed to falsehood and error; and, in this sense the Word of God is truth, being quite consistent with the things of which it speaks; and one part of it perfectly agreeing with another. To walk in this truth, or, in other words, "To practice holiness, and the fear of the Lord" is, to persevere with steadfastness and resolution in the profession, in the faith, and in the obedience of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to live in a course of subjection to His law. The practical, as well as the doctrinal part of the Word, which is the rule of life, and which is called "the way of truth," must be strictly obeyed, as we are required to do; for it is as necessary to guide our practice by Divine command, as it is to direct our judgment by Divine revelation. Our walk is not as it should be, if the law of truth does not govern our whole conversation, as persons, whose loins are girt about with it. Perseverance, therefore, in this course, must also be added to complete the sense; for, how can it be called "a walking in the truth," if it only consists in a few steps, and is not a continued motion? What less can it include, than a diligent care to approve all our ways to God, to the very end of our life? Whatever hypocrites, and vain professors of Religion, may imagine to the contrary, unless they can truly appeal to God, and their own hearts, that they are sincerely conscientious in their obedience to the commands of Jesus Christ, and the whole practice of their duty, they can, with no justice or propriety, presume to say in the words of the Psalmist: "I have walked in Thy truth." The words of the text, being thus explained, may be resolved into this general proposition, "That a deep and lasting sense of the loving kindness of God upon our minds, is a powerful motive to engage and quicken us to a steady and sincere obedience to His holy and righteous commands." In illustrating this proposition, I shall first lay down some observations for explaining this doctrine. Secondly, I shall offer some arguments for the proof of it. And lastly, I shall conclude this discourse with a few words of application. First then,—it is proposed to lay down some general observations for explaining the doctrine deduced from the text; and in doing so, I would observe, that all

who pretend to an interest in the love of God, or to have His loving kindness before their eyes, have not their hearts engaged to a suitable obedience, for by many this is only falsely pretended. Multitudes, who vainly imagine that they are the friends and favorites of God, really are not; for by their practices, by their every-day life and conversation, they plainly discover themselves to be self-deceivers. If they do not walk in God's truth; if their steps are not ordered aright in His word, it is most certain that they have not "His loving kindness before their eyes." If any man say, that he has found grace in the sight of God, who makes little or no conscience of performing his duty to God, we cannot help pronouncing that the truth is not in him. How vain and foolish is it for any one to give the lie to his own conscience, by professing to obey the laws of God, when he knows for a certain fact, that he is doing the contrary! To say that I shall have peace at last among the redeemed, though I have no regard to holiness in this life, and that God will reckon me among His brightest jewels, though I lie still wallowing in the mire of sin, is impudently to give the lie to the whole Bible, as if we knew the mind of Christ better than Himself. Sinners that prophesy such smooth things to themselves, prophesy nothing but pernicious deceits. The foolish and sinful visions of their own minds, will end in utter darkness and ruin. They boast in their own imagination, that God is well pleased with them, though they take no delight in serving Him; but all such boasting is vain, and their end will discover them to be nothing else but mere hypocrites. Again, all have not a full and uninterrupted assurance of the "loving kindness of God," who do nevertheless yield the most unfeigned obedience to His laws. God does not always put gladness into those hearts, where He puts His fear; nor does He always make His face to shine, where He hath restored His image. Though every one that is born of God doth right; yet every such person does not certainly know, that His heavenly Father's heart is toward him for good. Some may live under His frowns, that yet live under His authority. They may be great strangers to "rejoicing in God," and yet, for all that, will not renounce their subjection to Him. Though they want the light of His countenance, yet His law is a lamp to their feet. This is the case of those upright souls, who walk trembling after the Lord. They are ready sometimes to call in question the "loving kindness" of the Lord, and to suspect that His tender mercies are quite shut up; yet, for all this, they are resolved to cleave to Him, and to walk so as to please Him, though they may have no testimony of their acceptableness to Him. The number of the righteous is indeed very small in comparison of the wicked, but we should make them