

existence of God. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God" (Ps. xiv. 1).

The second pretext, more plausible than the first does not come from an avowed infidel, but from a religious man who flatters himself, that he can render to God a worship acceptable to Him. The orthodox Pharisee who admits man's responsibility before God satisfies himsc'f with the thought that he is not a debtor and that God must necessarily justify him before His tribunal. It is this which the Lord exposes in Luke xviii, where the man thanks God that he is not unjust, "as other men are." From the bottom of his heart he despised the publican who was an avowed sinner. But Jesus says that the publican went down to his house justified, rather than the other, "for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Let us then leave our own thoughts and ascertain what God says. His thoughts are not as our thoughts. It is in vain for us to lean upon our own righteousness. On the other side, God desires not the death of the sinner. He wishes to be a Saviour and not a Judge; all however in righteousness for he cannot deny himself. Consequently His righteousness has been revealed, not ours, in the fact that by the redemption which Christ has effected, God manifests Himself as righteous in justifying the sinner who believes in Jesus (Rom. iii. 21, 26). The wretched condition of the one who becomes justified is thus declared, and at the same time that