

estimate of sin, but on His own. None can condemn—since God Himself justifieth (Rom. viii. 33, 34). God has not put us in the place of justifying ourselves; He does that Himself. And He takes our part much more effectually than we could take our own. Hence there is no guile in the spirit. So to speak, it is not needed. All anxiety about making out a case for ourselves is removed, since God Himself declares His righteousness in covering our sin, and making us righteous (Rom. iii. 24-26). If we search ever so deeply (and it is well to do so), as to what sin is, God knows it more deeply, and has dealt with it in judgment on the Cross of Christ according to His own estimate of it. There is no guile in the spirit, where there truly is faith; because the truthfulness of our own character, and the truthfulness of the character of God are alike maintained by the marvellous mode of God's dealing with us in and through Christ.

There is no guile in the spirit of him who at one and the same time takes his place as the chief of sinners, and yet also as perfectly righteous in Christ. There is no guile in the spirit of him whose object is to glorify Christ and not himself. Hence it follows that when self-vindication becomes needful for a saint, which is but rarely, he is placed in the most humiliating position; because he has to speak of himself instead of Christ. The apostle was thus compelled to speak "as a fool" (2 Cor. xi.). But as a general rule confession and not self-vindication is the path of a saint. An over-