

spiritual and temporal. How manifold are the benefits which He has conferred, and is still conferring on us! And O forbid, that, sinful and undeserving as we are, we should complain under any affliction, which he may see meet to mingle in our cup, and even which also, if we be duly exercised thereby, He sends in mercy. Let it rather be our earnest desire, and endeavor, to profit by all His dispensations, that they may be accompanied by the teaching of His Word and Spirit, may be the means of producing in us more realizing impressions of divine and eternal things, more humbling views of ourselves, a closer cleaving to Christ, and a more watchful, and prayerful obedience for the time to come.

5. But, having urged upon us a proper control over our passions and inclinations, and a patient resignation to all the dispensations of the providence of God, we are farther enjoined to add to patience "*godliness*;" that is, a regard to God in all the thoughts and feelings of our souls, and all the actions of our lives,—that love and fear of Him, and delight in Him, which will effectually dispose us to the performance of every duty, and which are the fulfilling of the law. So important is this grace of *piety*, to which we are here called, that it in fact involves in it the whole of true religion. Timothy, therefore, is exhorted by St. Paul to "exercise himself unto *godliness*," and it is declared, that "*godliness* is profitable unto all things, having the promise both of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." By it, we are taught, at once to take, as our guide in all our ways, His holy, and just, and good Law,—the perfect, and unchangeable standard of rectitude; and, at the same time, to keep all His commandments from a regard to Him, as our only Creator, our only Preserver, and Benefactor, our only Lawgiver and Judge, our only Redeemer, and our only Happiness. No sentiments, or dispositions, or actions can be properly called *good*, when not prompted mainly by a regard to God. Man alone, of all His creation here below, has been formed with the capacity of knowing, and loving, and intelligently serving Him. This is our highest privilege and distinction, as it must be the highest privilege and distinction of any created being. God has paramount claims on our reverence, gratitude, obedience, trust, and devout admiration, and affection;—claims, to which the claims of all others are as nothing in comparison, and he who is not actuated by a supreme