

GLORIOUS PROMISES.

SANCTIFYING GRACE.—"He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ"—Phil. i. 6 Reader! is the good work begun in thee? Art thou holy? Is sin crucifying? Are thy heart's idols one by one abolished? Is the world less to thee, and eternity more to thee? Is more of thy Saviour's image impressed on thy character, and thy Saviour's love more throned in thy heart? Is "salvation" to thee more "the one thing needful?" Oh! take heed! there can be no middle ground, no standing still; or if it be so, thy position must be a false one. The Saviour's blood is not more necessary to give thee a title to heaven than His Spirit to give thee a meetness for it. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His!" "Onwards!" should be thy motto. There is no standing still in the life of faith. "The man," says Augustine, "who says 'Enough,' that man's soul is lost!" Let this be the superscription in all thy ways and doings, "Holiness to the Lord." Let the monitory word exercise over thee its habitual power, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Moreover, remember, that to be holy is to be happy. The two are convertible terms. Holiness! It is the secret and spring of the joy of angels; and the more of holiness attained on earth, the nearer and closer my walk is with God—the more of a sweet earnest shall I have of the bliss that awaits me in holy heaven. Oh! my soul, let it be thy holy sacred ambition to "Be holy!"

REVIVING GRACE.—"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."—Isa. xl. 31.—"Wilt thou not revive us, O Lord?" My soul! art thou conscious of thy declining state? Is thy walk less with God, thy frame less heavenly? Hast thou less conscious nearness to the mercy-seat, diminished communion with thy Saviour? Is prayer less a privilege than it has been?—the pulsations of spiritual life more languid, and fitful, and spasmodic?—the bread of life less relished?—the seen, and the temporal, and the tangible, displacing the unseen and the eternal? Art thou sinking down into this state of drowsy self-contentment, this conformity-life with the world, forfeiting all the happiness of true religion, and risking and endangering the better life to come! Arise! call upon thy God! "Wilt thou not revive us, O Lord?" He might have returned nothing but the withering repulse, "How often would I have gathered thee, but thou wouldst not!"—"Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone!" But "in wrath He remembers mercy" "They shall revive as the corn." "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

PERSEVERING GRACE.—"The righteous shall hold on his way"—Job. xvii. 9.—Reader! how comforting to thee amid the ebbings and flowings of thy changing history, to know that the change is all with thee, and not with thy God! Thy spiritual bark may be tossed on the waves of temptation in many a dark midnight. Thou mayest think thy pilot hath left thee, and be ready continually to say, "Where is my God?" But fear not! The bark which bears thy spiritual destinies is in better hands than thine; a golden chain of covenant love links it to the eternal throne! That chain can never snap asunder. He who holds it in His hand gives thee this as the pledge of thy safety,—"Because I live, ye shall live also." "Why art thou then cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God!" Thou wilt assuredly ride out these stormy surges and reach the desired haven. But be faithful with thyself! see that there be nothing to hinder or impede thy growth in grace. Think how little may retard thy progress. One sin indulged—one temptation tampered with—one bosom traitor, may cost thee many a bitter hour and bitter tear by interposing between thee and thy God. Make it thy daily prayer, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

DYING GRACE.—"I have the keys of hell and of death."—Rev. i. 18.—And from whom could dying grace come so welcome as from Thee, O blessed Jesus? Not only is Thy Name, "the Abolisher of death;" but Thou didst Thyself die! Thou hast sanctified the grave by Thine own presence, and divested it of all its terrors. My soul! art thou at times afraid of this, thy last enemy? If the rest of thy pilgrimage-way be peaceful and unclouded—rests there a dark and portentous shadow over the terminating portals? Fear not! When that dismal

entrance is reached, He who has "the keys of the grave and of death" suspended at His golden girdle, will impart grace to bear thee through. It is the messenger of peace. Thy Saviour calls thee! The promptings of nature, when at first thou seest the darkening waves, may be that of the affrighted disciples, when they said, "It is a spirit, and cried out for fear!" But a gentle voice will be heard high above the storm, "It is I! Be not afraid!" Death, indeed, as the wages of sin, must, even by the believer, be regarded as an enemy. But, oh! blessed thought, it is thy last enemy—the cause of thy last tear. In a few brief moments after that tear is shed, thy God will be wiping every vestige of it away!

AFTER GRACE, GLORY.—"The Lord will give grace and glory"—Psalm lxxiv. 11.—Oh! happy day, when this toilsome warfare will all be ended, Jordan crossed, Canaan entered, the legion-enemies of the wilderness no longer dreaded; sorrow, sighing, death, and, worst of all, sin, no more either to be felt or feared! Here is the terminating link in the golden chain of the everlasting covenant. It began with *predestination*; it ends with *glorification*. It begins with *sovereign grace* in a bypast eternity, and no link will be wanting till the ransomed spirit be presented faultless before the throne! Grace and glory! If the earnest be sweet, what must be the reality? If the wilderness table contain such rich provision, what must be the glories of the eternal banqueting house? Oh! my soul, make sure of thine interest in the one, as the blessed prelude to the other. "Having access by faith into this grace, thou canst rejoice in hope of the glory of God!" for "whom he justifies them he also glorifies!" Has grace begun in thee? Canst thou mark—though it should be but the drops of the incipient rill which is to terminate in such an ocean—the tiny grains which are to accumulate and issue in such "an exceeding weight of glory?" Delay not the momentous question! The day of offered grace is on the wing, its hours are fast numbering, and "no grace, no glory!"

ANOTHER COMFORTER.—"I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter: that He may abide with you for ever."—John xiv. 16.—Blessed Spirit of all grace! how oft have I grieved Thee! resisted Thy dealings, quenched Thy strivings; and yet art Thou still pleading with me! Oh! let me realise more than I do the need of Thy gracious influences, Ordinances, sermons, communions, providential dispensations, are nothing without Thy life-giving power. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." "No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Church of the living God! is not this the cause of thy deadness? My soul! is not this the secret of thy languishing frames, repeated declensions, uneven walk, and sudden falls, that the influences of the Holy Ghost are undervalued and unsought? Pray for the outpouring of this blessed Agent for the world's renovation, and thine own. "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh," is the precursor of millennial bliss. Jesus! draw near in Thy mercy to this torpid heart, as Thou didst of old to Thy mourning disciples: and breathe upon it, and say, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." It is the mightiest of all boons; but, like the sun in the heavens, it is the freest of all.

PROVIDENTIAL OVERRULING.—"All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."—Rom. viii. 28—My soul! be still! thou art in the hands of thy covenant God. Were those strange vicissitudes in thy history the result of accident or chance, thou mightest well be overwhelmed; but "all things," and this thing (be what it may) which may be now disquieting thee, is one of these "all things" that are so working mysteriously for thy good. Trust thy God! He will not deceive thee,—thy interests are with Him in safe custody. When sigh says, "All these things are against me," let faith rebuke the hasty conclusion, and say, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" How often does God hedge up our way with thorns to elicit simple trust! How seldom can we see all things so working for our good! But it is better discipline to believe it. Oh! for faith amid frowning providences, to say, "I know that Thy judgments are good"; and, relying in the dark, to exclaim, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him!" How can I doubt the wisdom, and faithfulness, and love of the most mysterious earthly dealing, when I know that the Roll of Providence is thus in the hands of Him who has given the mightiest pledge Omnipotence could give of His tender interest in my soul's well-being, by giving Himself for me?