

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is ; and every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure " (1 John iii.).

This hope, grounded on Christ, is the great power of present purification. "Desiring to be teachers of the law" (1 Tim. i.), was, in the apostle's judgment, the result of ignorance in those who undoubtedly thought to promote holiness thereby. And so there is even a way of pressing conduct and service, which, instead of strengthening the life of Christ in the saint, turns him back on the question of his own salvation. Such is not the way in which the Spirit leads. He glorifies Christ, and takes great care to establish the soul in Him, when leading it on into practical holiness. Such is the order of instruction for the most part in the Epistles. And I believe the wondrous truth of "righteousness without works" to be the very ground-work of righteousness and true holiness. It is the positive blessing received, recognized and enjoyed—"God delivered Christ for our sins and raised Him for our justification," which calls the Christian life into activity.

Secondly, "And in whose spirit there is no guile." It is written of Jesus, "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Pet. ii.). Of all others the description is but too true—"With their tongues they have used deceit" (Rom. iii.). This