

the infinite nature, and perfections of God, an intelligent acquaintance with our own real state, and what the Gospel reveals, and requires, and a Christian wisdom, and discretion, in the application of what it contains to the circumstances in which we are placed, and in which we act. The importance of a right understanding of the objects of faith can scarcely be too highly estimated. If we know not the glorious nature, and works, and ways of God, how can we possibly think of Him, and feel towards Him, and serve Him as we ought? If we have only vague, or mistaken notions of the way of salvation which His Word proclaims, how can we expect, that we should experience its saving and sanctifying power? How, without knowledge, can we be said to believe at all, in the proper sense of that term? We must, first, understand the meaning of what we affirm that we believe; otherwise, although still termed by us belief, it is not the belief of the truth as it is in Jesus. Let us seek, not only, to have the knowledge of these things, but to *grow* in the *knowledge* of them. For while the declarations of the Gospel are, in their main features, simple, and level to the apprehension of the meanest capacity, and such that he who runs may read, they are at the same time sublime, in their import, beyond the most exalted conceptions of the highest intelligence.

3. *Another* grace specified by the Apostle, as requisite to be added to our faith, is *temperance*. By this, is not meant a refraining from excess merely of one particular kind, but of all kinds whatever. The *temperance* of Christianity implies in it moderation in *all* things, even those which are lawful, and innocent in themselves. This is evident from the meaning of the original word, which is *mastery*,—the mastery over the world, the devil and the flesh,—the greatest of all conquests, which none but the true disciple of Christ can attain. The want of a proper rule over our spirits, and carrying beyond their due bounds passions, and inclinations right and becoming in themselves, is the source of many of the sins of men. Thus a proper industry, and economy are degraded into covetousness, the lawful desire for pleasure is debased into sensualism, the love of knowledge gives place to an insatiable craving after an unprofitable, and falsely called learning, patriotism degenerates into a vain ambition, and thirst after a merely popular applause, the natural appetites, which