

THE WAY OF A CHRISTIAN'S POWER.

2 CORINTHIANS XII.

This chapter presents to us, in a remarkable manner, the way in which the power comes whereby a Christian can walk through this world. It is not merely now a path in which he can walk, but the way by which he may have strength to walk in it, and what the perfect work of God is in order to his walking in this path. Here we see the two extremes of what a Christian can rise to, and into what he can fall.

In the beginning of the chapter a man was caught up to the third heaven; he was in the highest extreme of spiritual blessedness. Such blessedness, indeed, he had been conscious of, that it was not suited to speak of when he got back into his natural state. No doubt his faith was strengthened by it for his work, but he could not speak of such things. Now there is the highest state of spirituality which you can suppose, and yet it is that which is true for us all. No doubt it was brought home to the apostle in a special manner, but the thing that he so realized is true of us. Then, at the close of the chapter, is seen the other extreme—namely, the terrible state into which a saint can get. We read of envyings, wraths, strifes, uncleanness, fornication, etc. So bad indeed was their state that the apostle could not even go to Corinth. True, they had received the apostle's reproof, and the man was