

to the hearers (Rom. xii.; Ephes. v.). Hence arises the danger to Christians from misusing even the good, holy and righteous law of God. It is not for the righteous (1 Tim. i.). Their need is to have the life already received nurtured by the ministry of Christ, the true and living Head; in order that the energies of that life may be called forth in its varied and appropriate activities. We have Christ Himself for our standard, and the righteousness which we have in Him, as our standing before God, presented to us as our highest but certain final attainment. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after; if that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Hence it is that the one hope of our calling, which is so certain, because according to the purpose of God, becomes so formative of the Christian character. To be conformed to the image of God's Son, as the First-born among many brethren, is the blessed destiny of those whom God has already justified. It is upon the certainty of this, that the Holy Ghost acts in our conscience and affections, not making what we shall be to depend on what we practically are, I mean as Christians; but, taking the divine certainty of what we *shall be*, as the mighty moral lever, now to elevate our affections; and even now beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.