

ceived. Our subject, however, refers not to the person who is made righteous by imputation, but to one who is righteous in character and practice.

2ndly. *The Righteous expresses a sanctified person.* We have to do at present, not with the foundation of imputed righteousness, but with the superstructure of personal righteousness. The two are inseparably connected, and both are alike indispensably necessary. All who have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, are also washed and sanctified by the Spirit of our God. The character of righteousness is, in every instance, the effect of the grace of God. The semblance of it may, and, it is to be feared, is often assumed; worldly men, for certain purposes of their own, very generally lay claim to it. They may exhibit an appearance of righteousness which may closely resemble it, and which is, by superficial observers, thoughtlessly confounded with genuine or evangelical righteousness. But the morality of the world is unrighteousness with God. The quality of an action depends altogether on the nature from which it proceeds. Although the principle of our conduct may, in general, be a matter of indifference among men, yet it is everything with our God. It signifies not what we do, if we do it not with a single eye to His glory, we do it not to "Him who searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men." The peculiar excellence of the righteous is, that he acts from the holy principles which God has not only inculcated in His Word, but which He has implanted in his heart by His grace. His obedience differs from that of other men, no less in its quality than in its degree,—an obedience, be it observed, proceeding out of a true heart, and from faith unfeigned—an obedience influenced by a supreme regard to the honor of God, maintained in a single and simple dependence on the promised strength of God—an obedience expressive of the purity and intensity of his love, and exhibiting the character of likeness to Him. He that is born of God cannot sin allowedly or habitually; having been made free from sin, he cannot serve it or obey it in the lusts thereof. The fountain having been cleansed, the streams thereof will be pure: the tree being made good, the fruit will partake of the same.

3rdly. *The Righteous is a character of high and comprehensive excellency.* It includes the exercise of piety in the devout and regular acknowledgments of God, which is man's principal duty, by offering to Him the honor of our worship, as the expression of reverence, submission and love; by presenting to Him the tribute of our thanksgivings for the varied and numerous bounties of His Providence, as well as the rich blessings of His grace; by the humble and penitent confession of sin, both of the heart and conduct; by asking His countenance and supplicating His favour, with his whole heart, and

in His own appointed way; and, generally, making it our chief concern to promote His glory, to advance His kingdom, and to execute His will; and, in short, the character of the righteous cannot truly be such, without being sincerely religious in all things, in great or small, at home or abroad, in secret or in public. The fear of the Lord lies at the foundation of all moral excellence, and, without this most essential and grand principle, *there can be no moral and righteous excellence of character.* A decided profession of the Christian faith, and followed up in the careful observance of commanded religious ordinances, form an essential element in the lofty character of the righteous. Some there are, who eagerly plead for, and strongly advocate in behalf of an abstract sentimental devotion, which rejects all external ceremonies in their worship. But, such advocates for such a system ought to remember that we have bodies as well as souls; that our minds must be addressed through the medium of the senses. Piety should be seen, as well as felt. There may, it is true, be the form of godliness without the power, but the power will naturally express itself in the abundance of the form. This evidence of piety is indeed not at all times to be depended upon, yet, at the same time, it cannot be dispensed with; and, if the form be prompted by right and proper motives, it will invariably be attended with those feelings of the heart, which constitute the spirit of genuine piety, and with those features of character which prove its sincerity, and exhibit its power and efficacy. There will be the consecration of the whole man to the service of God, expressed in a desire to do, and a disposition to give, and a readiness to suffer, in every form, and to any extent that may be most agreeable to God's will, and most conducive to His glory. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and soul, and strength, and mind." This is the first and great commandment; and the second is like to it, namely, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Accordingly the character of the righteous combines the sacred observance of religion, with the performance of all relative duties incumbent on them.

4thly. *The character of the Righteous includes the practice of justice;* in rendering to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor, custom to whom custom.

The righteous man, as the subject of *Civil Government*, always presents an example of due submission "to the powers that be, which are ordained of God," by yielding implicit obedience to all constituted authorities; by bearing cheerfully his appointed share of every public and necessary burden, and by scrupulously abstaining from every and all attempts, either openly or privately, to evade the law, even when it can be done with perfect impunity, and with great pecuniary advantage. In the intercourse of *social life*,