

self, saying—"Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." He was a luminary only as he was illumined from a higher source, and reflected the light he had received. And the most holy and useful of CHRIST'S servants have ever acknowledged their obligations and consecrated all their endowments to *Him* from whom they had emanated. They *shine*, because they display the graces of the Spirit, or "hold forth the word of life,"—and they *burn*, because "the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts;" and whenever the church is favoured with men of eminent gifts and graces—holiness, zeal, and usefulness—let us adore the grace of God in them, and pray to the LORD that he will graciously be pleased to multiply his Servants, who shall go forth, like John, and be *burning and shining lights*, for the edification of the church, and the conversion of a wicked world. The harvest truly is great, but such labourers are few.

II.—Let us now contemplate the *feelings* and *conduct* displayed by the Jews toward John the Baptist.—"He was a burning and a shining light, and *ye were willing, for a season, to rejoice in his light.*" They once regarded him as a prophet, and admired his character and ministry, though their great men afterwards persecuted him. Even Herod himself, whom he reprov'd for gross sins, "feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him; and when he heard him he did many things, and heard him gladly."—*Mark*, 6, 20. And it is said that "when he afterwards would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, for they counted him as a prophet."—*Matt.* 14, 5. Thus they "rejoiced in his light."

*They admired the sanctity of his life.* They beheld