

S E R M O N II.

THE ADVANTAGE TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST'S ABSENCE IN HEAVEN, AS SECURING THE SPIRIT'S PRESENCE ON EARTH.

'Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you;' John xvi, 7.

There is a love which knits hearts together by the tenderest and most endearing ties;—a love this not necessarily arising from blood relationship, but which is founded on mutual esteem and approbation, and heightened and confirmed by kindred feeling. And wherever this love exists, it is an evidence of refinement and virtue; for wherever vice predominates, *there* is intense selfishness, and disregard of the comfort and feelings of others. But *there* is a love even stronger than this. It is the love which we feel for one vastly elevated above us, by the possession of qualities of mind and heart of the noblest and rarest sort. A person may be possessed of great qualities which cannot fail to command our admiration; but if these are dissociated from virtue, he may excite our dread rather than call forth our love. Again *there* may be great qualities of mind, in connection with the sternest virtues, and such a person may secure our respect, as well as command our admiration. But when great qualities of mind are associated with the possession of great power, and beautified by all that is lovely, and kind, and benevolent, and good; when we are brought into contact with such a character, and even received into his confidence, and friendship, and have opportunities of seeing the blessed effects of his beneficent conduct, and ourselves experience his kindness, a feeling of intensest affection, and reverence; and admiration, springs up for him in our soul; so that *there* is scarcely any sacrifice which we would not make for one so noble and beloved. Such was the love which