

panied with blessings to the christian, are all intended "to work together for good to them that love God."* Lastly, we may name, *spiritual depression* as another state where this grace is peculiarly needed. Every true believer has a title to peace of soul, but every true believer does not possess it in an equal degree; nor does every true believer possess it at all times. It often happens that, owing either to bodily weakness, or Satan's temptations, or the absence of clear views upon the doctrines of grace; the true Christian struggles for a season, against desponding apprehensions about his spiritual state. In the character of God he beholds such spotless purity, in the standard of his Law such spirituality and perfection, in his own heart such weakness and defilement, that he is tempted to "write bitter things against himself," and almost to conclude, at times, that "there is no help for him in his God." Here, more than in any other situation, patience is demanded. The spirit says—"Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."† And again "wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart, wait I say on the Lord."‡

Subject to these difficulties as he travels the path to Heaven, the Christian needs the grace of patience in his soul, to ensure his perseverance in that path. It is by inclining the hearts of his people to exercise this grace that God preserves them in the midst of their trials, and thus brings them "through faith and patience," to inherit at last the glorious promises of his word.

II. Such characters, my brethren, are held up for our imitation, in the text before us, and it is now our part to consider attentively *the exhortation which*

* Rom. 8. 28.

† Isai. 50. 10.

‡ Psal. 27. 14.