

SERMON I.

GODLY SORROW.

(Preached on the 4th Sunday in Lent.)

II. Cor. vii. 10.

“ Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”

It cannot be denied that a large portion of holy scripture is taken up with the subject of Sorrow in its various forms, that it holds an eminent position, and fills a wide circumference in our holy religion;—that though the joy of a Christian, even in this dark world, is said by an apostle to be “unspeakable,” yet his sorrow rivals it in magnitude, and struggles with it for equal sway. Hence the profane barking of the world, always essentially anti-Christian—hence its opposition to the cross, that awful type of sorrow—and its impatient objurgations:—“Are we never to hear aught from your pulpits but the same melancholy strains? When will its torrent of mingled tears, and sighs, and groans, and alarms run dry?” Forgetting that sorrow is in the pulpit—because it is in the world; forgetting that sorrow is in the world, not because Christianity brought it there, but ourselves, by our sins; forgetting that Christianity (on which they fasten a quarrel, with a sort of natural antipathy) is not all sorrow—but that it has exhaustless stores of joy, to which they have no heart: but worst, and most of all to be deplored, forgetting, with immeasurable ingratitude, the wonder-working wisdom and goodness of God, who, finding sorrow in the world, introduced by human wilfulness, divests it of its