

dually as well as collectively. Nor would little advantage arise from the conversations among the hearers on the truths delivered in their public assemblies, in applying them to their improvement, comfort, and encouragement.

But it may be said, that I am multiplying evidence upon a question which no person doubts, since all must be sensible from their own personal experience of the great efficacy of private instruction and friendly conversation. If then we are all thus convinced, why do we hold back—why do we shrink from the public profession of our faith? Why do we avoid proclaiming our love for our blessed Lord, and our determination to walk in the law that he hath set before us? Are we at a loss for topics for religious conversation? Have we nothing to say of the purity of the divine knowledge communicated in his blessed word? the clearer conceptions of the one true God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, in whom we live and move, and have our being? that the belief in this sublime truth hath abolished idolatry, and that though we are not able fully to comprehend the eternal invisible God, because the splendour of his glory and the infinity of his perfections confound us, yet we see him now in a gentler, a milder light, in a visible and human form, in the person of his Son Jesus Christ, the faithful and express image of his Father—the brightness of his glory? Have we nothing to say of the Providence and moral Government of God, extending over all the parts as well as the whole? Not a sparrow shall fall to the ground without his permission, saith Christ, nor a hair of our heads, for they are all numbered; he knows what we need before we ask it of him; he sees all things, governs all things, directs all things by the most consummate wisdom and goodness;—therefore the eyes of the Omniscient behold even us, and care for us, the children of the dust, who seldom know what is proper and good for ourselves, and at every step we take are in danger of losing the way. What a glorious and comfortable doctrine is this, for the knowledge of which, we are indebted to the blessed Jesus, who came into the world to save sinners!

Are we silent on the goodness and mercy of God, that he is placable and long suffering—that he is love itself! that he is our wise and gracious Father, who embraces all his children with benevolence and affection—who deals not with us after our sins, nor rewards us according to our