

of the people of Israel, and recounting to them the benefits which the Lord had conferred on them, thus exhorted them, "New *therefore* fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth." Surely to us is peculiarly applicable the exhortation of the Apostle in our Text, "And besides this" (or rather, for such is the meaning of the expression), "*on this very account*, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." The Apostle, after, in the preceding verses of this Epistle, praying for grace and peace from God to his Christian brethren, first directs their minds to the grace of God, by His Holy Spirit, as the only effectual source of their conversion, impressing as it did on their hearts and minds the knowledge of Christ, and the precious promises of His Gospel, and causing them to fulfil the end which these were intended, as well as fitted to accomplish,—that is, that they might be delivered from sin, and made partakers of the divine nature; and then he takes occasion, in the words before us, to exhort those to whom he wrote, in the use of every means in the pursuit of the same end, to work out their own salvation with fear, and trembling, because it is God who hath wrought, and still worketh in them to will, and to do, and giving all diligence, to make their calling and election sure.—Even so, since God thus calls us by his grace, and has bestowed on us so many inestimable blessings, in that land which we still delight to call by the endearing name of Home, we ought, all the more, to give all diligence to add to our faith every Christian grace.

Let us then consider, in the *first* place, the *several practical duties* to which we are here called; and *next*, the *manner in which they ought to be performed*, "Giving all diligence."

Christian faith is not a dead and inoperative, but a living and active principle. Though we are saved by faith *alone*, we are not saved by a faith *which is alone*, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but *faith which worketh by love*." From that which is, in these words, declared to be the all in all of Christianity, we learn the inseparable connexion between Christian faith, and Christian practice. And how miserably would we deceive ourselves, if we