

like them springing up in his breast? When we read Enoch's short but sublime history, the desire to be like him,—to attain to a higher degree of spiritual life, to live nearer to God,—is kindled within our hearts. And when we study the history of faithful Abraham, the desire to be strong in faith,—to have unbounded confidence in God, takes possession of our minds. And then, again, when we read the history of David, and observe the ardent piety that burned in his bosom, we are constrained to wish that the flame of love may burn pure and bright in our hearts also; and that we, like him, may be men after God's own heart.

But although the examples of these holy men of old are made use of as motives and encouragements to induce us to the exercise of those virtues for which they were remarkable, yet they are not set forth as our examples in all things. This honour is given to Christ alone. We are to follow them in so far as they followed Christ, and no farther. Christ, and Christ alone, is the great example whom we are to follow in all things. We are told that he suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps. We are commanded to put on the Lord Jesus, which means to clothe ourselves with the virtues that adorned his character; and it is written, he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as he walked.

The injunction, however, to walk as Jesus walked, must be taken in a limited sense. It is, we apprehend, similar to the injunction which the apostle Paul gives to the Ephesians: "Be ye followers of God as dear children." Now, in what respect are we to be imitators of God? Certainly not as regards his natural attributes, such as his power, omniscience, omnipresence, immutability, and eternity; for it is impossible for the finite creature to attain to any of these. The reference is manifestly to his moral attributes,—those attributes which constitute his moral character. And so it is with reference to Christ as our example. There are many things which Jesus did when he lived upon the earth, and which he is now doing in heaven, that cannot be literally followed by us. For example, we cannot follow him in his miracles,—in raising the dead, opening the eyes of the blind, and causing the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak. Neither can we follow him in his official character, as the great atoner for sin, and as mediator between God and man. We can follow him only in those things which come within the circle of our duty, such as his holiness, love, meekness, and compassion for the souls of men. And, on the