

CIRCULAR LETTER.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

The cultivation of deep personal piety is the subject to which we beg leave to call your attention in our present Epistle.

We rejoice in the assured confidence, that you have been led under the influence of grace, to *receive the love of the truth*; and that you are disposed to retain it without wavering. It affords us, also, sincere pleasure to contemplate the manifest tokens, which you are enabled to exhibit, of the possession of vital godliness. We are persuaded, however, that you are aware of the necessity and importance of superior attainments in the divine life, and that you will readily *suffer the word of exhortation*.

By *deep personal piety* we mean, a fervent devotion of the heart to the service of God, disposing us to yield a cheerful obedience to all His commands, to delight in Him as the Supreme Good, to confide firmly in His providence and grace, to acquiesce in His will, to renounce the world, to depart from iniquity, and to endeavour to promote the best interest of our fellow men, under the influence of a lively faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In adducing motives to enforce the cultivation of deep personal piety, it may be proper to notice particularly the following considerations, which evidently require it:—

1. *The command of God.* It is expressly enjoined on believers to *grow in grace* (2 Peter iii. 18,) and to *set their affection on things above*, (Col. iii. 2.) These and similar divine injunctions demand the most unqualified and constant obedience.

2. *The glory of God.* It is written, *Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.* (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.) That it is incumbent, then, on the Lord's people to glorify Him, admits not of a question: but how can this be done without the cultivation of fervent piety? Jesus says, *Therein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit*, (John xv. 8,) and we know that it is only being assimilated to the likeness of the dear Redeemer, under the transforming operation of living faith in Him, that we can bring forth the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.

3. *The prosperity of Zion.* Christians are directed to *exhort one another daily* (Heb. iii. 13,) and to *edify one another*, (1 Thes. v. 11.) But these duties are not likely to be attempted, and they