

PREFACE.

THE unbounded freedom with which in these days every thing connected with religion is discussed, will appear, it is presumed, to all who shall honour these pages with a perusal, a sufficient reason for such a discourse having been composed and preached. Its publication has followed, in compliance with the request of many of those who heard it. This request, although at first, and for some time, he was but little inclined to submit the Sermon to public criticism, was highly gratifying to the Author—proceeding as it did from a considerable number of respectable and intelligent persons, regular attendants upon his ministry, who well know what the general tenor of his preaching during many years has been, and who must be understood by that request to have expressed their own opinion, that it has been evangelical in the proper sense of that word, and correspondent to the account here given of it. He would wish it to be received as a statement of what his doctrine will continue to be, as well as of what it has been hitherto. No new views of theology have been lately taken up by him. He adheres steadfastly to the system in which he accounts it his happiness to have been trained from his earliest years, and will certainly continue to do so until he is convinced that it is inconsistent with the Scriptures, and with the primitive and catholic belief. He thanks God that the more he reads and meditates upon the particulars which that system embraces, the more he is satisfied of their truth and soundness, and of their conformity to the principles of the British Reformation.