

own nature, be unjust in either respect. The rewards of the distributive righteousness of God are reckoned not of debt but of *grace*; and the whole tenor of Scripture proclaims that the allotments of the last day will be measured out according to the strictest rule of right: *ἐκάστῳ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ*. St. Paul calls the last day the revelation of the *righteous judgment of God*, *δικαιοκρισίας τοῦ Θεοῦ*, the only instance of this impressive word. He teaches here as elsewhere that, as the punishment of evil-doers will be the fruit of their own doings, and also the direct infliction of judgment, so likewise the reward of the blessed will be the righteous decision of judgment, as well as the harvest of their own sowing.

Truth.

THE TRUTH OR FAITHFULNESS OF GOD.

These attributes—which are really one under two aspects—are, as it were, the supporters and guarantees of the Divine Justice. It may be affirmed that they are never referred to save in connection with that supreme economy which reveals the Righteousness of God in Jesus Christ.

In His  
Revela-  
tions.

1. Truth as a Divine perfection represents the absolute correspondence of all His revelations with the reality; and it may be referred to His representations of His own nature, to His revelation of the great system of grace under which He governs the world, and to His word of revelation generally whether in whole or in part.

1 John v.  
20.  
Johann x vii.  
3.

(1.) God is *the true God*, and *the only true God*. It is observable that in both these passages, which are unique, the revelation of God is connected with the Son. He is the only veritable God, in opposition to every fictitious being; and He is the God of veracity in thus revealing Himself. We have here a sublime *petitio principii*: our God is the only real God, because He Who is true declares it. But the attribute is not here objective: it is rather the subjective Divine veracity in all His revelations of Himself. As to His nature, His Triune essence, His attributes, our relations to Him and His to us, and all that concerns the essentials of our theology, we are dependent on the truth of the Creator, Who hath formed us in His image and implanted those instincts and that consciousness of

Him which cannot deceive us. Our faith in universal religion is bound up with our faith in the veracity of God Who speaks the truth to us concerning Himself and our own relations to Him.

(2.) The truth of God is pledged to the stability and eternity of the redeeming economy as a whole. This is His absolute immutability translated into the sphere of His saving revelations. One great purpose for the good of mankind is announced from generation to generation; and to that the Eternal declares Himself true, uttering every variety of appeal to His own steadfastness from age to age. In early times the universal purpose seemed limited to one people; and to them He represents His truth. *He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.* As the great system is further disclosed in the psalms and prophets, the coming salvation is pledged with ever-increasing strength: *The Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations.* When it is consummated, it is by Him who is THE TRUTH; and it is confirmed by the oath of an immutable counsel in which it was impossible for God to lie. Hence it may be said that the attribute of truth is assigned to God mainly as the God of the one eternal covenant in Christ.

(3.) But it is also referred to His spoken and written revelations generally, which are declared to contain only the truth of God. Speaking to His Father, He Who is the Truth said *Thy word is truth.* There is no doubt that the Old Testament, which was then the Bible, was regarded by all who read it as containing the infallible sayings of the undecieving God of truth. The truth of Scripture we are not now, however, pleading: only for the attribute in the Supreme that insures the absolute correspondence of every word spoken by Him with the essential reality of things.

2. The Faithfulness of God has a more limited application than His truth. It is the attribute that pledges to man in infinite condescension—for it is the most anthropopathic of all the attributes—the fulfilment of every specific promise based upon the economy of His righteousness. Appeals to His own fidelity on the part of Jehovah, and responses to the appeal on the part of man, crowd the Scriptures. It may suffice here to refer to three most interesting illustrations of it in the economy of grace. Sinners

Faithfulness to Redemption.

Deut. xxxii. 4.

Ps. c. 5.

John xiv. 6.  
Heb. vi. 18.

In the Word.

John xvii. 17.

Faithfulness Proper.

- 1 John i. 9. repenting of their sin, and confessing it, are assured that *He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*. Believers oppressed by the weariness of the way, and their own instability, are reminded that *The Lord is faithful, Who shall stablish you, and guard you from the evil one*. We are encouraged to aspire to perfect holiness of body and soul and spirit, are assured that *faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will do it*. These passages carry the Divine fidelity into the entire process of personal salvation from beginning to end. It is remarkable that this attribute is never expressly connected with the fulfilment of the Divine threatenings, though equally applicable to them. Hence, though we have located it in the family of Righteousness or justice, it forms the transition to the other and more gracious family of Love.

Love.

## THE LOVE OF GOD.

Like His holiness, the love of God has its most direct and express relation to the creature, and especially to the intelligences under the moral government of God. But love has in this the pre-eminence, that it has an eternal and essential seat in the Triune Essence.

- In the Divine Essence. 1 John iv. 16. 1. Hence we read that GOD IS LOVE: in the secret of the Divine Self-sufficiency and Blessedness we have already seen the mysterious intercommunion of Three Persons whose mutual love gives God one of His Names and defines His nature. If in the created universe it for ever seeks to impart itself to all who are capable of receiving it, and delights both in giving and receiving, that is because in the ever-blessed Trinity love is, as in all who reflect the Divine image, the *bond of perfectness*. We may, we must, transfer our finite feeling to the Infinite, and believe, not that the Triune God was, but that He is, existing in an eternal sphere of love, into the fellowship of which the finite and creaturely universe is received. *Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world*: if these words are connected with those which immediately precede, *and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me*; and these again with the assurance, *as the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you*; and these once more with the command, *That ye love one another*,
- Col iii. 14. John xvii. 23, 24. John xv. 9. John xiii. 34.