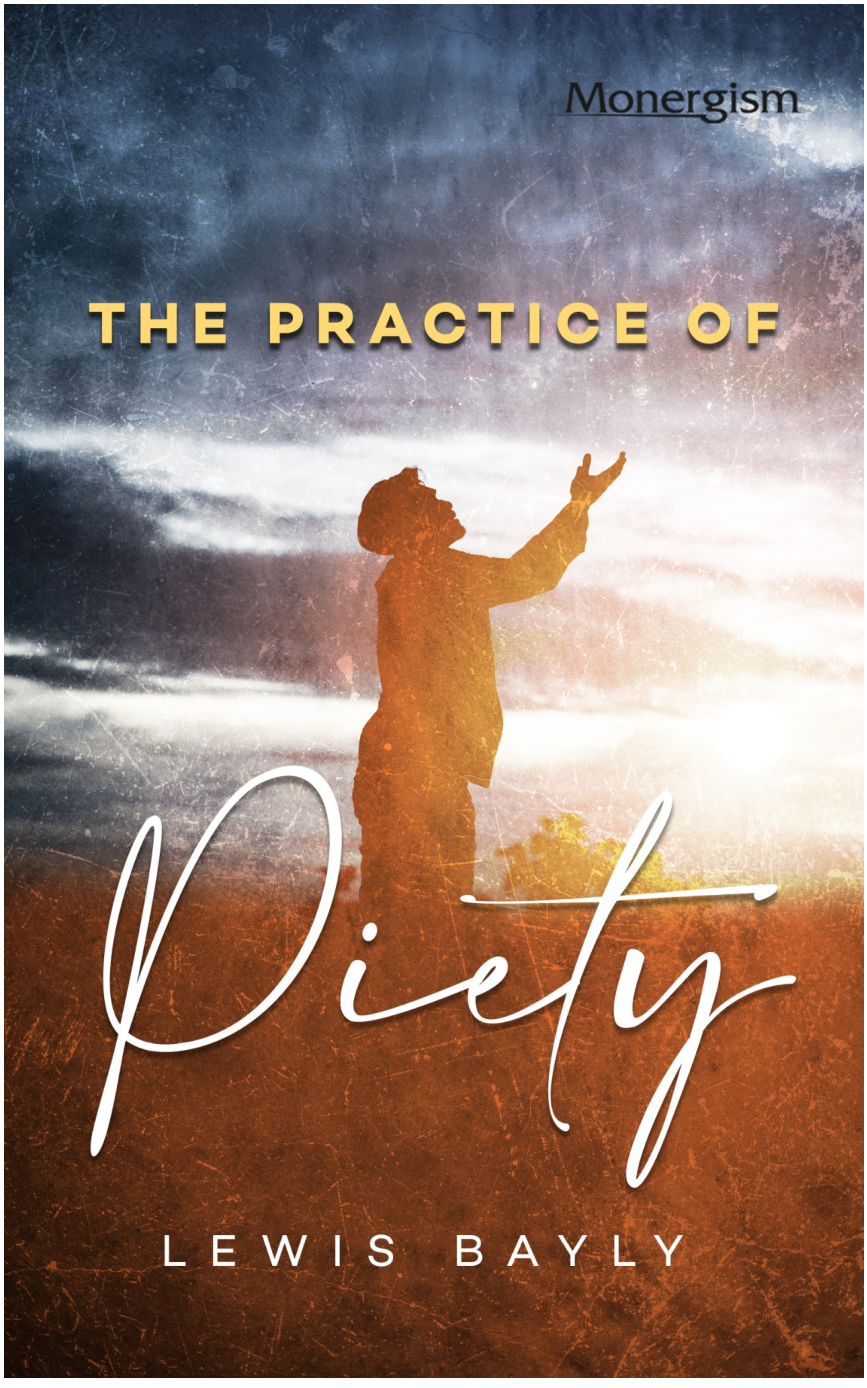

Monergism
THE PRACTICE OF
Piety
LEWIS BAYLY

THE PRACTICE OF PIETY

Directing a Christian How to Walk, That He May Please God

LEWIS BAYLY

MONERGISM BOOKS

The Practice of Piety

Lewis Bayly

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Contents

Title Page 7

Biographical Preface 8

The Practice of Piety 22

Original Table of Contents . . . 23

The Epistle Dedicatory . . . 25

To the Devout Reader . . . 29

The Practice of Piety: Directing a Christian How to... 30

A Plain Description of the Essence and Attributes... . . . 31

Meditations of the Misery of a Man Not Reconciled... . . . 49

Meditations of the State of a Christian Reconciled... . . . 61

Blessedness of the Regenerate . . . 62

Meditations of the Blessed State of a Regenerate... . . . 65

Meditations of the Blessed State of the Regenerate... . . . 67

Meditations of the blessed state of a Regenerate... . . . 75

Of the Prerogatives which the Elect shall enjoy in... . . . 79

Of the Effects of those Prerogatives . . . 80

Meditations directing a Christian how to apply to... . . . 85

Meditations on the Hindrances which Keep Back a... . . . 86

How a Private Man Must Begin the Morning with Piety . . . 103

Meditations for the Morning . . . 104

Brief Directions How to Read the Holy Scriptures... . . . 106

A Prayer for the Morning . . . 109

Meditations to Stir Us Up to Morning Prayer . . . 112

Another Short Morning Prayer . . . 114

Farther Meditations to Stir Up to Prayer in the... . . . 116

A Brief Prayer for the Morning . . . 117

Meditations Directing a Christian How He May Walk... . . . 118

First, For Thy Thoughts . . . 119

Secondly, for Thy Words . . . 122
Thirdly, for Thy Actions . . . 125
Meditations for the Evening . . . 130
A Prayer for the Evening . . . 132
Another Shorter Evening Prayer . . . 135
Meditations for Household Piety . . . 138
Morning Prayer for a Family . . . 140
The Practice of Piety at Meals, and the Manner of... . . . 143
Meditations before Dinner and Supper . . . 144
Grace before Meat . . . 146
The Practice of Piety at Evening . . . 148
Rules to be Observed in Singing of Psalms . . . 149
Evening Prayer for a Family . . . 150
Meditations of the True Manner of Practising Piety... . . . 153
Ten Reasons demonstrating the Commandment of the... . . . 160
The True Manner of Keeping Holy the Lord’s Day . . . 172
Consecration of the Sabbath’s Rest . . . 173
A Morning Prayer for the Sabbath-day . . . 177
Duties in the Holy Assembly . . . 179
A Private Evening Prayer for the Lord’s Day . . . 185
Of the Practice of Piety in Fasting . . . 188
I. Of a Private Fast . . . 189
II. Of the Public Fast . . . 197
Of the Practice of Piety in Holy Feasting . . . 198
I. Of Preparation . . . 199
Duties After Communion . . . 222
The Practice of Piety in Glorifying God in the Time... . . . 227
A Prayer When One Begins to Be Sick . . . 229
A Prayer Before Taking of Medicine . . . 234
Meditations for the Sick . . . 235
Meditations for One That Is Like to Die . . . 243
A Prayer to Be Said of One That Is Like to Die . . . 247
Meditations against Despair, or doubting of God’s... . . . 249

An Admonition to them who come to visit the Sick 256
A Prayer to Be Said for the Sick by Them Who Visit... 258
Consolations Against Impatience in Sickness 260
Consolations Against the Fear of Death 262
Seven Sanctified Thoughts and Mournful Sighs of a... 264
Of the Comfortable Assurance of God’s Forgiveness... 268
Meditations of Martyrdom 274
A Divine Colloquy Between the Soul and Her Savior... 278

Indexes **289**

Index of Scripture References 290
Greek Words and Phrases 297
Hebrew Words and Phrases 299
Latin Words and Phrases 300
Index of Pages of the Print Edition 305

The Practice of Piety

Directing a Christian How to Walk, that He May Please God.

by Lewis Bayly, D.D.

Bishop of Bangor

(with a biographical preface by Grace Webster)

“Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”
1 Timothy 4:8

This edition of The Practice of Piety was taken

from the Hamilton, Adams, and Co. edition

published in London in 1842.

BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE.

“The Church! Am I asked again, What is the Church? The ploughman at his daily toil—the workman who plies the shuttle—the merchant in his counting-house—the scholar in his study—the lawyer in the courts of justice—the senator in the hall of legislature—the monarch on his throne—these, as well as the clergymen in the works of the material building which is consecrated to the honour of God—these constitute the Church. The Church is ‘the whole congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered.’ The Church is so constituted under its Divine Head, that not one of its members can suffer but the whole body feels—nay, the great Head himself feels in the remotest and meanest member of his body: not the meanest member of the body can make an exertion in faith and love, but the blessed effects of it are felt, to the benefit of the whole, ‘which groweth by that which every joint supplieth, to the increase of itself in love.’”—Bishop Blomfield.

One who hopes to effect any good by his writings, must be so pure in his life, that what he proposes for instruction or imitation must be a transcript of his own heart. But general improvement is so little to be anticipated, that almost any attempt which may be made by an individual in his zeal to do good, seems to be lost labour. Those whose character has attained to the greatest perfectness, are at all times the persons most willing and anxious to avail themselves of any hint or suggestion which might tend to improve them in virtue and knowledge, so that what is intended for universal benefit serves but to instruct a very few, and those few the individuals who require it least. Serious works, meant to reform the careless, are read only by those who already are serious, and disposed to assent to what such works set forth. In that case their object, humanly speaking, is in a great measure defeated. It seems hopeless to attempt to infuse a taste for serious reading into the minds of the thoughtless multitude. Write down to the capacity of the weak and slenderly informed, or write up to the taste of the intellectual portion of them; give it cheap, or give it for nothing, it is all the same—a man will not thus be forced or induced to read what you put in print for his especial benefit.

The most powerful means, therefore, of promoting what is good, is by example, and this means is what is in every individual’s power. One man only in a thousand, perhaps, can write a book to instruct his neighbours, and his neighbours in their perversity will not read it to be instructed. But every man may be a pattern of living excellence to those around him, and it is impossible but that, in his peculiar sphere, it will have its own weight and efficacy; for no man is insignificant who tries to do his duty—and he that successfully performs

his duty, holds, by that very circumstance, a station, and possesses an influence in society, superior to that which can be acquired by any other distinction whatever. But it is only those who propose to themselves the very highest standard, that attain to this distinction. There are many different estimates of what a Christian's duty is, and society is so constituted, that very false notions are formed of that in which true excellence and greatness consists; besides, many men who are theoretically right are practically wrong—all which detracts from the weight of Christian influence upon human society. But however much human opinion may vary, and however inconsistent human practice may be, there is but one right rule; and it is only he who has this rule well defined in his own mind, who can exhibit that preëminence in the Christian life which is the noblest distinction to which man can attain. It is deeply to be regretted that they who seek for this preëminence are a very small number compared with the mass of the professedly religious world. But small though the number be, the good which might be effected through their means is incalculable, if they were bound as in solemn compact to discountenance all those vices and habits which the usages of society have established into reputable virtues—thus becoming as it were a band of conspirators against the prince of this world and his kingdom—transfusing and extending their principles and influence, till they draw men off from their allegiance to that old tyrant by whom they have been so long willingly enslaved.

It has been said of genius, that it creates an intellectual nobility, and that literary honours superadd a nobility to nobility. Such, in a supereminent degree, may be said of holiness. Holiness constitutes a royal family—yea, a nation of kings, whose honours shall never fade, and whose reign shall have no termination.

"Happy is the man who in this life is least known of the world, so that he doth truly know God and himself." It is to be hoped that this sentiment, taken from the "Practice of Piety" was applicable to its learned author, about whom almost nothing is extant to furnish materials for the pen of the biographer.

Lewis Bayly was born in the ancient borough of Caermarthen, in Wales, about the middle, or towards the end of the 16th century; but of the precise date of his birth, or of his parentage, no record remains; neither is it known in what house he received his education, nor what degree he took in arts; but it is supposed that he must have been educated at Exeter College, Oxford, for it is recorded that as a member of that College he was admitted to the reading of the sentences in the year 1611. About that time he was minister of Evesham, in Worcestershire, and chaplain to Prince Henry, and afterwards minister of St. Matthew's Church, Friday Street, London. He took his degrees in divinity in 1613–14, and being much famed for his great eminence in preaching, he was

appointed, on the decease of the amiable and pious Prince of Wales, to be one of the chaplains of his father, King James I.

The King soon afterwards nominated him to the Bishopric of Bangor, in the room of Dr. H. Rowlands. It is thus recorded: “1610. Ludov. Bayly, A.M. Admissus ad Thesaurariam S. Pauli per resign. Egidii Fletcher, LL.D. Reg. London. 1616, 11 Jun. Franc. James, SS. T. P. ad eccl. Sancti Matth. Fryday Strete per promotionem Ludovici Bayly, SS. T. P. ad episcopatum Bangor.”

He was consecrated at the same time with Dr. Lake, Bishop of Bath and Wells, at Lambeth, on Sunday, 18th December 1616, by George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by Bishop Andrews of Ely, Dr. Neale, Bishop of Lincoln, Dr. Overall, Bishop of Litchfield, and Dr. Buckeridge, Bishop of Rochester.

It appears that Bishop Bayly on more than one occasion came under the royal displeasure chiefly about matters connected with the marriages of the royal family. It is recorded of him, that on Monday, March 9, 1619, Mr. Secretary Nanton, by the King’s orders, called Bishop Bayly into the council chamber, and there gave him a severe reprimand, in the presence of the two clerks of council in ordinary, because, in his prayer before sermon the previous Sunday in Lincoln’s Inn, he had prayed for the King’s son-in-law and his daughter the Lady Elizabeth, under the titles of King and Queen of Bohemia, before His Majesty had owned the title. The Secretary aggravated the matter much, and in conclusion told him His Majesty was deservedly offended with him, and so left him under high displeasure.

If Bishop Bayly’s satisfaction at the union of the Princess Elizabeth with Frederick the Elector Palatine, the head of the Protestant league in Germany, made him, with a promptitude which gave offence to the chary monarch, recognise the new title of that princess when her consort was chosen to the crown of Bohemia, it is not to be wondered at, that he gave equal offence by evincing his disapprobation of the alliances contemplated for the Prince Charles. Happy in the one instance at any accession of dominion to the Prince Palatine, by which the interests of the great protestant cause which he headed might be advanced, he could not but feel, in respect of the other case, intense anxiety in a matter on which the future peace and prosperity of the Church in his native land so much depended. Actuated by that integrity of character which the prospects of secular advancement could not bend, and disdaining the compliances of the courtier where the interests of religion were at stake, he could not enter into the peculiar views of his royal patron with regard to the matches he had an eye to for Prince Charles, for whose spiritual welfare he was deeply concerned. The bright example of Prince Henry, who was immoveably attached to the principles of the Reformation, was fresh in every one’s remembrance— “he who was compounded of all loveliness, the glory of

the nation, the ornament of mankind, a glorious saint." Thus Mr. Joseph Hall[1] justly describes him who was illustrious for every Christian virtue; and that Charles might walk in the footsteps of his deceased brother, that pattern of princes, whom would to God all princes would imitate, was the earnest desire of Bishop Bayly's heart. To him he inscribed "The Practice of Piety," and the whole tenor of the Dedication manifests his faithfulness and his anxious solicitude for the establishment of the Gospel in the hearts both of the Prince and people.

That any alliance below that of a great king was unworthy of a Prince of Wales, was the vain and characterestic notion of King James, which opinion made him resolve that no princess but a daughter of France or Spain should be united to his son. Not to coincide with this opinion, or to suggest any other alliance, was sure to incur the royal displeasure. Bishop Bayly could not coincide. What had been endured for the establishment of the Reformation was still in the memory of many living witnesses, and not a matter of remote history, as it now is, and accounted by certain classes out of date and out of fashion to be referred to, as fostering party spirit. Scarce fifty years had elapsed since England had enrolled her glorious division of "the noble army of martyrs." Their fiery tribulation, it is true, was now over, and they had entered into their rest; but the memory of their sufferings for the name of Jesus had not passed away. The eyes of some that had witnessed the agonies of the meek sufferer Hooper, one of the earliest martyrs of that period, perhaps were not yet closed in death: The ears that had heard his gentle voice raised aloft entreating for God's love more fire, that his protracted conflict should the sooner cease, were not yet deaf in the dreamless sleep of the grave; yea, the eyes that had wept to behold his mortal agony were ready to weep again at the remembrance of him standing immoveable in the refiner's fire, praying for strength, and smiting upon his breast till the arm dropped off from his body, and still smiting with his other hand, while his swollen tongue and lips, shrivelled with the flame, continued to move with unutterable prayer.[2]

We who read the record of such sufferings bless ourselves that we live in happier times. But, in an age when religious liberty was but ill understood by all parties, the spectators of such scenes must have been indelibly impressed that the same might be enacted over again. Bishop Bayly could not but participate in such feelings; and in what manner he had expressed his dread of the match proposed for the prince with the Infanta of Spain, or whether he had interfered or remonstrated, is not known. But on account of his opinion on that subject, and other matters which brought upon him the displeasure of the Court, he was thrown into the Fleet prison; but was soon afterwards acquitted, and again set at liberty. In Annual Register, Jacobus I. sub Ann. 1621, this passage occurs (15th July 1621) "Episcopus Bangoriensis examinatur et in Le Fleet datur, sed paulo post liberatur."

If one might be allowed to hazard a conjecture with regard to the other grounds of offence to the King, might it not have been his refusing to read in his church the “Book of Sports” which had been published in the year 1617, and which the Clergy were enjoined to read to their congregations, for neglect of which some of them were prosecuted in the Star Chamber?

Such are the few particulars connected with this excellent man, and useful and faithful minister, which I have been able to collect, and these relate only to his public life. But those features of private character which render biographies interesting to curiosity, and those circumstances which enable one to trace the developement of the human mind, and the gradations whereby a man rises to eminence, are wholly awanting. But enough remains to warrant our identifying him with those men of all ages to whom mankind stands indebted, and who have justly earned an honoured name for their efforts to improve society.

“Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo:

Omnibus his nivea cinguntur tempora vitta.”

Thus the Latin poet expresses it; but we have a more sure word of testimony regarding them who have thrown their mite into the treasury of Christian usefulness, “great is their reward.” Yea those whose work has been to convert souls “shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”

Lewis Bayly departed this life on Wednesday 26th October 1631, and was buried in his church at Bangor. He left four sons, Nicholas, John, Theodore, and Thomas. Nicholas, a military man, a major in Ireland, died 1689. John, Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, and a publisher of sermons entitled “The Angel Guardian,” Psalm xxxiv. 7; “Light Enlightening,” John i. 9; and several other books much esteemed in their time, died in the year 1633; and Theodore and Thomas were likewise educated for the Church. Doctor David Dolben, of St. John’s College, Cambridge, who was Bishop Bayly’s successor to the see of Bangor, found, at his first visitation in the year 1632, these two sons, Theodore and Thomas, occupying Welsh curacies. Thomas, who had been educated at Cambridge, was afterwards Rector of Brasteed in Kent: but being represented as popishly affected, he was ejected from his living. He suffered much in the civil wars, and brought himself into great trouble by his political writings. He wrote many histories of his travels abroad, and railed freely against all the commonwealths of Europe. He most desperately attacked the newly-erected one of England, for which injudicious and unpleasing publication he was committed to Newgate; but escaping from prison, he fled to the Continent, where he long lived in obscurity, and died in an hospital there. This unfortunate man, firmly attached to the Royalists, we find mentioned as a Commission Officer with the Marquis of Worcester, in the year 1646, defending Ragland Castle against the Parliamentarians. In the enumeration of

his sufferings in the civil wars which he relates, he tells he had been “deprived of £1000 a-year, and had lost blood and liberty,—he who was a peer’s son, and his mother a knight’s daughter.” This is the only intimation which I find of the rank of the lady to whom Bishop Bayly was married.

These few facts are all that remain of his family history and domestic relations. Of his public capacity as a minister of Christ, it may again be repeated that he was a powerful preacher of the Gospel. “The Practice of Piety” remains a durable monument of the soundness of his faith, the purity of his doctrines, and the practically useful way and method whereby he exercised that most valuable gift of preaching with which he was endowed. That book was the substance of several sermons which he preached while he was minister of Evesham. He threw these discourses into that form as a manual for the use of his people, and it soon became the most popular book in England. Year by year, edition after edition issued from the press; copies of it were multiplied throughout the whole of England, till it was in every man’s house, and in the hands of every one that could read. Nor was its circulation confined to Britain alone; it was equally well esteemed abroad. In what year it was first published I am not able to state; but the eleventh edition of it was published at London in the year 1619 (Bodl. 8vo. B. 185 Th.;) and when Bishop Lloyd was nominated to the see of Bangor in the year 1673, it had been printed above fifty times in English, besides many times in the Welsh tongue, the French, Hungarian, Polish, and various other continental languages. It was held in such high estimation in France by the protestants there, that John Despagne, a French writer and preacher in Somerset House Chapel, made a complaint of its popularity (1656), and said the common people looked upon its authority as almost equal to that of the Scriptures. Indeed it was so universally read by all classes, that the authorities in England took cognizance of the matter, and though the order of the day was for every man to have a Bible in his pocket, yet, with that unaccountable distortion of judgment which often attends human deliberations, and seeming to forget that its use and tendency is to draw men to study more and more the Divine will, and to seek a more intimate acquaintance with the Word of God, the Parliament brought it under consideration, in order to prohibit the reading of it, and to suppress its future publication.

About that same period, a lying report concerning its authorship was raised by some of the prejudiced narrow-minded factious sectarians of those times, who were not willing that a book so highly esteemed should be written by a bishop. Some said it was written by Price, Archdeacon of Bangor, and that Bishop Bayly had taken the credit of it to himself; and an author, who takes all advantages of calumniating the clergy and speaking against the Established Church, said that it was written by a puritan minister. (Ludov. Molinæus in lib. suo cui lit. est, Patronus bonæ Fidei, &c., edit in oct. ann. 1672, in cap.

continent specimen contra Durellum, p. 48.) “Nevertheless,” he observes, “whoever be the author, it has been very serviceable to persons of all ranks in England, and was equally purchased by both parties (viz. the Episcopal party and the Puritans), and those of the Episcopal party by reading it became better.”

An attempt was afterwards made to suppress the Bishop’s name upon the title-page; and when a new edition was printed in the Welsh language, a person of the name of Gouge caused the title-page to be torn out of the whole impression, and a new title-page to be wrought off without the author’s name. This disrespect to the Bishop’s memory, particularly to this edition set forth in his native language, was found great fault with by the gentlemen in the country, and Bishop Lloyd, of Bangor, caused the author’s name to be written on the title-pages of all the copies that were to be distributed in that neighbourhood, many of which the Bishop wrote with his own hand, and Dr. Humphreys wrote the rest by his order. Many of Bishop Bayly’s contemporaries, clergymen who had been intimate with him, and also several old men, his parishioners, who were alive when Dr. Humphreys was appointed to the see of Bangor, and who knew well that he was the author of it, spoke with great veneration of his memory, and with regard to his book assured Bishop Humphreys, from whose original papers, in the possession of Dr. White Kennet, Bishop of Peterborough, these facts were derived, that highly esteemed as the “Practice of Piety” was, Bishop Bayly had learning for a greater work than that.

To enumerate the editions through which it has gone would be impossible. Scarcely any work ever had such a prodigious circulation; by reason that it is not the book of a sect or party, but is a general book, acceptable to all who agree in the grand doctrinal and practical truths of the Gospel. From the testimony of various writers, it appears to have been remarkably beneficial; and during the period of its amazing popularity, it was equally sought for by churchmen and nonconformists, and was equally valued by both.

Peter Pindar characterizes Mr. Whitebread as bribing voters with

“Bunyans, and Practices of Piety.”

instead of the more substantial douceurs usual on these occasions. Whether this be a mere figure of speech used by that scurrilous lampooner, or whether it indicates that the work was circulated by the religious professors of that period, I cannot determine. Certain it is, that of the many manuals which have been written to direct the Christian in his religious duties, this is the most valuable. It may have been supplanted in popularity by the multitude of ephemeral productions of modern times, but as it holds a priority in the date of its composition, so it will maintain its rank in the scale of standard religious

literature as an original English work, when their name and place are known no more.

A book which the blessing of God has accompanied in one period of the Church, may be alike blessed on its revival now. It pertains to subjects of unchanging interest. The science of religion, as derived from God's revealed will, is the same yesterday, to-day, and tomorrow. No change of human affairs, effected by human advancement in other sciences, can alter its truths or diminish their importance. It was written at a time when a peculiar lustre adorned the ministers of religion. It was an age of eminence in divinity such as the world had not witnessed since the primitive days of Christianity, and which the world has not witnessed again. The Church had come out of its bloody conflicts "fair as the sun, and clear as the moon." The ministers of religion had not settled down into deadness and mediocrity, which become the characteristics of the clergy when the Church is at her ease, and when they lose sight of what their spiritual forefathers have suffered for the truth, and the free course of the Gospel which they are privileged to enjoy. They forget what the defence of the truth cost others, because it costs themselves nothing. Religion, as it now exists, is to them honourable, fashionable, and advantageous in a worldly sense, therefore they take it easily.

Lukewarmness is the besetting sin of the present day. If there be any zeal about doctrines, it is not for essential truths, but about doubtful questions. If there be any zeal about duties, it is not for the promotion of piety and personal holiness, but for some particular duties, which leading characters, or the force and influence of public opinion, have brought into fashion. Make a virtue popular, and all other virtues are lost sight of in that one. The characteristics of the genuine diciples of Jesus are lost in the Christian's anxiety to conform himself to the world. He constantly betrays his dread of losing his grasp of present advantages; and no improvement can be expected until men professing to fear God divest themselves of this worldly spirit, and selfishness, and the desire to increase in this world's goods, and to advance their families in this world's distinctions. Women, also, who possess such influence in society, would require to exalt the Christian character from the lamentably low standard to which it is reduced, that they may become "as the polished corners of the Temple." But this cannot be, until they aim at something better than to be smatterers in superficial learning, or until the sum of their existence be something more than "embroidery, small scandal, prayers, and vacancy." Above all, until they cease to be busy bodies in the affairs of others, and indulgers in evil surmisings, or indeed in surmisings of any kind—that source of unspeakable evil in society, whereby are sacrificed the peace and respectability of individuals and families, and of which Satan, the father of lies, is the busy promoter; and it rejoices his malignant nature to see the constant

agitation in which it keeps the world, and the heart-burnings which it occasions.

Human plans of education and improvement may do much towards refining mankind, and adding to the adornments of life, until society become like a fair monument of polished marble, “beautiful indeed oustide,” and which might be mistaken for a temple consecrated to purity and virtue, but in reality a habitation of death and cavern of moral putrefaction. The Gospel is the axe which must be laid to the tree of human corruption. The ministers of God, those men who have the inward call, as well as the outward commission, are the labourers sent forth to this work. If they tire in their work, and lie down to rest, or execute it feebly, can they wonder to see roots of bitterness springing up everywhere, and flourishing and occupying the good ground which they have neglected.

A martyr for religious liberty, after receiving sentence of death, protested before going to the scaffold that he was “not so much cumbered how to die as he many a time had been how to preach a sermon.” And another minister, Mr. Thomas Shepard, whose watchfulness to discharge the duties of the ministry is worthy of imitation, exhorted some young ministers who were about him on his death-bed to remember “that their work was great, and called for great seriousness. For his own part he told them three things:—First, that the studying of every sermon cost him tears; he wept in the studying of every sermon. Secondly, before he preached any sermon he got good by it himself. Thirdly, he always went up into the pulpit as if he were going to give up his accounts to his Master.”

It was the opinion and experience of one[3] whose preaching, and writings on the Christian faith and life were the means of awakening many millions of souls from a lifeless formality to an inward sense of religion, that “one of the principal expedients for reviving the evangelical spirit in the churches when under a decay, is to call to the people to live up to the plainest precepts of Christ; such as self-denial, mortification, contrition, resignation, and the like; instead of filling their minds with the niceties of controversial and speculative matters, which seemed to him rather to nourish, than to abate pride and self-love, those springs of corruption.”

“The Practice Of Piety” has been superseded by innumerable treatises on the same subject, but not excelled; while it retains its claim to originality in that department of religious literature. Its power to awaken the conscience, there is reason to believe, has been, by the blessing of God, most effectual. Two notable instances may be recorded. When John Bunyan was married, he and his wife were in extreme poverty, being totally destitute of any provision, and they had not one article of household stuff between them. But Mrs. Bunyan possessed for her portion a copy of “Bayly’s Practice of Piety,” which

she had received from her father on his death-bed; and she being a well-disposed woman, sprung of godly parents, induced her husband to read it from time to time. This begot in him a desire to reform his vicious life, and he forthwith began. But it seemed to proceed all in self-righteousness and formality, and it was a considerable time before he felt the freeness of the grace of God. But a thing begun is half finished; therefore we must value the beginning of all good works. “God is at much pains with sinners, ordinarily, ere he draw them fully, wholly, and effectually to himself.” Many and varied are the means and instruments which he employs, but all tend towards the one great point, the conversion of the soul to himself. Another eminent person whose awakening may be traced to the effects of that book, was Mr. James Frazer of Brea, minister of Culross in Fife, born 1639, who suffered much in the cause of religious liberty. He himself states, after describing a youth spent in carelessness and sinful conformity to the world like other young men of rank and fashion, that he began seriously to think of his responsibility as an accountable and immortal being, and determined to reform his life. He thereupon “made a conscience of all duties. The occasion,” says he, “of this reformation and great change was this. One Sabbath-day afternoon I read on a book called ‘The Practice of Piety’ concerning the misery of a natural man, the torments of hell, and the blessedness of a godly man, and some directions for a godly life. The Lord so wrought, and my heart was therewith so affected and drawn, that without more ado I thenceforth resolved to become a new man, and to live not only a harmless life, but a godly and devout life; and to turn my back upon all my old ways, and utterly to forsake them.” Farther on in his Christian experience, when he had attained to the blessed hope of the Gospel, he states, “this hope produced a cheerful endeavour to seek the Lord, which I did, and was labouring to do good unto others, and to spread the knowledge of Christ; by which means I daily grew in the knowledge and love of God. One of the books I most read was ‘The Practice of Piety,’ which God did bless to me. And thus,” he adds, “Grace makes a great, wonderful, and universal change; changing the outward life and inward frame; ‘All things are new,’—new prayers, new love, new company, new opinions, and new principles.”

Among all the rises and downfalls of kingdoms—from those of which history has preserved almost nothing save the name, to those whose greatness and power seemed constituted to last till the end of time—one kingdom, one nation alone, viz. the kingdom of God, the Church, has stood immoveable, surviving shocks and vicissitudes that would have cast down temporal dominions, and obliterated them from the earth. And however varied it may have appeared—whatever alternations of lustre and obscurity may have passed over it—whatever designations it may have assumed—whatever storms nigh to destruction may have shaken it—whether its subjects were few or many—whether it consisted of one simple patriarchal family, or was spread

over the empires of the civilized world, comprising different kindreds, and nations, and tongues,—yet by distinctive marks it can be always recognised as the one peculiar nation destined to outstand all temporal kingdoms—the one peculiar people distinguished by internal characteristics, as well as marked by the special dealings and dispensations of its Almighty Ruler through the successive ages of time.

No community but itself could have outlasted what it has endured from the internal divisions and animosities of persons struggling for opposite interests, as well as the assaults from without of hostile powers thirsting for its destruction; but with a singular, preternatural, unconquerable energy, it survives every shock, waxing stronger and stronger after each attack—shewing that it is upheld and invigorated by a power that cannot be subdued, nor finally overthrown. Security, blindness, and ease, belong to the kingdom of the wicked one, but nowhere characterize the kingdom of God. The Church on earth is called sons or children, because it needs continual care, discipline, chastisement, and teaching. The Church in heaven is called the bride, no longer to be corrected and kept in awe as a child, but to reign and rejoice in the full possession of that peace and security, which, in its militant state, it never could possess. Those who form their judgment of Christianity from the Holy Scriptures, must see that too much ease and worldly prosperity injure the Church as well as the individual Christian. These, instead of promoting the real interests of a kingdom which is not of this world, accelerate its corruption. And when Christianity is propagated merely by human authority and worldly inducements, what it gains in numbers and earthly glory, it loses in purity, soundness, and spirituality.

Though the whole earth were but one vast area overspread with temples for the service of God, and you could not plant the sole of your foot but where it might be said this is consecrated to God’s glory, yet as little true worship might ascend to him as there does now from the desolate places of the world where his name was never heard. Extent of territory is nothing unless the corrupt soil of the human heart have been subdued. Nations may throw off the yoke of superstition, and a corrupt religion and Satan’s kingdom lose nothing by the change. “Men judge of the outside chiefly, but God values least of all that part which shines brightest in the eyes of men.”[4]

A pious and prayerful life persevered in by the individual Christian is one of the truest means of extending the Church of God. Many think they are extending the Redeemer’s kingdom when they are but extending their own name and fame. The Church of God is the meek, the pure, the peacemakers, the humble, the stedfast, the just. These are the living stones which compose the spiritual edifice, and this spiritual edifice, this Church of God, comprises all that is excellent on earth, and that only of earth which shall endure through the eternal ages of Heaven.

All else—men's honours and achievements, men's inventions, men's vanities, is doomed to everlasting perdition. To think of wicked doers and their works being doomed to destruction is comparatively nothing, but it is an appalling consideration to know that the reputable things, the honourable things of the world—the highly esteemed, shall pass away into everlasting contempt.

If personal holiness be a true means of extending and establishing the Church of God, union among Christians, as it is a chief token of Christ's presence among his people, is also a powerful means of advancing the Gospel and the spiritual interests of mankind. But when the disciples of Jesus dispute by the way about the preference due to themselves and their opinions, they are seeking their own preëminence and not their master's glory. Mankind are represented as sojourners and travellers. This analogy implies sociality and companionship. Where many are travelling the same road they must of necessity converse as they journey. The wicked go in company together to the place of destruction though the ways are broad and various, how much more the righteous, when to their destination there is but one road, and that a narrow one.

Activity is another essential mark of the Christian character, and a means by which the kingdom of God is promoted. The kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of Christ we all know are the two grand divisions of the human race. All other divisions are trifling and of transient duration. The distinctions of blood and kindred, nation and language, sect, party, and opinion are among those fashions of the world which shall pass away. But these two divisions are permanent, yea eternally permanent. The righteous all are one in Christ Jesus. The wicked, the slothful Christians, the fearful, the unbelieving, all are one with Satan. He leaves no means untried to keep souls out of Christ's kingdom. He hates an awakened frame of spirit. Those who do no good, though they do no harm, promote by their sloth the spread of Satan's reign. They who are of the kingdom and habitation of the wicked one, may be slothful if they will. They are characterized as sluggards, slumberers, and sleepers; but they who are of the kingdom of Christ have all their appointed work. Satan's bramble-field will grow without dressing. The weeds, thorns, briars, and evil fruit which are his harvest, flourish well in their native soil, the world. But the vine which is the Lord's planting is not indigenous to earth, but is of celestial growth, and must be tended by the vine-dressers, and pruned, and sheltered, and watered with the dews of heaven.

Satan's followers may be idle, but there is no time of idleness for the Christian. He is a soldier at continual warfare. He is an husbandman sowing and reaping, a merchantman seeking great gain, a traveller on a far Journey with but short time to accomplish it, a secant with his appointed work and stipulated wages, a child at school with his task to learn. He is an invited guest

to a banquet where all things are ready, and if he hasten not to it, the company will be all assembled and the doors shut.

There is nothing so humbling to human nature as a view of the incompleteness of all that one is able to perform in this life. A man may live long enough in the world in a reputable way, and never find out till the last that he has been living to very little purpose. The extreme difficulty of knowing in many cases whether we are seeking God's glory or our own, should make the Christian abide more steadily by those duties and pursuits which he is sure will stand the test of the judgment day, and then the certainty of ultimate success in such undertakings, assisted by divine aids and encouragements, enables him to persevere in his course. The human mind must be sustained by encouragements, otherwise it will relax in its exertions, and finally fail. The countenance which a man zealous about religious enterprises receives from his fellow-men helps him on wonderfully, though, at the same time, if he would have the honesty to confess it, he may be receiving very little encouragement from God, and may be making no progress himself in the divine life. But when God's secret assistance and counsel to a man are combined together with his gracious disposal of the hearts of others to aid his exertions, then it is that great things may be achieved for the advancement of God's glory on the earth. But one has much need to beware that he mistake not outward prosperity for heavenly sanctions. Religious professors go on generally with great eclât while many a faithful servant of God toils on his way with very little human approbation. But he needs not to be discouraged; for in this respect he is the more like his divine master.

"I have meat to eat which ye know not of," was Jesus Christ's acknowledgment to his friends when they thought he stood in need of bodily refreshment. Such in a certain degree is the experience of every follower of Jesus. And when the world is pitying, and Satan assaulting, and nature failing, there is a divine nourishment imparted to the soul that carnal minds cannot be made to participate in nor to discern. There is no redeemed soul but what has experienced this refreshing from on high, and he estimates it above all other supports. It is the food with which the Psalmist's table was furnished in the presence of his enemies. In despite of all those evils that conspired against him, he was sustained and nourished, and constrained to exult in the loving-kindness of the great Shepherd of Israel that had refreshed his soul and anointed his head.

If the believer were to give utterance to the feelings of his heart when he is rejoicing in the Lord's goodness, he would be called a foolish enthusiast. But he has divine prudence imparted to him as well as divine joy, and he restrains himself. He avoids every appearance of evil—everything by which his good could be evil spoken of, and he moderates his feelings with the remembrance that this is a vale of tears—a strange country not seemly to sing God's songs in,

and he reserves them for that land where every heart shall be attuned with melody like his own.

[1]Bishop of Norwich.

[2]See Fox’s Martyrs.

[3]John Arndt, general superintendent or principal minister in the Duke of Zell’s dominions, who died 1621.

[4]Fenelon.

THE

PRACTICE OF PIETY.

CONTENTS.

The Epistle Dedicatory, — page xxxi

Address to the Devout Reader, — xxxvii

1. — A Plain Description of God, in respect of his Essence, Persons, and Attributes, so far as every Christian should competently endeavour to learn and know, with sundry sweet Observations and Meditations thereupon, — 3

2. — Meditations setting forth the Miseries of a Man in his Life and Death, that is not reconciled to God in Christ, — 28

3. — Meditations of the Blessed State, both in Life and Death, of a Man that is reconciled to God in Christ; wherein thou shalt find not a few things worthy the reading and observation, — 45

4. — Meditations on Seven Hindrances which keep back a Sinner from the Practice of Piety; necessary to be read of all, but especially of carnal Gospellers in these times, — 76

5. — How to begin the Morning with pious Meditations and Prayer, — 102

6. — How to read the Bible with profit and ease once over every year, — 105

7. — A Morning Prayer, — 108

Another shorter Prayer for the Morning, — 115

Another brief Morning Prayer, — 118

8. — Meditations how to walk with God all the Day, — 119

Especially how to guide thy Thoughts, — ib.

” ” thy Words, — 123

” ” thy Actions, — 126

9. — Meditations for the Evening, — 133

10. — An Evening Prayer. — 135

Another shorter Evening Prayer, — 140

11. — Meditations as thou art going to Bed, — 142

12. — Meditations for a Godly Householder, — 143

13. — A Morning Prayer for a Family, — 145

14. — Holy Meditations and Graces before and after Dinner and Supper, — 149

15. — Rules to be observed in singing of Psalms, — 154

16. — An Evening Prayer for a Family. — 155

17. — A Religious Discourse of the Sabbath day, wherein is proved, that the Sabbath was altered from the seventh to the first day of the week, not by human ordinance, but by Christ himself and his Apostles—that the fourth commandment is perpetual and moral under the New Testament, as well as under the Old. And the true manner of sanctifying the Sabbath day is described out of the Word of God, — 159

18. — A Morning Prayer for the Sabbath day, — 193

19. — An Evening Prayer for the Sabbath day, — 204

20. — Meditations of the true manner of Fasting, and giving of Alms, out of the Word of God, — 207

21. — The right manner of Holy Feasting, — 219

22. — Holy and Devout Meditations of the worthy and reverent receiving of the Lord’s Supper, — 220

23. — An Humble Confession of Sins before the Holy Communion, — 237

24. — A Sweet Soliloquy to be said a little before the receiving of the Holy Sacrament, — 250

25. — A Prayer to be said after the receiving of the Holy Sacrament, — 257

26. — Meditations how to behave thyself in the time of Sickness, — 263

27. — A Prayer when one begins to be sick, — 264

28. — Directions for making thy Will, and setting thy house in order, — 268

29. — A Prayer before taking Medicine, — 271

30. — Meditations for the Sick, — 272

31. — Meditations for one that is recovered from Sickness, — 279

And a Thanksgiving, — 280

32. — Meditations for one that is like to die, — 283

33. — A Prayer to be said of one that is like to die, — 288

34. — Comfortable Meditations against Despair, — 290

35. — Directions for those who come to visit the Sick, — 301

36. — A Prayer to be said for the Sick by those who visit him, — 303

And choice Scriptures to be read unto him, — 305

37. — Consolations against Impatience in Sickness, — 306

38. — Consolations against the Fear of Death, — 309

39. — Seven Sanctified Thoughts, and so many Spiritual Sighs, fit for a sick man ready to die, — 312

40. — Of the Comfortable Assurance of God’s Forgiveness of Sins, and receiving of the Lord’s Supper, to the faithful and penitent, before they depart this life, if it may conveniently be had, — 316

41. — The Speech of a Godly Man dying, — 323

42. — Meditations of Martyrdom, wherein is proved that those who die for Popery cannot be Christ’s Martyrs, — 324

43. — A Divine Colloquy between Christ and the Soul concerning the virtue and efficacy of his dolorous passion, — 330

44. — The Soul’s Soliloquy unto Christ her Saviour, — 339

TO THE

HIGH AND MIGHTY PRINCE

CHARLES, PRINCE OF WALES.

Tolle malos, extolle pios, cognosce teipsum:

Sacra tene, paci consule, disce pati.

Christ Jesus, the Prince of princes, bless your Highness with length of days, and an increase of all graces, which may make you truly prosperous in this life, and eternally happy in that which is to come.

Jonathan shot three arrows to drive David further off from Saul's fury; and this is the third epistle which I have written, to draw your Highness nearer to God's favour, by directing your heart to begin, like Josiah, in your youth to seek after the God of David, and of Jacob, your father. Not but that I know that your Highness does this without my admonition, but because I would, with the apostle, have you to abound in every grace,[5] in faith and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to God's service and true religion. Never was there more need of plain and unfeigned admonition; for the Comick in that saying, seems but to have prophesied of our times, "Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit." And no marvel; seeing that we are fallen into the dregs of time, which being the last, must needs be the worst days. And how can there be worse, seeing vanity knows not how to be vainer, nor wickedness how to be more wicked? And whereas heretofore those have been counted most holy, who have shewed themselves most zealous in their religion (Matt. xv. 1), they are now reputed most discreet, who can make the least profession of their faith. And that these are the last days, appears evidently (2 Tim. ii. 4), because the security of men's eternal state hath so overwhelmed all sorts (as Christ foretold it should), that most who now live are become lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; and of those who pretend to love God, O God! what sanctified heart cannot but bleed, to behold how seldom they come to prayers! how irreverently they hear God's word! what strangers they are at the Lord's table! What assiduous spectators they are at stage-plays; where, being Christians, they can sport themselves to hear the vassals of the devil scoffing religion,[6] and blasphemously abusing phrases of holy scripture on their stages, as familiarly ag they use their tobacco-pipes in their bibbing-houses! So that he who would now-a-days seek in most Christians for the power, shall scarce almost find the very shew of godliness. Never was there more sinning, never less remorse for sin. Never was the Judge nearer to come, never was there so

little preparation for his coming: and if the bridegroom should now come, how many who think themselves wise enough, and full of all knowledge, would be found foolish virgins, without one drop of the oil of saving faith in their lamps? for the greatest wisdom of most men in this age consists in being wise, first, to deceive others, aud in the end to deceive themselves. And if sometimes some good book haps into their hands, or some good motion cometh into their heads, whereby they are put in mind to consider the uncertainty of this life present, or how weak assurance they have of eternal life if this were ended, and how they have some secret sins, for which they must needs repent here, or be punished for them in hell hereafter, security then forthwith whispers the hypocrite in the ear, that though it be fit to think of these things, yet, it is not yet time, and that he is yet young enough, though he cannot but know, that many millions as young as himself are already in hell for want of timely repentance. Presumption warranteth him in the other ear, that he may have time hereafter, at his leisure, to repent, and that howsoever others die, yet he is far enough from death, and therefore may boldly take yet a longer time to enjoy his sweet pleasures, and to increase his wealth and greatness; and hereupon, like Solomon's sluggard, he yields himself to a little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep in his former sin, till at last, despair (security's ugly handmaid) comes in unlooked for, and shews him his hourglass, dolefully telling him that his time is past, and that nothing now remains but to die, and be damned. Let not this seem strange to any, for too many have found it too true; and more, without more grace, are like to he thus soothed to their end, and in the end, snared to their endless perdition.

In my desire, therefore, of the common salvation, but especially of your Highness's everlasting welfare, I have endeavoured to extract out of the chaos of endless controversies the old practice of true piety, which flourished before those controversies were hatched; which my poor labours, in a short while, now come forth again under the gracious protection of your Highness's favour, and by their entertainment seem not to be altogether unwelcome to the church of Christ. If to be pious has in all ages been held the truest honour, how much more honourable is it, in so impious an age, to be the true patron and pattern of piety? Piety made David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezechias, Josias, Zerubbabel, Constantine, Theodosius, Edward the VI., Queen Elizabeth, Prince Henry, and other religious princes, to be so honoured, that their names, since their deaths, smell in the church of God like a precious ointment, and their remembrances are sweet as honey in all mouths, and as music at a banquet of wine; whereas the lives of others, who have been godless and irreligious princes, do rot and stink in the memory of God's people—and what honour is it for great men to have great titles on earth, when God counts their names unworthy to be written in his book of life in heaven?

It is piety that embalms a prince's good name, and makes his face to shine before men, and glorifies his soul among angels. For as the face of Moses, by often talking with God, shined in the eyes of the people, so by frequent praying, which is our talking with God, and hearing the word, which is God speaking unto us, we shall be changed from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord, to the image of the Lord. And seeing this life is uncertain to all, especially to princes, what argument is more fit both for princes and people to study, than that which teacheth sinful man to deny himself by mortifying his corruptions, that he may enjoy Christ, the author of his salvation—to renounce these false and momentary pleasures of the world, that he may attain to the true and eternal joys of heaven—and to make them truly honourable before God in piety, who are now only honourable before men in vanity? What charges soever we spend in earthly vanities, for the most part they either die before us, or we shortly die after them; but what we spend, like Mary, in the practice of piety, shall remain our true memorial for ever. For piety hath the promise of this life, and of that which shall never end; but without piety there is no internal comfort to be found in conscience,[7] nor external peace to be looked for in the world, nor any eternal happiness to be hoped for in heaven. How can piety but promise to herself a zealous patron of your Highness, being the sole son and heir of so gracious and great a monarch, who is not only the defender of the faith by title, but also a defender of the faith in truth, as the Christian world hath taken notice, by his learned confuting of Bellarmine's overspreading heresies, and his suppressing in the blade of Vorstius's Athean blasphemies? And how easy it is for your Highness to equal, if not exceed, all that were before you, in grace and greatness, if you do but set your heart to seek and to serve God, considering how religiously your Highness hath been educated by godly and virtuous governors and tutors;[8] as also that you live in such a time, wherein God's providence, and the King's religious care, hath placed over this church, to the unspeakable comfort thereof, another venerable Jehoiada, that doth good in our Israel both towards God and towards his house; of whom your Highness at all times, in all doubts, may learn the sincerity of religion, for the salvation of your inward soul, and the wisest counsel for the direction of your outward state. And to excite you the rather to the zealous practice of divine piety, often suppose with yourself, that your Highness hears your religious father James speaking unto you, as sometimes holy David spake to his son Solomon: and thou Charles my son know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.

To help you the better to seek and serve this God Almighty, who must be your chief protector in life, and only protector in death, I here once again, on

my bended knees, offer my old mite new stamped into your Highness's hands; daily, for your Highness, offering up unto the Most High my humblest prayers, that as you grow in age and stature, so you may, like your master Christ, increase in wisdom and favour with God and all good men. This suit will I never cease. In all other matters I will ever rest,

Your Highness's humble servant,

during life to be commanded,

LEWIS BAYLY.

[5] Qui monet ut facias, quod jam facis, ipse monendo
Laudat, et hortatu comprobat acta suo.—2 Cor. viii. 7.

[6] Exemplum accidit, mulieris, domino teste, quæ theatrum adiit, et inde cum dæmonio rediit. Itaque in exorcismo cum oneraretur immundus spiritus quod ausus est fidelem aggredi: constanter justissime quidem (inquit) feci: In meo eam inveni.—Tertul. de Spect. lib. cap. 26. Therefore Tertullian, in cap. 26, calls the stage Diaboli Ecclesiam, and Cathedram pestilentiarum.

[7] Principibus ad salutem sola satis vera est pietas, absque illâ vero, nihil est vel exercitus vel imperatoris fortitudo, vel apparatus reliquus.—Zozom. Eccles. Hist. lib. 9, cap. 1.

[8] The Honourable Sir Robert Cary, Knight, and the religious Lady Gary, his wife. Mr. Thomas Murray. Sir James Fullerton. The gracious Archbishop of Canterbury, G. A.

TO THE DEVOUT READER.

I had not purposed to enlarge the last Edition, save that the importunity of many devoutly disposed prevailed with me to add some points, and to amplify others. To satisfy whose godly requests I have done my best endeavour, and withal finished all that I intend in this argument. If thou shalt hereby reap any more profit, give God the more praise; and remember him in thy prayers who hath vowed both his life and his labours to further thy salvation as his own.

Farewell in the Lord Jesus,

Lewis Bayly.

THE

PRACTICE OF PIETY;

DIRECTING A CHRISTIAN HOW TO WALK THAT HE MAY PLEASE GOD.

Whoever thou art that lookest into this book, never undertake to read it, unless thou first resolvest to become from thine heart an unfeigned Practitioner of Piety. Yet read it, and that speedily, lest, before thou hast read it over, God, by some unexpected death, cut thee off for thine inveterate impiety.

The Practice of Piety consists—

First, In knowing the essence of God, and that in respect of, (I.) The diverse manner of being therein, which are three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. (II.) The Attributes thereof; which are either Nominal or Real,—(1.) Absolute, as, Simpleness, Infiniteness,—(2.) Relative, as, Life, Understanding, Will, Power, Majesty.

Second, In knowing thy own self, in respect of thy state of Corruption and Renovation.

Third, In glorifying God aright, (I.) By thy life, in dedicating thyself devoutly to serve him,—both privately, in thine own person; and publicly, with thy family, every day; and with the Church, on the Sabbath-day;—and extraordinarily, by fasting and by feasting. (II.) By thy death, in dying in the Lord, and for the Lord.

Unless that a man doth truly know God, he neither can nor will worship him aright: for how can a man love him whom he knoweth not? and who will worship him whose help a man thinks he needeth not? and how shall a man seek remedy by grace, who never understood his misery by nature? Therefore, saith the Apostle, “He that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him,” Heb. xi. 6.

And forasmuch as there can be no true piety without the knowledge of God; nor any good practice without the knowledge of a man’s own self; we will therefore lay down the knowledge of God’s majesty, and man’s misery, as the first and chiefest grounds of the Practice of Piety.

A PLAIN DESCRIPTION OF THE ESSENCE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD,

OUT OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE,

SO FAR AS EVERY CHRISTIAN MUST COMPETENTLY KNOW, AND NECESSARILY BELIEVE, THAT WILL BE SAVES.

Although no creature can define what God is, because he is incomprehensible (Psal. cxliii. 3) and dwelling in inaccessible light (1 Tim. vi. 16); yet it has pleased his majesty to reveal himself to us in his word, so far as our weak capacity can best conceive him. Thus:

God is that one spiritual and infinitely perfect essence, whose being is of himself eternally (Deut. i. 4; iv. 35; xxxii. 39; vi. 4; Isa. xlv. 5–8; 1 Cor. viii. 4; Eph. iv. 5, 6; 1 Tim. ii. 5; John iv. 24; 2 Cor. iii. 17; 1 Kings viii. 17; Psal. cxlvii. 5; Deut. xxxii. 4; Exod. iii. 14; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Acts xvii. 25; Rom. xi. 36.)

In the Divine Essence we are to consider two things: First, The diverse manner of being therein; secondly, The attributes thereof.

The diverse manner of being therein, are called Persons (Heb. i. 3.)

A person is a distinct subsistence of the whole Godhead (John i. 1; v. 31, 37; xiv. 16; Col. ii. 9; John xiv. 9.)

There are Three Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost (Gen. i. 26; iii. 22; xi. 7; Exod. xx. 2; Hos. i. 4, 7; Isa. lxiii. 9, 10; Zech. iii. 2; Hag. ii. 5, 6; 1 John v. 7; Matt. iii. 16, 17; xxviii. 19; John xiv. 26; 2 Cor. xiii. 13.) These three persons are not three several substances, but three distinct subsistences; or three diverse manner of beings, of one and the same substance and divine essence. So that a person in the Godhead is an individual Understanding and incommunicable subsistence, living of itself, and not sustained by another.

In the unity of the Godhead there is a plurality which is not accidental (Gen. i. 26; iii. 22; xi. 7; Isa. vi. 8), for God is a most pure act, and admits no accidents; nor essential, for God is one essence only—but personal.

The persons in this one essence are but three. In this mystery there is alius et alius, another and another; but not aliud et aliud, another thing and another thing.

The Divine Essence in itself is neither divided nor distinguished, but the three Persons in the Divine Essence are distinguished amongst themselves three manner of ways:

1. By their Names. 2. By their Order. 3. By their Actions.

1. By their Names, thus:

The first Person is named the Father; first, in respect of his natural son, Christ (Matt. xi. 27; iii. 17;) secondly, in respect of the elect, his adopted sons (Isa. lxiii. 16; Eph. iii. 14, 15;) that is, those who, being not his sons by nature, are made his sons by grace.

The second Person is named the Son, because he is begotten of his Father's substance, or nature (Prov. xxx. 4; Psal. ii. 7; Heb. i. 3; Phil. ii. 6;) and he is called the Word—First, because the conception of a word in man's mind is the nearest thing that, in some sort, can shadow to us the manner how he is eternally begotten of his Father's substance; and in this respect he is also called the Wisdom of his Father (Prov. viii. 12.) Secondly, because that by him the Father has from the beginning declared his will for our salvation (John i. 18); hence he is called λόγος quasi λέγων, the person speaking with or by the Father. Thirdly, because he is the chief argument of all the word of God (Acts x. 43; Heb. i. 1; Luke xxiv. 27; John v. 45; Acts iii. 22, 23, 24), or that Word whereof God spake when he promised the blessed seed to the fathers under the Old Testament.

The third Person is named the Holy Ghost (Isa. lxiii. 10; 2 Cor. xiii. 14)—First, because he is spiritual, without a body (1 John iv. 13; 2 Cor. iii. 17.) Secondly, because he is spired, and as it were breathed from both the Father and the Son (John xx. 21, 22; Gal. iv. 6), that is, proceedeth from them both; and he is called Holy, both because he is holy in his own nature (1 Pet. i. 15, 16), and also the immediate sanctifier of all God's elect people (2 Cor. iii. 18; 1 Thess. v. 23; 1 Pet. i. 2.)

2. By their Order, thus:

The Persons of the Godhead are either the Father, or those which are of the Father.[9] The Father is the first Person (Mat. xxviii. 19; 1 John v. 7) in the glorious Trinity,[10] having neither his being nor beginning of any other but of himself; begetting his Son, and together with his Son sending forth the Holy Ghost from everlasting. The persons which are of the Father are those who, in respect of their personal existence, have the whole divine essence eternally communicated unto them from the Father. And those are either from the Father alone, as the Son; or from the Father and the Son, as the Holy Ghost.

The Son is the second Person of the glorious Trinity, and the only begotten Son of his Father, not by grace, but by nature; having his being of the Father alone, and the whole being of his Father by an eternal and incomprehensible generation; and with the Father sendeth forth the Holy Ghost.[11] In respect of his absolute essence, he is of himself; but in respect of his person he is, by an eternal generation, of his Father. For the essence doth not beget an essence, but the person of the Father begetteth the person of the Son, and so he is God

of God, and hath from his Father the beginning of his person and order, but not of essence and time.

The Holy Ghost is the third Person of the blessed Trinity, proceeding and sent forth equally from both the Father and the Son (John xv. 26; xvi. 15)[12] by an eternal and incomprehensible spiration. For as the Son receiveth the whole divine essence by generation, so the Holy Ghost receiveth it wholly by spiration.[14]

This order betwixt the three persons appears in that the Father begetting must in order be before the Son begotten; and the Father and Son, before the Holy Ghost proceeding from both.

This order serves to set forth to us two things—First, the manner how the Trinity worketh in their external actions; as, that the Father worketh of himself, by the Son and the Holy Ghost; the Son from the Father by the Holy Ghost; the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son. Secondly, to distinguish the first and immediate beginning from which those external and common actions flow. Hence it is, that forasmuch as the Father is the fountain and original of the Trinity, the beginning of all external working, the name of God in relation, and the title of Creator in the creed, are given in a special manner to the Father; our redemption to the Son, and our sanctification to the person of the Holy Ghost, as the immediate agents of those actions. And this also is the cause why the Son, as he is mediator, referreth all things to the Father, not to the Holy Ghost (Matt. xi. 25, 26, 27; John v. 19–23; xi. 41, 42; xii. 49), and that the Scripture so often saith that we are reconciled to the Father (2 Cor. v. 18, &c.)

This divine order or economy excepted, there is neither first nor last, neither superiority nor inferiority, among the three persons; but for nature they are co-essential, for dignity co-equal, for time co-eternal.

The whole divine essence is in every one of the three persons; but it was incarnated only in the second person of the Word, and not in the person of the Father, or of the Holy Ghost, for three reasons:—

First, That God the Father might the rather set forth the greatness of his love to mankind, in giving his first and only-begotten Son to be incarnated, and to suffer death for man’s salvation.

Secondly, That he who was in his divinity the Son of God, should be in his humanity the Son of man: lest the name of Son should pass to another, who by his eternal nativity was not the Son.

Thirdly, Because it was meetest that that person, who is the substantial image of his eternal Father, should restore in us the spiritual image of God, which we had lost. In the incarnation, the Godhead was not turned into the manhood, nor the manhood into the Godhead; but the Godhead, as it is the

second person or Word, assumed unto it the manhood, that is, the whole nature of man, body and soul; and all the natural properties and infirmities thereof, sin excepted[15] (Heb. iii. 17, 18; .)

The second person took not upon him the person of man, but the nature of man.[16] So that the human nature has no personal subsistence of its own (for then there should be two persons in Christ), but it subsisteth in the Word, the second person: for as the soul and body make but one person of man, so the Godhead and manhood make but one person of Christ.

The two natures of the Godhead and manhood are so really united by a personal union, that as they can never be separated asunder, so are they never confounded; but remain still distinguished by their several and essential properties which they had before they were united. As for example, the infiniteness of the divine is not communicated to the human nature, nor the finiteness of the human to the divine nature.

Yet by reason of this personal union, there is such a communion of the properties of both natures, that that which is proper to the one is sometimes attributed to the other nature. As, that God purchased the church with his own blood (Acts xx. 28); and that he will judge the world by that man whom he hath appointed (Acts xvii. 31.) Hence also it is, that though the humanity of Christ be a created, and therefore a finite and limited nature, and cannot be everywhere present by actual position, or local extension, according to his natural being; yet because he hath communicated unto it the personal subsistence of the Son of God, which is infinite, and without limitation,, and is so united with God, that it is nowhere severed from God, the body of Christ, in respect of his personal being, may rightly be said to be everywhere.

3. The Actions by which the Three Persons are distinguished.

The actions are of two sorts: either external, respecting the creatures; and those are after a sort common to every one of the three persons: or internal, respecting the persons only amongst themselves, and are altogether incommunicable.

The external and communicable actions of the three persons are these:

The creation of the world, peculiarly belonging to God the Father; the redemption of the church, to God the Son; and the sanctification of the elect, to God the Holy Ghost. But because the Father created (Rom. xi. 36) and still governeth the world by the Son in the Holy Ghost, therefore these external actions are indifferently, in Scripture, often ascribed to each of the three persons, and therefore called communicable and divided actions.[17]

The internal and incommunicable actions or properties of the three persons are these:

1. To beget; and that belongeth only to the Father, who is neither made, created, nor begotten of any.

2. To be begotten; and that belongeth only to the Son, who is of the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten.

3. To proceed from both; and that belongeth only to the Holy Ghost, who is of the Father and the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

So that when we say, that the divine essence is in the Father unbegotten, in the Son begotten, and in the Holy Ghost proceeding, we make not three essences, but only shew the diverse manners of subsisting, by which the same most simple, eternal, and unbegotten essence subsisteth in each person: namely, that it is not in the Father by generation; that it is in the Son communicated from the Father by generation; and in the Holy Ghost communicated from both the Father and the Son by proceeding.

These are incommunicable actions, and make not an essential, accidental, or rational, but a real distinction betwixt the three persons: so that he who is the Father in the Trinity, is not the Son; he who is the Son in the Trinity, is not the Father; he who is the Holy Ghost in the Trinity, is neither the Son nor the Father, but the Spirit proceeding from both; though there is but one and the same essence common to all three. As therefore we believe that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, so we likewise believe that God is the Father, God is the Son, and God is the Holy Ghost. But by reason of this real distinction, the person of the one is not, nor ever can be, the person of the other. The three persons, therefore, of the Godhead, do not differ from the essence but formally; but they differ really one from another, and so are distinguished by their hypostatical proprieties. As the Father is God, begetting God the Son; the Son is God, begotten of God the Father; and the Holy Ghost is God, proceeding from both God the Father and God the Son.

Hence it is that the Scriptures use the name of God two manner of ways: either essentially, and then it signifieth the three persons conjointly; or personally, and then by a synecdoche it signifieth but one of the three persons in the Godhead; as the Father (1 Tim. ii. 5), or the Son (Acts xx. 28; 1 Tim. iii. 16), or the Holy Ghost (Acts v. 4; 2 Cor. vi. 16.)

And because the divine essence (common to all the three persons) is but one, we call the same Unity. But because there be three distinct persons in this one indivisible essence, we call the same Trinity. So that this unity in trinity, and trinity in unity, is a holy mystery, rather to be religiously adored by faith, than curiously searched by reason, further than God has revealed in his word.

Thus far of the diverse Manner of being in the Divine Essence; now of the Attributes thereof.

Attributes are certain descriptions of the Divine Essence, delivered in the Scriptures according to the weakness of our capacity, to help us the better to understand the nature of God's essence, and to discern it from all other essences.

The attributes of God are of two sorts, either nominal or real.

The nominal attributes are of three sorts: 1. Those which signify God's essence. 2. The persons in the essence. 3. Those which signify his essential works.

Of the first sort is the name Jehovah (Exod. xv. 3), or rather Jehueh,[18] which signifieth the eternal being of himself, in whom, being without all beginning and end, all other beings both begin and end (Isa. xlii. 8; Psalm lxxxiii. 18.)

God tells Moses (Exod. vi. 3) that he was not known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by his name Jehovah. Not but that they knew this to be the name of God, for they used it in all their prayers, but because they lived not to see God effecting in deed (Exod. vi. 3) that which he promised them in graciously delivering their seed out of Egypt, and in giving them the real possession of Canaan's land, and so to be not only God Almighty, by whom all things were made, but also performing in deed to the children that which he promised in his word to the fathers, which this name Jehovah especially signifieth. And for this cause Moses calls God first Jehovah, when the universal creation had its absolute being (Gen. ii. 4.) And this admirable name is graven on the decalogue's forehead, which was pronounced upon the Israelites' deliverance, to be the rule of righteousness, after which they should serve their Deliverer in the promised land.

This name is so full of divine mysteries, that the Jews hold it a sin to pronounce it; but if it be no sin to write it, why should it be unlawful to pronounce it?

This holy name of God teacheth us—

First, what God is in himself; namely, an eternal being of himself.

Secondly, how he is unto others, because that from him all other creatures have received their being.

Thirdly, that we may confidently believe his promises, for he is named Jehovah, not only in respect of being, and causing all things to be, but especially in respect of his gracious promises, which without fail he will fulfil in his appointed time, and so cause that to be which was not before. And so this name is a golden pledge unto us, that because he hath promised, he will surely, upon our repentance, forgive us all our sins (Isa. lv. 7; John xi. 5; xii. 26; xiv. 2, 3; Job vi. 40;) at the time of death receive our souls, and in the resurrection raise up our bodies in glory to life everlasting.

The second name denoting God's essence is Ehejeh; but once read (Exod. iii. 14) of the same root that Jehovah is, and signifieth I am, or I will be; for when Moses asked God by what name he should call him, God then named himself Ehejeh, Asher Ehejeh, I am that I am, or I will be that I will be, signifying, that he is an eternal, unchangeable being: for seeing every creature is temporary and mutable, no creature can say, ero qui ero, I will be that I will be. This name in the New Testament is given to our Lord Christ, when he is called Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty (Rev. i. 8.) For all time, past and to come, is always present before God. And to this name Christ himself alludeth, John viii. 58, "Before Abraham was, I am."

This name should teach us likewise to have always present in our minds our first creation, present corruption, and future glorification; and not content ourselves with, I was good, or, I will be good, but to be good presently, that whenever God sends for us, he may find us prepared for him.

The third name is Jah, which, as it comes of the same root, so is it the contract of Jehovah, and signifieth Lord, because he is the beginning and being of beings.[19] It is a name for the most part ascribed unto God (Psal. lxviii. 19; ci. 18; cvi. 1, 48; cxi. 1, &c; cxii. 1, &c; cxiii. 1, 9; cxv. 17, 18; cxvi. 19; cxviii. 5, 14; cxxv. 34), when some notable deliverance or benefit comes to pass according to his former promise; and therefore all creatures in heaven and earth are commanded to celebrate and praise God in this name Jah.

The fourth is Κύριος, Lord, used often in the New Testament: for κύρω, or κυρέω, signifieth I am. Hence κύρος signifieth the first essence of a thing, or authority. When it is absolutely given to God, it answereth to the Hebrew name Jehovah, and is so translated by the seventy interpreters: for God is so a Lord, that he is of himself Lord of all. This name should always put us in remembrance to obey his commandments, and to fear his judgments, and submit ourselves to his blessed will and pleasure, saying with Eli, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good," 1 Sam. iii. 18.

The fifth is Θεὸς, God, six hundred times used in the New Testament, and the profane writers commonly. It is derived ἀπὸ τοῦ θεῖν, because he runs through and compasseth all things; or ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰθεῖν, which signifieth to burn and kindle—for God is light, and the author both of heat, light, and life in all creatures, either immediately of himself, or mediately by secondary causes. This name is used either improperly, or properly. Improperly, when it is given either figuratively to magistrates, or falsely to idols. But when it is properly and absolutely taken, it signifieth the eternal essence of God, being above all things, and through all things; giving life and light to all creatures, and preserving and governing them in their wonderful frame and order. God seeth all in all places; let us therefore everywhere take heed what we do in his sight.

Thus far of the names which signify God's essence. The name which signifieth the persons in the essence, is chiefly one, Elohim.

Elohim signifieth the mighty Judges; it is a name of the plural number, to express the trinity of persons in unity of essence. And to this purpose the Holy Ghost beginneth the holy Bible with this plural name of God, joined with a verb of the singular number, as Elohim Bara, Dii creavit, the mighty Gods, or all the three persons in the Godhead created. The Jews also note in the verb ברא, consisting of three letters, the mystery of the Trinity, by ב beth, ben, the Son; by ר resch, rouach, the Spirit; by א aleph, ab, the Father. But this holy mystery is more clearly taught by Moses, Gen. iii. 23. And Jehovah Elohim said, "Behold the man is become as one of us." And Gen. xix. 24, "Jehovah rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven;" that is, God the Son, from God the Father, who hath committed all judgment unto the Son (John v. 22; see Psal. xxxiii. 6; Isa. vi. 8, 9, 10.) The singular number of Elohim is Eloah, derived of Alah, he swore; because that in all weighty causes, when necessity requireth an oath to decide the truth, we are only to swear by the name of God, who is the great and righteous Judge of heaven and earth.

This name Eloah is but seldom used, as Habak. iii. 3; Job iv. 9; xii. 4; xv. 2, 8, 36; Psal. xviii. 32; cxiv. 7. Once it has a noun plural joined to it, Job xxxv. 10, "None saith, where is Eloah Gosai, the Almighty my Maker?" to note the mystery of the eternal Trinity. Many times also Elohim, the plural number, is joined with a verb singular, to express more emphatically, this mystery (Gen. xxxv. 7; 2 Sam. vii. 23; Josh. xxiv. 19; Jer. x. 10.) Elohim is also sometimes tropically given to magistrates, because they are God's vicegerents; as to Moses (Exod. vii. 1), Jehovah said unto Moses, I have made thee Elohim to Pharaoh; that is, I have appointed thee an ambassador to represent the person of the true three-one God, and to deliver his message and will unto Pharaoh; as oft, therefore, as we read, or hear this name Elohim, it should put us is mind to consider, that in one divine essence there are three distinct Persons, and that God is Jehovah Elohim.

Now follow the Names which signify God's essential Works, which are these five especially:—

1. El, which is as much as the strong God,[20] and teacheth us, that God is not only most strong, and fortitude itself in his own essence, but also that it is he that giveth all strength and power to all other creatures. Therefore Christ is called (Isa. ix. 6) El Gibbor, the strong most mighty God. Let not God's children fear the power of enemies, for El, our God, is stronger than they.

2. Shaddai,[21] that is, Omnipotent. By this name God usually styled himself to the patriarchs, I am El Shaddai, the strong God Almighty; because he is perfectly able to defend his servants from all evil, to bless them with all

spiritual and temporal blessings, and to perform all his promises which he hath made to them for this life, and that which is to come. This name belongeth only to the Godhead, and to no creature, no not to the humanity of Christ. This may teach us with the patriarchs, to put our whole confidence in God, and not to doubt of the true performance of his promises.

3. Adonai,[22] my Lord. This name, as theMassorets note, is found one hundred and thirty-four times in the Old Testament; and logically it is given to creatures, but properly it belongeth to God alone. It is used (Mal. i. 6) in the plural number to note the mystery of the holy Trinity. If I be Adonim, Lords, where is my fear? Adoni, the singular; Adonim, the plural number. This name is given to Christ, Dan. ix. 16, “Cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for Adoni (the Lord Christ) his sake.”

The hearing of this holy name may teach every man to obey God’s commandments, to fear him alone, to suffer none besides him to reign in his conscience, to lay hold (by a particular hand of faith) upon his word and promise, and to challenge God in Christ to be his God, that he may say with Thomas, “Thou art my Lord and my God.”

4. Helion, that is, Most High (Psal. ix. 2; xci. 9; xcii. 9; Dan. iv. 17, 24, 25, 34; Acts vii. 48.) This name Gabriel gives to God, telling the Virgin Mary that the child which should be born of her, should be the Son of the Most High[23] (Luke i. 32.) This teacheth, that God in his essence and glory exceedeth infinitely all creatures in heaven and earth; secondly, that no man should be proud of any earthly honour or greatness; thirdly, if we desire true dignity, to labour to have communion with God in grace and glory.

5. Abba, a Syriac name, signifying Father (Rom. viii. 15.) This is sometimes used essentially, as in the Lord’s prayer; secondly, personally (as Matt. xi. 25.) For God is the Father of Christ by nature, and of Christians by adoption and grace. Christ is called the everlasting Father (Isa. ix. 6), because he regenerates us under the New Testament. God is also called the Father of lights (Jam. i. 17), because God dwelleth in inaccessible light (1 Tim. vi. 16), and is the author not only of the sun’s light, but also of all the light, both of natural reason, and of supernatural grace, which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. This name teacheth us, that all the gifts which we receive from God proceed from his mere fatherly love; secondly, that we should love him again as dear children; thirdly, that we may, in all our needs and troubles, be bold to call upon him as a father for his help and succour. Thus should we not hear of the sacred names of God, but we should thereby be put in mind of his goodness to us, and of our duties to him. And then should we find how comfortable a thing it is to do everything in the name of God,—a phrase usual in every man’s tongue, but the true comfort of it, through ignorance, known to few men’s hearts.

It is a great wisdom, and an unspeakable matter for the strengthening of a Christian's faith, to know how, in the mediation of Christ, to invocate God by such a name, as whereby he hath manifested himself to be most willing, and best able, to help and succour him in his present need or adversity. The ardent desire of knowing God, is the surest testimony of our love to God, and of God's favour to us. "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he hath known my name: He shall call upon me, and I will answer him," &c. Psal. xci. 14, 15. And it is a great strengthening of faith with understanding to begin every action in the name of God.

Thus far of the nominal attributes.

The real attributes are of two sorts; either absolute or relative.

The absolute attributes are such, which cannot in any sort agree to any creature, but to God alone.

These are two, Simpleness and Infiniteness.

Si'mpleness is that whereby God is void of all composition, division, multiplication, accidents, or parts compounding, either sensible or intelligible; so that what ever he is, he is the same essentially.

It hinders not God's simpleness that he is three, because God is three, not by composition of parts, but by co-existence of persons.

Infiniteness is that whereby all things in God are void of all measure, limitation, and bounds above and beneath, before and after.

From these two do necessarily flow three other absolute attributes.

1. Unmeasureableness or ubiquity, whereby he is of infinite extension, filling heaven and earth (Acts vii. 48; Psal clxv; Job xi. 7, &c.; 2 Chron. ii. 5, 6; , &c.; Jer. xxiii. 23, 24), containing all places, and not contained of any space, place, or bounds, and being nowhere absent, is everywhere present.

There are four degrees of God's presence: The first is universal, by which God is repletively everywhere, inclusively nowhere; secondly, special, by which God is said to be in heaven, because that there his power, wisdom, and goodness is in a more excellent manner seen and enjoyed (Psal. xix. 1; Hos. ii. 21); as also because that usually he doth from thence pour forth his blessings and Judgments; thirdly, more special, by which God dwelleth in his saints (1 Cor. iii. 16; ; 2 Cor. vi. 16); fourthly, most special, and altogether singular, by which the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in Christ bodily (Col. ii. 8.)

2. Unchangeableness, whereby God is void of all change, both in respect of his essence and will[24] (Rom. i. 23; Isa. xl. 28; Psal. cii. 27, &c.; Rev. i. 8; 1 Sam. xv. 29; Numb. xxiii. 19; Mal. iii. 6; Rom. xi. 29; James i. 18.)

3. Eternity, whereby God is without beginning of days, or end of time, and without all bounds of precession or succession.[25] (Isa. xliv. 6; James v. 19; Dan. vi. 26; Heb. xii; Rev. iv. 8.)

Thus far of the absolute attributes; now of the relative, or such which have reference to the creatures.

Those are five:—1. Life; 2. Understanding; 3. Will; 4. Power; 5. Majesty;

1. The life of God is that by which, as by a most pure and perpetual act, he not only liveth of himself, but is also that ever and overflowing fountain of life, from which all creatures derive their lives (Acts xvii. 25, 28; xiv. 15; Psal. xlii. 2; xxxvi. 19; John v. 26; Heb. iii. 12); so as that in him they live, move, breathe, and have their being. And because only his life differs not from his essence;[26] therefore God is said only to have immortality (1 Tim. vi. 16.)

2. The understanding, or knowledge of God, is that whereby, by one pure act, he most perfectly knoweth in himself all things that ever were, are, or shall be; yea, the thoughts and imaginations of men's hearts (1 Kings viii. 39; Psal. lxiv. 21; cxxxix. 1, &c.; Jer. xvii. 10; xx. 12; Luke xvi. 15; Acts i. 24; Heb. iv. 12; Rom. xi. 33; xvi. 17; 1 Tim. ii. 19; Matt. vii. 13.)

This knowledge of God is either general, by which God knoweth simply all things eternally, the good by himself, the evil by the good opposite to it, imposing to things contingent the lot of contingency, and to things necessary the law of necessity. And thus knowing all things in and of himself, he is the cause of all the knowledge that is in all, both men and angels. Or, secondly, special, called the knowledge of approbation, by which he particularly knoweth, and graciously acknowledged, only his elect or his own.

Understanding also contains the wisdom of God, by which he most wisely created all things of nothing, in number, measure; and weight, and still ruleth and disposeth them to serve his own most holy purpose and glory.[27]

3. The will of God is that whereby of necessity he willeth himself as the sovereign good (1 Tim. ii. 5; Rom. ix. 19; Eph. i. 5); and (by willing himself) willeth most freely all other good things which are out of himself.

The will of God, though in itself it be but one, as is his essence, yet in respect of the diversity of objects and effects, it is called in the Scriptures by diverse names; as,

(1.) Love, whereby is meant God's eternal good-will (1 John iii. 1), whereby he ordaineth his elect to be freely saved through Christ, and bestoweth on them all necessary graces for this life (Psal. xlv. 7) and that to come, taking pleasure in their persons and services (Gen. iv. 4.)

(2.) Justice is God's constant will (Rom. ii. 5; 2 Thess. i. 6, &c.; 2 Tim. iv. 8; Deut. vii. 9, 10), whereby he recompenseth men and angels, according to their

works; punishing the impenitent according to their deserts, called the justice of his wrath; and rewarding the faithful according to his promises, called the justice of his grace (Rom. ix. 15, 16; Ezek. xvi. 6.)

(3.) Mercy, which is God's mere good will (Psal. ciii. 8, &c.; Tit. iii. 4) and ready affection to forgive a penitent sinner, notwithstanding all his sins and ill deserts.

(4.) Goodness, whereby God willingly communicates his good with his creatures[28] (Psal. cxlv. 7, 9, 16; Matt. xvi. 17); and because he communicates it freely, it is termed grace.

(5.) Truth, whereby God willeth constantly those things which he willeth (Josh. xiii. 14; Psal. cxlix. 6; Numb. xxiii. 19);[29] effecting and performing all things which he hath spoken in his appointed time.

(6.) Patience, whereby God willingly forbeareth to punish the wicked, so long as it may stand with his justice, and until their sins be ripened (2 Pet. iii. 9; Rom. ii. 4; Gen. v. 16.)

Ad pœnam tardus Deus est, ad præmia velox;

Sed pensare solet vi graviore moram.

(7.) Holiness, whereby God's nature is separated from all profaneness, and abhorreth all filthiness (1 Pet. i. 5; 1 Thess. iv. 3; Heb. xii. 14; Mark xv. 9); and so being wholly pure in himself, delighteth in the inward and outward purity of his servants, which he infuseth into them.

(8.) Anger, whereby is meant God's most certain and just will in chastening the elect[30] (Psal. cvi. 23, 29, 40, 41; Numb. xxv. 11); and in revenging and punishing the reprobate, for the injuries they offer to him and his chosen; and when God will punish with rigour and severity, then it is termed wrath, temporal to the elect, eternal to the reprobates (1 Cor. xix. 2; 1 Thess. i. 10.)

4. The Power of God is that whereby he can simply and freely do whatsoever he will[31] (Gen. xvii. 1; Psal. cxv. 3; Matt. viii. 2; xi. 26; Eph. i. 11), that is agreeable to his nature; and whereby, as he hath made, so he still ruleth heaven and earth, and all things therein. This almighty power of God is either absolute, by which he can will, and do more than he willeth or doth (Matt. iii. 9; xx. 53; Rom. ix. 18); or actual, by which God doth indeed whatsoever he will, and hindereth whatsoever he will not have done (Psal. cxv. 3.)

5. Majesty is that by which God, of his own absolute and free authority, reigneth and ruleth as Lord and King over all creatures visible, and invisible (1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12; 2 Sam. vii. 22; Rev. v. 12, 13); having both the right and propriety in all things[32] (1 Chron. xxix. 14); as also such a plenitude of power, that he can pardon the offences of all whom he will have spared (Rom. ix. 15; John iv. 11); and subdue all his enemies, whom he will have plagued and

destroyed without being bound to render to any creature a reason of his doing (Luke xix. 17; Psal. ii. 9; cx. 1); but making his own most holy and just will his only most perfect and eternal law.

From all these attributes ariseth one, which is God's sovereign blessedness or perfection.

Blessedness is that perfect and unmeasurable possession of joy and glory, which God hath in himself for ever;[33] and is the cause of all the bliss and perfection that every creature enjoys in its measure.

There are other attributes figuratively and improperly ascribed to God, in the holy scriptures, as by an anthropomorphosis, the members of a man, eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands, feet, &c.; or the senses and actions of a man, as, seeing, hearing, smelling, working, walking, striking, &c.: by an anthropopatheia, the affections and passions of a man, as, gladness, grief, joy, sorrow, love, hatred, &c.; or by an analogy, as when he is named, a Lion, a Rock, a Tower, a Buckler, &c., whose signification every commentary will express.

Of all these attributes we must hold these general rules:—No attributes can sufficiently express the essence of God, because it is infinite and ineffable.

Whatsoever, therefore, is spoken of God, is not God; but serves rather to help our weak understanding, to conceive in our reason, and to utter in our speech, the majesty of his divine nature, so far as he hath vouchsafed to reveal himself to us in his word.

1. All the attributes of God belong to every of the three Persons, as well as to the essence itself, with the limitation of a personal propriety. As the mercy of the Father is mercy begetting, the mercy of the Son is mercy begotten, the mercy of the Holy Ghost is mercy proceeding: and so of the rest.

2. The essential attributes of God differ not from his essence; because they are so in the essence, that they are the very essence itself. In God, therefore, there is nothing which is not either his essence or person.

3. The essential attributes of God differ not essentially or really one from another, because whatsoever is in God, is one most simple essence, and admits no division, but only in our reason and understanding, which being not able to know earthly things by one simple act, without the help of many distinct acts, must of necessity have the help of many distinct acts to know the incomprehensible God. Therefore, to speak properly, there are not in God many attributes, but one only, which is nothing else but the Divine Essence itself, by what attribute soever you call it. But in respect of our reason, they are said to be so many different attributes; for our understanding conceives by the name of mercy, a thing different from that which is called justice. The essential attributes of God are not therefore really separate.

4. The essential attributes of God are not parts or qualities of the divine essence, nor accidents in the essence, nor a subject, but the very whole and entire essence of God; so that every such attribute is not aliud et aliud, another and another thing, but one and the same thing. There are therefore no quantities in God, by which he may be said to be so much and so much; nor qualities, by which he may be said to be such and such; but whatsoever God is, he is such and the same by his essence. By his essence he is wise, and therefore wisdom itself; by his essence he is good, and therefore goodness itself; by his essence he is merciful, aud therefore mercy itself; by his essence he is just, and therefore justice itself, &c. In a word, God is great, without quantity; good, true, and just, without quality; merciful, without passion; an act, without motion; everywhere present, without sight; without time, the first and the last; the Lord of all creatures, from whom all receive themselves, and all the good they have, yet neither needeth nor receiveth he any increase of goodness or happiness from any other.[34]

This is the plain description of God, so far as he hath revealed himself to us in his word.

This doctrine, of all other, every true practitioner of piety must competently know, and necessarily believe, for four special uses:—

1. That we may discern our true and only God from all false gods and idols; for the description of God is properly known only to his church, in whom he hath thus graciously manifested himself (Psal. clxvii. 19, 20; Jer. x. 25.)

2. To possess our hearts with a greater awe of his majesty, whilst we admire him for his simpleness and infiniteness; adore him for his unmeasurableness, unchangeableness, and eternity; seek wisdom from his understanding and knowledge; submit ourselves to his blessed will and pleasure; love him, his love, mercy, goodness, and patience; trust to his word, because of his truth; fear him for his power, justice, and anger; reverence him for his holiness; and praise him for his blessedness: and to depend all our life on him, who is the only author of our life, being, and all the good things we have.

3. To stir us up to imitate the Divine Spirit in his holy attributes, and to bear, in some measure, the image of his wisdom, love, goodness, justice, mercy, truth, patience, zeal, and anger against sin; that we may be wise, loving, just, merciful, true, patient, and zealous, as our God is.

4. Lastly, that we may in our prayers and meditations conceive aright of his divine majesty, and not according to those gross and blasphemous imaginations which naturally arise in men’s brains, as when they conceive God to be like an old man sitting in a chair; and the blessed Trinity to be like that tripartite idol which papists have painted in their church windows.

When, therefore, thou art to pray to God, let thine heart speak to him as to that eternal, infinite, almighty, holy, wise, just, merciful Spirit, and most perfect, indivisible essence of three several persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; who being present in all places, ruleth heaven and earth, understandeth all men's hearts, knoweth all men's miseries, and is only able to bestow on us all graces which we want, and to deliver all penitent sinners who with faithful hearts seek, for Christ's sake, his help out of all their afflictions and troubles (Psal. xc. 2; 1 Kings viii. 27, 30; Gen. xvii. 1; Job xv. 25; Isa. vi. 3; Rev. iv. 8; xv. 4; Rom. xi. 33; xvi. 17; Deut. xxxii. 4; Psal. cxlv. 8, 9, 17; ciii. 11; John iv. 24; 1 John v. 7; Matt. iii. 16; xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Jer. xxiii. 24; Dan. iv. 32; Jer. xvii. 10; Acts i. 24.)

The ignorance of this true knowledge of God makes many to make an idol of the true God, and is the only cause why so many profess all other parts of God's worship and religion with so much irreverence and hypocrisy;—whereas, if they did truly know God, they durst not but come to his holy service; and coming, serve him with fear and reverence: for so far doth a man fear God as he knoweth him; and then doth a man truly know, God, when he joins practice to speculation: and that is,

First, when a man doth so acknowledge and celebrate God's majesty, as he hath revealed himself in his word.

Secondly, when, from the true and lively sense of God's attributes, there is bred in a man's heart a love, awe, and confidence in God; for saith God himself, "If I be a Father, where is my honour? if I be a Lord, where is my fear?" "O taste and see that the Lord is good!" saith David, Psal. xxxiv. 9. He that hath not by experience tasted his goodness, knows not how good he is. "He" (saith John) "that saith he knoweth God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him," 1 John ii. 4. So far, therefore, as we imitate God in his goodness, love, justice, mercy, patience, and other attributes, so far do we know him.

Thirdly, when with inward groans, and the serious desires of our hearts, we long to attain to the perfect and plenary knowledge of his majesty, in the life which is to come.

Lastly, this discovers how few there are who do truly know God; for no man knoweth God, but he that loveth him; and how can a man choose but love him, being the sovereign good, if he know him, seeing the nature of God is to enamour with the love of his goodness? and whosoever loveth anything more than God, is not worthy of God; and such is every one who settles the love and rest of his heart upon anything besides God. If, therefore, thou dost believe that God is almighty, why dost thou fear devils and enemies, and not confidently trust in God, and crave his help in all thy troubles and dangers?—if thou believest that God is infinite, how darest thou provoke him to anger?—if

thou believest that God is simple, with what heart canst thou dissemble and play the hypocrite?—if thou believest that God is the sovereign good, why is not thy heart more settled upon him than on all worldly good?—if thou dost indeed believe that God is a just Judge, how darest thou live so securely in sin without repentance?—if thou dost truly believe that God is most wise, why dost not thou refer the events of crosses and disgraces to him who knoweth how to turn all things to the best unto them that love him? (Rom. viii. 28)—if thou art persuaded that God is true, why dost thou doubt of his promises?—and if thou believest that God is beauty and perfection itself, why dost not thou make him alone the chief end of all thine affections and desires? for if thou lovest beauty, he is most fair; if thou desirest riches, he is most wealthy; if thou seekest wisdom, he is most wise. Whatsoever excellency thou hast seen in any creature, it is nothing but a sparkle of that which is in infinite perfection in God: and when in heaven we shall have an immediate communion with God, we shall have them all perfectly in him communicated to us. Briefly, in all goodness, he is all in all. Love that one good God, and thou shalt love him in whom all the good of goodness consisteth. He that would therefore attain to the saving-knowledge of God, must learn to know him by love: for God is love, and the knowledge of the love of God passeth all knowledge (Eph. iii. 19; 1 John iv.) For all knowledge besides to know how to love God, and to serve him only, is nothing, upon Solomon’s credit, but vanity of vanities, and vexation of spirit (Eccles. i. 17.)

Kindle therefore, O Lord, the love of thyself in my soul especially, seeing it was thy good pleasure that, being reconciled by the blood of Christ (Rom. v. 9, 10; John xvii. 3, 22; 1 Cor. xv. 8), I should be brought, by the knowledge of thy grace, to the communion of thy glory, wherein only consists my sovereign good and happiness for ever.

Thus, by the light of his own word, we have seen the back parts of Jehovah Elohim, the Eternal Trinity; whom to believe is saving faith and verity; and unto whom from all creatures in heaven and earth, be all praise, dominion, and glory for ever. Amen.

Thus far of the knowledge of God. Now of the knowledge of a man’s self. And first of the state of his misery and corruption without renovation by Christ.

[9]Origo essentiæ in divinis nulla est, origo personarum locum habet in Filio, et Spiritu Sancto; Pater enim est prior Filio, non tempore, sed ordine—Alsted.

[10]Ideo dicitur pater ἄναρχος et ἀγέννητος.

[11]Films Dei ὁλόγος, quoad essentiam absolutam, est quidem à seipso et ἀυτόθεος, sed ratione τρόπου ὑπράξεως, sive esse personalis per æternam generationem à Patre existit: ideoque non est αὐτούσιος (John vi. 38; v. 19; Mic. v. 1; John i. 1.)

[12]Therefore (Rom. viii. 9) the Holy Ghost i» called the Spirit of Christ.

[14] Spiritus S. à Patre, et à Filio procedit, tanquam ab uno et eodem principio, in duabus tantum personis subsidente, non autem tamquam à duobus ac diversis principis.

[15] Infirmitates meræ privationes non pravæ dispositionis.

[16]Humana natura est distinctum individuum à natura divina, etsi non sit distincta persona.—Keck. Syst. Theol. lib. iii. page 119.

[17]As Redemption (Acts xx. 28) and Sanctification (1 Pet. i. 2) to the Father; Creation (1 John iii.) and Sanctification (1 Cor. i. 2) to the Son; Creation (Psal. xxxiii. 6) and Redemption (Eph. iv. 30) to the Holy Ghost; jointly all to each (1 Cor. vi. 11.) Opera Trinitatis ad extra indivisa, ad intus divisa.

[18] Jehovah non habet plurale, et in scripturis soli vero Deo tribuitur.

[19] Deus est causa causarum et ens entium.

[20]Hence Eli in Hebrew (as Matth. xxvii. 46), and Eloi in Syriac (as Mark xv. 31), doth signify my God (2 Chron. xxxii. 8.)

[21](The LXX. turns it παητοκράτωρ.) It is derived of Dai, sufficiency, and the relative ע, the same as αὐταρκης, self-sufficient, (αυτος and αρκεω.)

[22]A name compounded of ai, my, and Adon, Lord. Adon derivatur ab Eden, basis, quia Deus est fundamentum et sustentator omnium creaturarum. Hinc Adon, Dominus, cui rei domesticæ cura incumbit, et ei tanquam columnæ innititur. Quando de creaturis usurpatur Adonai, est Jod cum patach: Sed de Creatore cum cametz. Ab Adonai manasse videtur Ethnicorum Ἀθηνᾶ.

[23]So the Devil styled Christ, The most High (Luke viii. 28.)

[24]Pœnitentia cum de Deo enunciatur, non affectum in Deo, sed effectum Dei in hominibus significat.—Alsttd.

[25]Creaturæ quædam æternæ sunt a posteriori: a priori solus Deus est æternus.—Alsted. Lex, Theol. cap. 2.

[26]Hence it is that God is called of the Hebrews Eheje, so likewise Echeje; and as of the Grecians, ὁ ὢν, so also ὁ ζῶν; and as of the Latins, primum ens, so also primum vivens; for, to be, and to live, is all one and the same in God.

[27]Intellectus scientia et sapientia in Deo non distinguuntur.—Tilen. Nam sapientia in homine est habitus intellectui impressus, qui de Deo dici non debet, cujus intellectus est ipsa sapientia.—Keckerm. Πάντα ἰδὼν Δμὸς ὀφθαλμὸς καὶ πάντα νοήσας. Hes. ib. ἔργα καὶ ἡμίρ. Sap. Hence the Platonics term God ἐφόπτην, all-eye, seeing all.

[28]In creaturis multa inveniuntur bona, ergo Creator multo magis est bonus. Imo αὐτάγαθον, ipsum bonum.

[29]Veritas est harmonia tum intellectus et verborum cum rebus, tum etiam rerum ipsarum cum Ideis in mente divina.—Keckerm. Veritas Dei in verbis, fides Dei dicitur, quod certo fiant, quæ ab ipso dicta sunt. Item constantia, quia sententiam non mutat.—Polan.

[30]Ira Dei non est aliud quam voluntas puniendi.—Aug. 15, de Civit. Dei, c. 15. Ansel, lib. vii. cap. 6. Cur Deus Hom. furor et ira in Deo, non passionem mentis, sed ultionis acerbitatem notant.—Carth. in Apoc. 19.

[31]Deus potest omnia quæ contradictionem non implicant.—Aqu. i. qu. 25, art 3, 4. Omnia potentia excludit omnes defectus, qui sunt impotentia, seu, posse mentiri, mori, peccare, &c.

[32]Hinc Deus dicitur, αὐτοκρατωρ.

[33]Deus est Sharldi, sive αὐτάρκης, non solum quia Ipse nihil desiderat, sed etiam quia nihil in eo desiderari potest. Creaturas fecit perfectas in suo quasque genere, ergo ipse perfectissimus est in se et per se.—Scal. Exerc. 146, sect. 2. (Mark xiv. 61; Acts xvii. 25; Rom. xi. 35, 36; 1 Tim. vi. 15; Matt. xxv. 36; James i. 17.)

[34]Exhibet omnia, accipit nihil; ipsum igitur bonum, est Deus ipse semper.—Trisnæy. serm. ii. Plin.

MEDITATIONS OF THE MISERY OF A MAN NOT RECONCILED TO GOD IN CHRIST.

O wretched Man! where shall I begin to describe thine endless misery, who art condemned as soon as conceived; and adjudged to eternal death, before thou wast born to a temporal life? A beginning indeed, I find, but no end of thy miseries. For when Adam and Eve, being created after God's own image, and placed in Paradise, that they and their posterity might live in a blessed state of life immortal, having dominion over all earthly creatures, and only restrained from the fruit of one tree, as a sign of their subjection to the almighty Creator; though God forbade them this one small thing, under the penalty of eternal death; yet they believed the devil's word before the word of God, making God, as much as in them lay, a liar. And so being unthankful for all the benefits which God bestowed on them, they became malcontent with their present state, as if God had dealt enviously or niggardly with them; and believed that the devil would make them partakers of far more glorious things than ever God had bestowed upon them; and in their pride they fell into high-treason against the Most High; and disdaining to be God's subjects, they affected blasphemously to be gods themselves, equals to God. Hence, till they repented (losing God's image) they became like the devil; and so all their posterity, as a traitorous brood (whilst they remain impenitent, like thee) are subject in this life to all cursed miseries, and, in the life to come, to the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Lay then aside for a while thy doting vanities, and take the view with me of thy doleful miseries; which duly surveyed, I doubt not but that thou wilt conclude, that it is far better never to have nature's being, than not to be by grace a practitioner of religious piety.

Consider therefore thy misery—

1. In thy life. 2. In thy death. 3. After death.

In thy life, 1. The miseries accompanying thy body; 2. The miseries which deform thy soul.

In thy death, The miseries which shall oppress thy body and soul.

After death, The miseries which overwhelm both body and soul together in hell.

And, first, let us take a view of those miseries which accompany the body in the four ages of life, viz. infancy, youth, manhood, and old age.

Meditations of the Miseries of Man from Infancy to Old Age.

What wast thou, being an infant, but an helpless unconscious creature, having the human form, but without speech or reason? Thou wast born in the stain of original sin, and cast naked upon the earth. What cause then hast thou

to boast of thy birth, which was pain and anguish to thy mother, and to thyself the entrance into a troublesome life? the greatness of which miseries, because thou couldst not utter in words, thou didst express as well as thou couldst in weeping tears.

What is youth, but an untamed beast? all whose actions are rash and rude, not capable of good counsel, when it is given; and, ape-like, delighting in nothing but in toys and babies? therefore thou no sooner beganst to have a little strength and discretion, but forthwith thou wast kept under the rod, and fear of parents and masters; as if thou hadst been born to live under the discipline of others, rather than at the disposition of thine own will. No tired horse was ever more willing to be rid of his burden, than thou wast to get out of the servile state of this bondage—a state not worthy the description.

What is man's estate but a sea, wherein, as waves, one trouble arises in the neck of another—the latter worse than the former? No sooner didst thou enter into the affairs of this world, but thou wast enwrapped about with a cloud of miseries. Thy flesh provokes thee to lust, the world allures thee to pleasures, and the devil tempts thee to all kinds of sins; fears of enemies affright thee, suits in law vex thee, wrongs of ill neighbours oppress thee, cares for wife and children consume thee, and disquietness betwixt open foes and false friends do in a manner confound thee; sin stings thee within; Satan lays snares before thee; conscience of sins past doggeth behind thee. Now adversity on the left hand frets thee; anon, prosperity on thy right hand flatters thee; over thy head God's vengeance due to thy sin is ready to fall upon thee; and under thy feet, hell's mouth is ready to swallow thee up. And in this miserable estate whither wilt thou go for rest and comfort? The house is full of cares, the field full of toil, the country of rudeness, the city of factions, the court of envy, the church of sects, the sea of pirates, the land of robbers. Or in what state wilt thou live, seeing wealth is envied and poverty contemned; wit is distrusted, and simplicity is derided; superstition is mocked, and religion is suspected; vice is advanced, and virtue is disgraced? Oh, with what a body of sin art thou compassed about in a world of wickedness! What are thine eyes, but windows to behold vanities? What are thine ears but flood-gates to let in the streams of iniquity? What are thy senses, but matches to give fire to thy lusts? What is thine heart, but the anvil whereon Satan hath forged the ugly shape of all lewd affections? Art thou nobly descended? thou must put thyself in peril of foreign wars to get the reputation of earthly honour; oft-times hazard thy life in a desperate combat to avoid the aspersion of a coward. Art thou born in a mean estate? Lord! what pains and drudgery must thou endure at home and abroad to get maintenance; and all perhaps scarce sufficient to serve thy necessity. And when, after much service and labour, a man has got something, how little certainty is there in that which is gotten? seeing thou seest by daily experience, that he who was rich yesterday, is to-day a beggar; he that

yesterday was in health, to-day is sick; he that yesterday was merry and laughed, has cause to-day to mourn and weep; he that yesterday was in favour, to-day is in disgrace; and he who yesterday was alive, to-day is dead; and thou knowest not how soon, nor in what manner thou shalt die thyself. And who can enumerate the losses, crosses, griefs, disgraces, sicknesses, and calamities, which are incident to sinful man? to speak nothing of the death of friends and children, which oft-times seems to us far more bitter than present death itself.

What is old age, but the receptacle of all maladies? For if thy lot be to draw thy days to a long date, in comes old bald-headed age, stooping under dotage, with his wrinkled face, decaying teeth, and offensive breath; testy with choler, withered with dryness, dimmed with blindness, obsurded with deafness, overwhelmed with, sickness, and bowed together with weakness; having no use of any sense, but of the sense of pain, which so racks every member of his body, that it never eases him of grief, till it has thrown him down to his grave.

Thus far of the miseries which accompany the body. Now of the miseries which accompany chiefly the soul in this life.

Meditations of the Misery of the Soul in this Life.

The misery of thy soul will more evidently appear, if thou wilt but consider—1st, The felicity she has lost; 2d, The misery which she has brought upon herself by sin.

1. The felicity lost was, first, the fruition of the image of God, whereby the soul was like God in knowledge, enabling her perfectly to understand the revealed will of God (Col. iii. 10; Rom. xii. 2); secondly, true holiness, by which she was free from all profane error; thirdly, righteousness, whereby she was able to incline all her natural powers, and to frame uprightly all her actions, proceeding from those powers. With the loss of this divine image, she lost the love of God, and the blessed communion which she had with Him, wherein consists her life and happiness. If the loss of earthly riches vex thee so much, how should not the loss of this divine treasure perplex thee much more?

2. The misery which she drew upon herself, consists in two things:—1st, Sinfulness; 2d, Cursedness.

1. Sinfulness is an universal corruption both of her nature and actions: for her nature is infected with a proneness to every sin continually (Eph. ii. 3; Gen. vi. 5); the mind is stuffed with vanity (Rom. xii. 2; Eph. iv. 17); the understanding is darkened with ignorance (1 Cor. ii. 14); the will affects nothing but vile and vain things (Phil. ii. 3); all her actions are evil (Rom. iii. 12); yea, this deformity is so violent, that often in the regenerate soul, the appetite will not obey the government of reason, and the will wanders after, and yields consent to sinful motions. How great, then, is the violence of the appetite and will in the reprobate soul, which still remains in her natural

corruption! hence it is that thy wretched soul is so deformed with sin, denied with lust, polluted with filthiness, outraged with passions, overcarried with affections, pining with envy, overcharged with gluttony, surfeited with drunkenness, boiling with revenge, transported with rage, and the glorious image of God transformed into the ugly shape of the devil (John viii. 44), so far as it once “repented the Lord, that ever he made man,” Gen. vi. 6.

From the former flows the other part of the soul’s miseries, called Cursedness (Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10; Psal. cxix. 21); whereof there are two degrees—1st, In part; 2d, In the fulness thereof.

1. Cursedness in part is that which is inflicted upon the soul in life and death, and is common to her with the body.

2. The cursedness of the soul in life, is the wrath of God, which lies upon such a creature so far, as that all things, not only calamities, but also very blessings and graces turn to ruin (Rom. ii. 4, 5; Jer. xxviii. 13; Isa. xxviii. 13); terror of conscience drives him from God and his service, that he dares not come to his presence and ordinances (Gen. iii. 8, 10; iv. 14; Heb. ii. 15), but is given up to the slavery of Satan, and to his own lusts and vile affections (Rom. i. 21, 24, 26; Eph. ii. 2; Col. i. 13). This is the cursedness of the soul in life. Now follow the cursedness of the soul and body in death.

Meditations of the Misery of the Body and Soul in Death.

After that the aged man has conflicted with long sickness, and having endured the brunt of pain, should now expect some ease, in comes death, nature’s slaughterman, God’s curse, and hell’s purveyor, and looks the old man grim and black in the face; and neither pitying his age, nor regarding his long-endured dolours, will not be hired to forbear either for silver or gold; nay, he will not take to spare his life, skin for skin (Job i.), and all that the old man hath; but batters all the principal parts of his body, and arrests him to appear before the terrible Judge. And as thinking that the old man will not despatch to go with him fast enough, Lord! how many darts of calamities doth he shoot through him, stitches, aches, cramps, fevers, obstructions, rheums, phlegm, colic, stone, wind, &c. Oh, what a ghastly sight it is, to see him then in his bed, when death has given him his mortal wound what a cold sweat over-runs all his body—what a trembling possesses all his members!—the head shoots, the face waxeth pale, the nose black, the nether jaw-bone hangs down, the eye-strings break, the tongue falters, the breath shortens and smells earthy, and at every gasp the heart-strings are ready to break asunder. Now the miserable soul sensibly perceives her earthly body to begin to die; for as towards the dissolution of the universal frame of the great world, the sun shall be turned into darkness, the moon into blood, and the stars shall fall from heaven, the air shall be full of storms and flashing meteors, the earth shall tremble, and the sea shall roar, and men’s hearts shall fail for fear, expecting the end of such

sorrowful beginnings; so, towards the dissolution of man, which is the little world, his eyes, which are as the sun and moon, lose their light, and see nothing but blood-guiltiness of sin; the rest of the senses, as lesser stars, do one after another fail and fall—his mind, reason, and memory, as heavenly powers of his soul, are shaken with fearful storms of despair, and fierce flashings of hell fire—his earthly body begins to shake and tremble, and the humours. like an overflowing sea, roar and rattle in his throat, still expecting the Woful end of these dreadful beginnings.

Whilst he is thus summoned to appear at the great assizes of God's judgment, behold, a quarter-sessions and jail-delivery is held within himself; where reason sits as judge, the devil puts in a bill of indictment, as large as that book of Zachary (Zech. v. 2; Ezek. ii. 10); wherein is alleged all thy evil deeds that ever thou hast committed, and all the good deeds that ever thou hast omitted, and all the curses and judgments that are due to every sin. Thine own conscience shall accuse thee, and thy memory shall give bitter evidence, and death stands at the bar ready, as a cruel executioner, to dispatch thee. If thou shalt thus condemn thyself, how shalt thou escape the just condemnation of God, who knows all thy misdeeds better than thyself? (1 John iii. 20.) Fain wouldest thou put out of thy mind the remembrance of thy wicked deeds that trouble thee; but they flow faster into thy remembrance, and they will not be put away, but cry unto thee, We are thy works, and we will follow thee! and whilst thy soul is thus within, out of peace and order, thy children, wife, and friends trouble thee as fast, to have thee put thy goods in order; some crying, some craving, some pitying, some cheering; all, like flesh-flies, helping to make thy sorrows more sorrowful (Luke xii. 20.) Now the devils, who are come from hell to fetch away thy soul, begin to appear to her; and wait, as soon as she comes forth, to take her, and carry her away. Stay she would within, but that she feels the body begin by degrees to die, and ready, like a ruinous house, to fall upon her head. Fearful she is to come forth, because of those hell-hounds which wait for her coming. Oh, she that spent so many days and nights in vain and idle pastimes, would now give the whole world, if she had it, for one hour's delay, that she might have space to repent, and reconcile herself unto God! But it cannot be, because her body, which joined with her in the actions of sin, is altogether now unfit to join with her in the exercise of repentance: and repentance must be of the whole man.

Now she sees that all her pleasures are gone, as if they had never been; and that but only torments remain, which never shall have end of being. Who can sufficiently express her remorse for her sins past, her anguish for her present misery, and her terror for her torments to come?

In this extremity she looks everywhere for help, and she finds herself every way helpless. Thus in her greatest misery, desirous to hear the least word of comfort, she directs this or the like speech to her eyes: O eyes, who in times

past were so quick-sighted, can ye spy no comfort, nor any way how I might escape this dreadful danger? But the eye-strings are broken, they cannot see the candle that burns before them, nor discern whether it be day or night.

The soul, finding no comfort in the eyes, speaks to the ears: O ears, who were wont to recreate yourselves with hearing new pleasant discourses, and music's sweetest harmony, can you hear any news or tidings of the least comfort for me? The ears are either so deaf, that they cannot hear at all, or the sense of hearing is grown so weak, that it cannot endure to hear his dearest friends speak. And why should those ears hear any tidings of joy in death, who could never abide to hear the glad tidings of the gospel in this life? The ear can minister no comfort.

Then she intimates her grief to the tongue: O tongue, who wast wont to brag it out with the bravest, where are now thy big and daring words? Now, in my greatest need, canst thou speak nothing in my defence? Canst thou neither daunt these enemies with threatening words, nor entreat them with fair speeches? Alas! the tongue two days ago lay speechless: it cannot, in his greatest extremity, either call for a little drink, or desire a friend to take away with his finger the phlegm that is ready to choke him.

Finding here no hope of help, she speaks to the feet: Where are ye, O feet, which sometime were so nimble in running? Can you carry me nowhere out of this dangerous place? The feet are stone-dead already: if they be not stirred, they cannot stir.

Then she directs her speech to her hands: O hands, who have been so often approved for manhood, in peace and war, and wherewith I have so often defended myself, and offended my foes, never had I more need than now. Death looks me grim in the face, and kills me—hellish fiends wait about my bed to devour me: help now, or I perish for ever. Alas! the hands are so weak, and do so tremble, that they cannot reach to the mouth a spoonful of liquid, to relieve languishing nature.

The wretched soul, seeing herself thus desolate, and altogether destitute of friends, help, and comfort, and knowing that within an hour she must be in everlasting pains, retires herself to the heart (which of all members is primum vivens, and ultimum moriens), from whence she makes this doleful lamentation with herself.

O miserable caitiff that I am! how do the sorrows of death compass me! how do the floods of Belial make me afraid! (2 Sam. xxii. 5.) Now have, indeed, the snares both of the first and second death overtaken me at once. O how suddenly has death stolen upon me with insensible degrees! like the sun, which the eye perceives not to move, though it be most swift of motion. How does death wreak on me his spite without pity! The God of mercy has utterly forsaken me; and the devil, who knows no mercy, waits to take me. How often

have I been warned of this doleful day by the faithful preachers of God's word, and I made but a jest of it! What profit have I now of all my pride, fine house, and gay apparel? What is become of the sweet relish of all my delicious fare? All the worldly goods which I so carefully gathered, would I now give for a good conscience, which I so carelessly neglected. And what joy remains now of all my former fleshly pleasures, wherein I placed my chief delight? those foolish pleasures were but deceitful dreams, and now they are past like vanishing shadows: but to think of those eternal pains which I must endure for those short pleasures, pains me as hell before I enter into hell. Yet justly, I confess, as I have deserved I am served; that being made after God's image a reasonable soul, able to judge of mine own estate, and having mercy so often offered, and I entreated to receive it, I neglected God's grace, and preferred the pleasures of sin before the religious care of pleasing God; lewdly spending my short time, without considering what accounts I should make at my last end. And now all the pleasures of my life being put together, countervail not the least part of my present pains: my joys were but momentary, and gone before I could scarce enjoy them; my miseries are eternal, and never shall know an end. O that I had spent the hours that I consumed in carding, dicing, playing, and other vile exercises, in reading the scriptures, in hearing sermons, in receiving the communion, in weeping for my sins, in fasting, watching, praying, and in preparing my soul, that I might have now departed in the assured hope of everlasting salvation! O that I were now to begin my life again! how would I contemn the world and its vanities! how religiously and purely would I lead my life! how would I frequent the church, and sanctify the Lord's day! If Satan should offer me all the treasures, pleasures, and promotions of this world, he should never entice me to forget these terrors of this last dreadful hour. But, O corrupt carcase and loathsome carrion! how has the devil deluded us! and how have we served and deceived each other, and pulled swift damnation upon us both! Now is my case more miserable than the beast that perisheth in a ditch; for I must go to answer before the judgment-seat of the righteous Judge of heaven and earth, where I shall have none to speak for me: and these wicked fiends, who are privy to all my evil deeds, will accuse me, and I cannot excuse myself; my own heart already condemns me; I must needs therefore be damned before his judgment-seat, and from thence be carried by these infernal fiends into that horrible prison of endless torments and utter darkness, where I shall never more see light, that first most excellent thing that God made. I, who gloried heretofore in being a libertine, am now enclosed in the very claws of Satan, as the trembling partridge is within the griping talons of the ravenous falcon. Where shall I lodge to-night—and who shall be my companions? O horror to think! O grief to consider! O cursed be the day wherein I was born, and let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed! Cursed be the man that shewed my father,

saying, “A child is born unto thee,” and comforted him; cursed be that man because he slew me not! O that my mother might have been my grave, or her womb a perpetual conception! How is it that I came forth of the womb to endure these hellish sorrows, and that my days should thus end with eternal shame? Cursed be the day that I was first united to so vile a body! O that I had but so much favour as that I might never see thee more! Our parting is bitter and doleful, but our meeting again, to receive at that dreadful day the fulness of our deserved vengeance, will be far more terrible and intolerable. But what mean I thus, by too late lamentation, to seek to prolong time? my last hour is come, I hear the heart-strings break: this filthy-house of clay falls on my head; here is neither hope, help, nor place of any longer abiding. And must I needs be gone, thou filthy carcase? O filthy carcase! with fare-ill, farewell, I leave thee: And so all trembling she comes forth, and forthwith is seized upon by infernal fiends, who carry her with a violence torrenti simili to the bottomless lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; where she is kept as a prisoner in torments till the general judgment of the great day (Rev. xxi. 8; Jude, ver. 6; 1 Pet. iii. 19.)

The loathsome carcase is afterwards laid in the grave. In which action, for the most part, the dead bury the dead; that is, they who are dead in sin, bury them who are dead for sin. And thus the godless and unregenerated worldling, who made earth his paradise, his belly his god, his lust his law; as in his life he sowed vanity, so he is now dead, and reapeth misery. In his prosperity he neglected to serve God: in his adversity God refuses to save him; and the devil, whom he long served, now at length pays him his wages. Detestable was his life, damnable is his death. The devil has his soul, the grave has his carcase: in which pit of corruption, den of death, and dungeon of sorrow, let us leave the miserable sinner, rotting with his mouth full of earth, his belly full of worms, and his carcase full of stench; expecting a fearful resurrection, when the body shall be reunited with the soul; that as they sinned together, so they may be eternally tormented together.

Thus far of the miseries of the soul and body is death, which is but cursedness in part: Now follows the fulness of cursedness, which is the misery of the soul and body after death.

Meditations of the Misery of a Man after Death, which is the fulness of Cursedness.

The fulness of cursedness, when it falls upon a creature, not able to bear the brunt of it, presseth him down to that bottomless deep of the endless wrath of Almighty God, which is called the damnation of hell (Luke viii. 28, & xvi. 23; 1 Thess. i. 10; Matt. xxiii. 33.) This fulness of cursedness is either particular or general.

Particular is that which, in a less measure of fulness, lighteth upon the soul immediately, as soon as she is separated from the body (Luke xvi. 22, 23; 1 Pet. iii. 19; Jude, ver. 6, 7;) for in the very instant of dissolution she is in the sight and presence of God: for when she ceaseth to see with the organ of fleshly eyes, she seeth after a spiritual manner; like Stephen, who saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at his right hand (Acts vii. 5;) or as a man who, being born blind, and miraculously restored to his sight, should see the sun, which he never saw before. And there, by the testimony of her own conscience, Christ, the righteous Judge, who knoweth all things, maketh her, by his omnipresent power, to understand the doom and judgment that is due unto her sins, and what must be her eternal state. And in this manner standing in the sight of heaven, not fit, for her uncleanness, to come into heaven, she is said to stand before the throne of God. And so forthwith she is carried by the evil angels, who came to fetch her with violence into hell, where she is kept, as in a prison, in everlasting pains and chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day; but not in that extremity of torments which she shall finally receive at the last day.

The general fulness of cursedness is in a greater measure of fulness which shall be inflicted upon both soul and body, when, by the mighty power of Christ, the supreme Judge of heaven and earth, the one shall be brought out of hell, and the other out of the grave, as prisoners, to receive their dreadful doom, according to their evil deeds (2 Pet. ii. 9; Jude, ver. 7; Rev. xi. 18; John v. 28, 29; Rev. xx. 13.) How shall the reprobate, by the roaring of the sea, the quaking of the earth, the trembling of the powers of heaven (Matt. xxiv. 29; Luke xxi. 24, 25), and terrors of heavenly signs, be driven, at the world’s end, to their wits’ end! Oh, what a woful salutation will there be betwixt the damned soul and body, at their reuniting at that terrible day!

O sink of sin, O lump of filthiness (will the soul say to her body), how am I compelled to re-enter thee, not as to an habitation to rest, but as a prison, to be tormented! How dost thou appear in my sight, like Jephtha’s daughter, to my great torment! Would God thou hadst perpetually rotted in the grave, that I might never have seen thee again! How shall we be confounded together to hear, before God, angels, and men, laid open all those secret sins which we committed together! Have I lost heaven for the love of such a foul carrion? Art thou the flesh for whose pleasures I have yielded to commit so many fornications? O filthy belly! how became I such a fool as to make thee my god! How mad was I, for momentary joys, to incur these torments of eternal pains! Ye rocks and mountains, why skip ye so like rams (Ps. cxliv. 4), and will not fall upon me, to hide me from the face of him that comes to sit on yonder throne; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand? (Rev. vi. 16, 17.) Why tremblest thou thus, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, and will

not open thy mouth, and swallow me up, as thou didst Corah, that I be seen no more?

O evil fiends! I would ye might without delay tear me in pieces, on condition that you would tear me into nothing!

But whilst thou art thus in vain bewailing thy misery, the angels (Matt. xiii. 41) hale thee violently away from the brink of thy grave to some place near the tribunal-seat of Christ; where being, as a cursed goat, separated to stand beneath on earth, as on the left hand of the Judge, Christ will pass sentence upon thee (Matt. xxv. 33.)

Within thee, thine own conscience (more than a thousand witnesses) shall accuse thee; the devils, who tempted thee to all thy lewdness, shall on the one side testify with thy conscience against thee; and on the other side shall stand the holy saints and angels approving Christ's justice; behind thee, an hideous noise of innumerable fellow-reprobates tarrying for thy company; before thee, all the world burning in flaming fire; above thee, an ireful Judge of deserved vengeance, ready to pronounce his sentenoe upon thee; beneath thee, the fiery and sulphureous mouth of the bottomless pit. gaping to receive thee. In this woful estate, to hide thyself will be impossible, for on that condition, thou wouldest wish that the greatest rock might fall upon thee (Rev. vi. 16, 17;) to appear will be intolerable, and yet thou must stand forth, to receive with other reprobates, this sentence—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Depart from me.] There is a separation from all joy and happiness.

Ye cursed.] There is a black and direful excommunication.

Into fire.] There is the cruelty of pain.

Everlasting.] There is the perpetuity of punishment.

Prepared for the devil and his angels.] Here are thy infernal tormenting and tormented companions.

O terrible sentence! from which the condemned cannot escape; which being pronounced, cannot possibly be withstood; against which a man cannot except, and from which a man can nowhere appeal: so that to the damned, nothing remains but hellish torments, which know neither ease of pain, nor end of time! From this judgment-seat thou must be thrust by angels, together with all the devils and reprobates, into the bottomless lake of utter darkness, that perpetually burns with fire and brimstone (Rev. xxi. 8:) Whereunto, as thou shalt be thrust, there shall be such weeping, woes, and wailing, that the cry of the company of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, when the earth swallowed them up, was nothing comparable to this howling: nay, it will seem unto thee a hell, before thou goest into hell, but to hear it. Into which lake, after that thou art once plunged, thou shalt ever be falling down, and never meet a bottom; and in

it thou shalt ever lament, and none shall pity thee; thou shalt always weep for pain of the fire, and yet gnash thy teeth for the extremity of cold; thou shalt weep to think, that thy miseries are past remedy; thou shalt weep to think, that to repent is to no purpose; thou shalt weep to think, how, for the shadows of short pleasures, thou hast incurred these sorrows of eternal pains; thou shalt weep, to see how weeping itself can nothing prevail; yea, in weeping, thou shalt weep more tears than there is water in the sea; for the water of the sea is finite, but the weeping of a reprobate shall be infinite!

There thy lascivious eyes will be afflicted with sights of ghastly spirits; thy curious ear affrighted with hideous noise of devils, and the weeping and gnashing of teeth of reprobates; thy dainty nose will be cloyed with noisome stench of sulphur; thy delicate taste pained with intolerable hunger; thy drunken throat will be parched with unquenchable thirst; thy mind will be tormented to think how, for the love of abortive pleasures, which perished ere they budded, thou so foolishly didst lose heaven's joys, and incur hellish pains, which last beyond eternity; thy conscience shall ever sting thee like an adder, when thou thinkest how often Christ by bis preachers offered the remission of sins, and the kingdom of heaven freely to thee, if thou wouldest but believe and repent; and how easily thou mightest have obtained mercy in those days; how near thou wert many times to have repented, and yet didst suffer the devil and the world to keep thee still in impenitency; and how the day of mercy is now past, and will never dawn again. How shall thy understanding be racked, to consider, that, for momentary riches, thou hast lost the eternal treasure, and changed heaven's felicity for hell's misery, where every part of thy body, without intermission of pain, shall be continually tormented!

In these hellish torments thou shalt be for ever deprived of the beatifical sight of God, wherein consists the sovereign good and life of the soul; thou shalt never see light, nor the least light of joy, but lie in a perpetual prison of utter darkness, where shall be no order, but horror; no voice, but of blasphemers and howlers; no noise, but of tortures and tortured; no society, but of the devil and his angels, who being tormented themselves, shall have no other ease but to wreak their fury in tormenting thee; where shall be punishment without pity; misery without mercy; sorrow without succour; crying without comfort; mischief without measure; torment without ease: where the worm dieth not and the fire is never quenched; where the wrath of God shall seize upon the soul and body, as the flame of fire doth on the lump of pitch, or brimstone. In which flame thou shalt ever be burning, and never consumed; ever dying, and never dead; ever roaring in the pangs of death, and never rid of those pangs, nor knowing end of thy pains. So that after thou hast endured them so many thousand years as there are grass on the earth, or sand on the sea shore, thou art no nearer to have an end of thy torments, than thou wast the first day that thou wast cast into them; yea, so far are they from

ending, that they are ever but beginning. But if, after a thousand times so many thousand years, thy lost soul could but conceive a hope that her torments should have an end, this would be some comfort—to think that at length an end will come. But as oft as the mind thinketh of this word Never, it is as another hell in the midst of hell.

This thought shall force the damned to cry, οὐαὶ, οὐαὶ, as much as if they should say, οὐκ ἀεὶ, οὐκ ἀεὶ. O Lord, not ever, not ever torment us thus! But their conscience shall answer them as an echo, ἀεὶ, ἀεὶ. Ever, ever! Hence shall arise their doleful οὐαὶ, woe, and alas for evermore!

This is that second death, the general perfect fulness of all cursedness and misery, which every damned reprobate must suffer, so long as God and his saints shall enjoy bliss and felicity in heaven for evermore.

Thus far of the misery of man in his state of corruption, unless he be renewed by grace in Christ.

Now follows the knowledge of man’s self, in respect of his state of regeneration by Christ.

MEDITATIONS OF THE STATE OF A CHRISTIAN RECONCILED TO GOD IN CHRIST,

Blessedness of the Regenerate

Now let us see how happy a godly man is in his state of renovation, being reconciled to God in Christ.

The godly man whose corrupt nature is renewed by grace in Christ and become a new creature, is blessed in a threefold respect—First, in his life; Secondly, in his death; Thirdly, after death.

I. His blessedness during his life is but in part, and that consists in seven things:—

1. Because he is conceived of the Spirit (John iii. 5), and is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John i. 13), who in Christ is his Father (Gal. iv. 6, 7; 2 Cor. ix. 8:) so that the image of God his Father is renewed in him every day more and more (Ephesians 4:2,3,13; Col. iii. 10.)

2. He has, for the merits of Christ's sufferings, all his sins, original and actual, with the guilt and punishment belonging to them (Rom. iv. 8, 25; viii. 1, 2; 1 Pet. ii. 24), freely and fully forgiven him; and all the righteousness of Christ as freely and fully imputed to him (Rom. iv. 5, 19;) and so God is reconciled to him (2 Cor. v. 19;) and approveth him as righteous in his sight and account (Rom. viii. 33, 34.)

3. He is freed from Satan's bondage (Act. xvi. 18; Eph. ii. 2), and is made a brother of Christ (John xx. 17; Rom. viii. 20), a fellow-heir of his heavenly kingdom (Rom. viii. 17), and a spiritual king and priest (Rev. i. 6), to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God by Jesus Christ (1 Pet. ii. 5; Mal. iii. 17.)

4. God spareth him as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. And this sparing consists in,

(1.) Not taking notice of every fault, but bearing with his infirmities (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.) A loving father will not cast his child out of doors in his sickness.

(2.) Not making his punishment, when he is chastened, as great as his deserts (Psal. ciii. 10.)

(3.) Chastening him moderately when he seeth that he will not by any other means be reclaimed (2 Sam. vii. 14, 15; 1 Cor. xi. 32.)

(4.) Graciously accepting his endeavours, notwithstanding the imperfection of his obedience; and so preferring the willingness of his mind before the worthiness of his work (2 Cor. viii. 12.)

(5.) Turning the curses which he deserved to crosses and fatherly corrections; yea, all things, all calamities of this life, death itself, yea, his very sins, to his good (Rom. viii. 28; Psal. lxxxix. 31, 33; cxix. 71; Heb. xii. 10; 2 Cor.

xii. 7; 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55; Hebrews 2:14,15; Luke xxii. 31, 32; Psal. li. 13, 14; Rom. v. 20, 21.)

5. God gives him his Holy Spirit, which,

(1.) Sanctifies him by degrees throughout (1 Thess. v. 23), so that he more and more dies to sin and lives to righteousness (Rom. viii. 5, 10.)

(2.) Assures him of his adoption, and that he is by grace the child of God (Rom. viii. 16.)

(3.) Encourages him to come with boldness and confidence into the presence of God (Heb. iv. 16; Eph. iii. 12.)

(4.) Moves him without fear to say unto him, Abba, Father (Gal. iv 6; Rom. viii. 15, 16.)

(5.) Pours into his heart the gift of sanctified prayer.

(6.) Persuades him that both he and his prayers are accepted and heard of God, for Christ his mediator's sake.

(7.) Fills him with, 1st, Peace of conscience (Rom. v. 1; xiv. 17;) 2d, Joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. xiv. 17:) in comparison whereof all earthly joys seem vain and vile to him.

6. He has a recovery of his sovereignty over the creatures (Psal. viii. 5, &c.; Heb. ii. 7, 8), which he lost by Adam's fall; and from thence free liberty (Rom. xiv. 14; 1 Tim. iv. 2, &c.) of using all things which God hath not restrained (1 Cor. ix. 19, 20), so that he may use them with a good conscience (1 Cor. iii. 22, 32; Heb. i. 7.) For to all things in heaven and earth he hath a sure title in this life (1 Cor. iii. 22;) and he shall have the plenary and peaceable possession of them in the life to come (Matt. xxv. 34; 1 Pet. i. 4.) Hence it is that all reprobates are but usurpers of all that they possess, and have no place of their own but hell (Acts i. 25.)

7. He has the assurance of God's fatherly care and protection day and night over him; which care consists in three things:

(1.) In providing all things necessary for his soul and body, concerning this life (Matt. vi. 32; 2 Cor. xii. 14; Psal. xxiii; xxxiv. 9, 10), and that which is to come; so that he shall be sure ever either to have enough, or patience to be content with that he hath.

(2.) In that God gives his holy angels, as ministers, a charge to attend upon him always for his good (Heb. i. 14; Psal. xxxiv. 7; xci. 11;) yea, in danger to pitch their tents about him for his safety wherever he be: yea, God's protection shall defend him as a cloud by day, and as a pillar of fire by night (Isa. iv. 5;) and his providence shall hedge him from the power of the devil (Job i. 10.)

(3.) In that the eyes of the Lord are upon him, and his ears continually open, to see his state (Psal. xxxiv. 15; Gen. vii. 1), and to hear his complaint, and in his good time to deliver him out of all his troubles (Psal. xxxiv. 19.)

Thus far of the blessed state of the godly and regenerate man in this life: Now of his blessed state in death,

Meditations of the Blessed State of a Regenerate Man in His Death

2. Meditations of the blessed state of a Regenerate Man in his Death.

When God sends death as his messenger for the regenerate man, he meets him half-way to heaven, for his conversation and affection is there before him (Phil. iii. 20; Col. iii. 2.) Death is never strange nor fearful to him: not strange, because he died daily—not fearful, because whilst he lived, he was dead, and his life was hid with Christ in God (1 Cor. i. 31; Col. iii. 3;) to die, therefore, is to him nothing else in effect, but to rest from his labour in this world, to go home to his Father's house, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant (Rev. xiv. 13; 2 Cor. v. 6; John xiv. 2; Heb. xii. 22, &c.) Whilst his body is sick, his mind is sound; for God maketh his bed in sickness, and strengthened him with faith and patience, upon his bed of sorrow (Psal. xli. 3.) And when he begins to enter into the way of all the world, he giveth (like Jacob, Moses, and Joshua) to his children and friends, godly exhortations and counsels, to serve the true God, to worship Him truly all the days of their life (Gen. xlix.) His blessed soul breatheth nothing but blessings, and such speeches as savour a sanctified spirit. As his outward man decayeth, so his inward man increaseth, and waxeth stronger; when the speech of his tongue faltereth, the sighs of his heart speak louder unto God; when the sight of the eyes faileth, the Holy Ghost illuminates him inwardly with abundance of spiritual light. His soul feareth not, but is bold to go out of the body, and to dwell with her Lord (2 Cor. v. 8.) He sigheth out with Paul, Cupio dissolvi, "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ," Phil. i. 23. And with David, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" Psal. xlii. 2. He prayeth with the saints, "How long, O Lord, which art holy and true?" Rev. vi. 10. "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," Rev. xxii. 10. And when the appointed time of his dissolution is come (Job xiv. 5), knowing that he goeth to his Father and Redeemer in the peace of a good conscience (Psal. xxxi. 5), and the assured persuasion of the forgiveness of all his sins, in the blood of the Lamb, he sings with blessed old Simeon his Nunc dimittis, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," (Luke ii. 29; Psal. xxxvii. 37; Isa. lvii. 2), and surrenders up his soul, as it were, with his own hands, into the hands of his heavenly Father, 6aying with David, "Into thy hands, O Father, I commend my soul, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth," Psal. xxxi. 5. And saying with Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," Acts vii. 59; he no sooner yields up the ghost, but immediately the holy angels (Matt. xviii. 10; Acts xii. 15; xxvii. 23) who

attended upon him from his. birth to his death, carry and accompany his soul into heaven, as they did the soul of Lazarus into Abraham's bosom (Luke xvi. 22), which is the kingdom of heaven, whither only good angels and good works do accompany the soul (Matt. viii. 11; Luke xiii. 28; Acts xv. 10, 11; Eph. i. 10; Heb. xi. 9, 10, 16; xii. 22, 23; Luke xix. 9; ix. 31;) the one to deliver their charge (Psal. xci. 11; Heb. i. 14;) the other to receive their reward (Rev. xiv. 13; xxii. 12.)

The body, in convenient time, as the sanctified temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 19), the members of Christ (1 Cor. vi. 15), nourished by his body (Mat. xxvi. 26), the price of the blood of the Son of God (1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Pet. i. 19), is by his fellow-brethren reverently laid to sleep in the grave as in the bed of Christ (1 Thess. iv. 14; Acts vii. 6; viii. 2), in an assured hope to awake in the resurrection of the just, at the last day, to be partaker, with the soul, of life and glory everlasting (Dan. xii. 2; John v. 28, 29; Luke xiv. 14; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; Rev. xiv. 13.) And in this respect not only the souls, but the very bodies of the faithful also are termed blessed.

Thus far of the blessedness of the soul and body of the regenerate man in death: Now let us see the blessedness of bis soul and body after death.

Meditations of the Blessed State of the Regenerate Man After Death.

3. Meditations of the blessed state of the Regenerate Man after Death.

This estate has three degrees:—1st, From the day of death to the resurrection; 2d, From the resurrection to the pronouncing of the sentence; 3d, After the sentence, which lasts eternally.

As soon as ever the regenerate man hath yielded up his soul to Christ, the holy angels take her into their custody, and immediately carry her into heaven (Luke xvi. 22), and there present her before Christ, where she is crowned with a crown of righteousness and glory; not which she hath deserved by her good works, but which God hath promised of his free goodness to all those who, of love, have in this life unfeignedly served him, and sought Ms glory (Heb. i. 14; xii. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 8; Rev. ii. 10; 1 Pet. v. 4.)

Oh, what joy will it be to thy soul, which was wont to see nothing but misery and sinners, now to behold the face of the God of glory! yea, to see Christ welcoming thee, as soon as thou art presented before him by the holy angels, with an Euge bone serve! “Well done, and welcome good and faithful servant, &c., enter into thy Master’s joy.” And what joy will this be, to behold thousand thousands of cherubims, seraphims, angels, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers! (Col. i. 6; Eph. i. 21.) All the holy patriarchs, priests, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and all the souls of thy friends, parents, husbands, wives, children, and the rest of God’s saints, who departed before thee in the true faith of Christ, standing before God’s throne in bliss and glory? If the Queen of Sheba, beholding the glory and attendance given to Solomon, as it were ravished therewith, brake out and said, “Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand ever before thee, and hear thy wisdom,” (1 Kings x. 8), how shall thy soul be ravished to see herself by grace admitted to stand with this glorious company, to behold tie blessed face of Christ, and to hear all the treasures of his divine wisdom; how shalt thou rejoice to see so many thousand thousands welcoming thee into their heavenly society (Luke xv;) for as they all rejoiced at thy conversion, so will they now be much more joyful to behold thy coronation, and to see thee receive thy crown, which was laid up for thee against thy coming (1 Tim. iv. 8.) There the crown of martyrdom shall be put on the head of the martyr, who for Christ’s gospel’s sake endured torments—the crown of piety on the head of them who sincerely professed Christ—the crown of good works on the good alms-giver’s head, who liberally relieved the poor—the crown of incorruptible glory on the head of those pastors, who by their preaching and good example have converted souls from the corruption of sin, to glorify God in holiness of life. Who can sufficiently express the rejoicing of this heavenly company, to see thee thus crowned with glory (Rev. vii. 9), arrayed with the shining robes of

righteousness, and to behold the palm of victory put into thy hand! O what gratulation will there be, that thou hast escaped all the miseries of the world, the snares of the devil, the pains of hell, and obtained with them thy eternal rest and happiness! for there every one joyeth as much in another's happiness as in his own, because he shall see him as much loved of God as himself; yea, they have as many distinct joys as they have copartners of their joy. And in this joyful and blessed state, the soul resteth with Christ in heaven till the resurrection; when the number of her fellow-servants and brethren shall have been fulfilled, which the Lord termeth but a little season (Rev. vii. 9.)

The second degree of man's blessedness after death, is from the resurrection to the pronouncing of the final sentence. For at the last day,

1. The elementary heavens, earth, and all things therein, shall be dissolved, and purified with fire (2 Pet. ii. 10, 12, 13.)

2. At the sound of the last trumpet, or voice of Christ, the Archangel, the very same bodies which the elect had before (though turned to dust and earth) shall arise again (1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 16; John v. 28; Ezek. xxxvii. 7, 8, &c.) And in the same instant, every man's soul shall re-enter into his own body, by virtue of the resurrection of Christ, their head (Rom. viii. 11; Phil. iii. 10, 11; 1 Thess. iv. 14), and be made alive and rise out of their graves, as if they did but awake out of their beds (Rom. v. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 22.) And howsoever tyrants bemangled their bodies in pieces, or consumed them to ashes, yet shall the elect find it true at that day, that not an hair of their head is perished (Matt. xix. 30.)

3. They shall come forth out of their graves, like so many Josephs out of prison; or Daniels out of the lion's den; or Jonahs out of the whale's belly;[35] (1 Thess. iv. 14; Dan. vi. 23.)

4. All the bodies of the elect being thus made alive, shall arise in that perfection of nature whereunto they should have attained by their natural temperament, if no impediment had hindered (Isa. lxv. 20); and in that vigour of age that a perfect man is at about three and thirty years old, each in their proper sex. To which divines think the apostle alludes when he saith, "Till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age (or stature) of the fulness of Christ," Eph. iv. 13. Whatsoever imperfection was before in the body (as blindness, lameness, crookedness) shall then be done away. Jacob shall not halt, nor Isaac be blind, nor Leah blear-eyed, nor Mephibosheth lame: for if David would not have the blind and lame to come into his house, much less will Christ have blindness and lameness to dwell in his heavenly habitation. Christ made all the blind to see, the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, that came to him to seek his grace on earth: much more will he heal all their imperfections whom he will admit to his glory in heaven. Among those tribes, there is not one feeble; but the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the

dumb man's tongue shall sing (Psal. cv. 37; Isa. xxxv. 6.) And it is very probable, that seeing God created our first parents, not infants, or old men, but of a perfect age or stature, the ἀνάπλασις, or new creation from death, shall every way be more perfect than the πλάσις, or first frame of man, from which he fell into the state of the dead. Neither is it like that infancy, being imperfection, and old age corruption, can well stand with the state of a perfect glorified body.

5. The bodies of the elect being thus raised, shall have four most excellent and supernatural qualities: For,

(1.) They shall be raised in power, whereby they shall for ever be freed from all wants and weakness, and enabled to continue, without the use of meat, drink, sleep, and other former helps (1 Cor. xv. 43.)

(2.) In incorruption, whereby they shall never be subject to any manner of imperfections, blemish, sickness, or death (1 Cor. xv. 41; Isa. lxv. 20.)

(3.) In glory, whereby their bodies shall shine as bright as the sun in the firmament (Matt. xiii. 43; Luke ix. 31;) and which being made transparent, their souls shall shine through far more glorious than their bodies (1 Thess. iv. 17.) Three glimpses of which glory were seen—first, in Moses's face (Exod. xxxiv. 29;) secondly, in the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 2;) thirdly, in Stephen's countenance (Acts vi. 15:) three instances and assurances of the glorification of our bodies at that glorious day. Then shall David lay aside his shepherd's weed, and put on the robe of the King's Son, Jesus, not Jonathan's (1 Sam. xviii. 4.) Then every true Mordecai (who mourned under the sackcloth of this corrupt flesh) shall be arrayed with the King's royal apparel (Esther i. 4), and have the crown-royal set upon his head, that all the world may see how it shall be done to him whom the King of kings delighteth to honour. If now the rising of one sun make the morning so glorious, how glorious shall that day be, when innumerable millions of millions of bodies of saints and angels shall appear more glorious than the brightness of the sun, the body of Christ in glory surpassing all!

(4.) In agility, whereby our bodies shall be able to ascend, and meet the Lord at his glorious coming in the air, as eagles flying unto their blessed carcase (Matt. xxiv. 28.) To this agility of the glorious bodies of the saints the prophet alludes, saying, "They shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they Shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint," Isa. xl. 31. And to this state may that saying of Wisdom be referred: "In the time of their vision they shall shine, and run to and fro, as sparks among the stubble."

And in respect of these four qualities, Paul calleth the raised bodies of the elect spiritual (1 Cor. xv. 46;) for they shall be spiritual in qualities, but the same still in substance.

And howsoever sin and corruption make a man, in this state of mortality, lower than angels, yet surely, when God shall thus crown him with glory and honour (Psal. viii. 5), I cannot see how man shall be anything inferior to angels. For are they spirits? so is man also in respect of his soul: yea, more than this, they shall have also a spiritual body, fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. iii. 21), in whom man's nature is exalted by a personal union into the glory of the Godhead, and individual society of the blessed Trinity (Heb. ii. 16), an honour which he never vouchsafed angels: and in this respect man hath a prerogative above them. Nay, they are but spirits appointed to be ministers unto the elect (Heb. i. 14; Psal. xci. 11;) and as many of them, who at the first disdained this office, and would not keep their first standing, were for their pride hurled into hell (Jude, ver. 6; 2 Pet. ii. 4.) This lesseneth not the dignity of angels, but extols the greatness of God's love to mankind.

But as for all the elect, who at that second and sudden coming of Christ shall be found quick and living, the fire that shall burn up the corruption of the world, and the works therein, shall in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, overtake them as it finds them, either grinding in the mill of provision, or walking in the fields of pleasure, or lying in the bed of ease (2 Pet. iii. 10, 11, 12; 1 Cor. xv. 51; Luke xvii. 31;) and so (burning up their dross and corruption) of mortal, make them immortal bodies: and this change shall be unto them instead of death.

Then shall the soul with joyfulness greet her body, saying, O well met again, my dear sister: How sweet is thy voice! How comely is thy countenance, having lain hid so long in the clefts of the rocks, and in the secret places of the grave! (Canticles ii. 14.) Thou art indeed an habitation fit, not only for me to dwell in, but such as the Holy Ghost thinks meet to reside in, as his temple, for ever. The winter of our affliction is now past; the storm of our misery is blown over and gone. The bodies of our elect brethren appear more glorious than the lily-flowers on the earth; the time of singing hallelujah is come, and the voice of the trumpet is heard in the land. Thou hast been my yoke-fellow in the Lord's labours, and companion in persecutions and wrongs, for Christ and his gospel's sake; now shall we enter together into our Master's joy. As thou hast borne with me the cross, so shalt thou now wear with me the crown. As thou hast with me sowed plenteously in tears, so shalt thou reap with me abundantly in joy. O blessed, ever blessed be that God, who, when yonder reprobates spent their whole time in pride, fleshly lusts, eating, drinking, and profane vanities, gave us grace to join together in watching, fasting, praying, reading the scriptures, keeping his sabbaths, hearing sermons, receiving the holy communion, relieving the poor, exercising, in all humility, the works of piety to God, and walking conscionably in the duties of our calling towards men. Thou shalt, anon, hear no mention of thy sins, for they are remitted and

covered (Psal. xxxii. 1); but every good work which thou hast done for the Lord's sake shall be rehearsed and rewarded.

Cheer up thy heart, for thy Judge is flesh of thy flesh, and bone of thy bone (Dan. ix. 21, &c.) Lift up thy head, behold these glorious angels, like so many Gabriels, flying towards us, to tell us that the day of our redemption is come (Luke xxi. 28), and to convey us in the clouds to meet our Redeemer in the air. Lo, they are at hand! Arise, therefore, my dove, my love, my fair one, and come away (Cant. ii. 1, 3.) And so, like roes, or young harts (verse 17), they run with angels towards Christ, over the trembling mountains of Bether,

6. Both quick and dead being thus revived and glorified, shall forthwith, by the ministry of God's holy angels (Luke xvii. 34, 35, 36), be gathered from all the quarters and parts of the world, and caught up together in the clouds, to meet the Lord, in the air (1 Thess. iv. 17), and so shall come with him, as a part of his glorious train, to judge the reprobates and evil angels (1 Cor. vi. 1, 3.) The twelve apostles shall sit upon twelve thrones (next Christ) to judge the twelve tribes, who refused to hear the gospel preached by their ministry; and all the saints, in honour and order, shall stand next to them, as judges also, to judge the evil angels, and earthly-minded men (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.) And as every of them received grace in this life to be more zealous of his glory, and more faithful in his service, than others, so shall their glory and reward be greater than others in that day (Rev. xxii. 12; 2 Cor. v. 6.)

The place whither they shall be gathered unto Christ, and where Christ shall sit in judgment, shall be in the air (1 Thess. iv. 17), over the valley of Jehoshaphat, by Mount Olivet, near to Jerusalem, eastward from the temple, as it is probable, for four reasons:—

1. Because the holy scripture seems to intimate so much in plain words: "I will gather all nations into the valley of Jehoshaphat and plead with them there.[36] Cause thy mighty one to come down, O Lord: let the heathen be awakened and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about," Joel iii. 1, 2, 11, 12. Jehoshaphat signifieth, the Lord will judge. And this valley was so called from the great victory which the Lord gave Jehoshaphat and his people over the Ammonites, Moabites, and inhabitants of Mount Seir (2 Chron. xx;) which victory was a type of the final victory which Christ, the Supreme Judge, shall give his elect over all their enemies in that place at the last day, as also the Jews interpret it—(see Zech. xiv. 4, 5; Psal. li. 1, 2, &c.)—all agreeing that the place shall be thereabouts.

2. Because that as Christ was thereabouts crucified and put to open shame, so over that place his glorious throne should be erected in the air, when he shall appear in judgment to manifest his majesty and glory. For it is meet that Christ should in that place judge the world with righteous judgment, where he himself was unjustly judged and condemned.

3. Because that seeing the angels shall be sent to gather together the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, it is most probable that the place whither they shall be gathered to shall be near Jerusalem and the valley of Jehoshaphat; which cosmographers describe to be in the midst of the superficies of the earth:[37] if the termini à quibus be the four parts of the world, the terminus ad quem must be about the centre.

4. Because the angels told the disciples that as they saw Christ ascend from Mount Olivet (Acts i. 11), which is over the valley of Jehoshaphat, so he shall in like manner come down from heaven. This is the opinion of Aquinas, and all the schoolmen, except Lombard and Alexander Hales.

5. Lastly, When Christ is set in his glorious throne, and all the many thousands of his saints and angels, shining more bright than so many suns in glory, sitting about him (Matt. xxv. 31; Jude, ver. 14; Rev. xx. 11, 12), and the body of Christ in glory and brightness surpassing them all; the reprobates being separate, and remaining beneath upon the earth (for the right hand signifieth a blessed, the left hand a cursed estate), Christ will first pronounce the sentence of bliss upon the elect (Matt. xix. 28;) and he will thereby increase the grief of the reprobate that shall hear it, and he will shew himself more prone to mercy than to judgment (Psal. cxlv. 9; Isa. xxviii. 21.) And thus, from his throne of majesty in the air, he will, in the sight and hearing of all the world, pronounce unto his elect, “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the beginning of the world,” &c. Matt. xxv. 34.

Come ye.] Here is our blessed union with Christ, and, by him, with the whole Trinity.

Blessed.] Here is our absolution from all sins, and our plenary endowment with all grace and happiness.

Of my Father.] Here is the author from whom, by Christ, proceeds our felicity.

Inherit.] Here is our adoption.

The kingdom.] Behold our birth-right and possession.

Prepared.] See God’s fatherly care for his chosen.

From the foundation of the world.] O the free, eternal, unchangeable election of God!

How much are those souls bound to love God, who of his mere good will and pleasure chose and loved them before they had done either good or evil (Rom. ix. 3.)

For I was hungry, &c.] O the goodness of Christ, who takes notice of all the good works of his children to reward them! How great is his love to poor Christians, who takes every work of mercy done to them for his sake, as if it

had been done to himself! Come ye to me, in whom ye have believed before ye saw me (John xx. 29; 1 Pet. i. 8), and whom ye have loved and sought for with so much devotion, and through so many tribulations. Come now from labour to rest, from disgrace to glory, from the jaws of death to the joys of eternal life. For my sake ye have been railed upon, reviled, and cursed (Matt. v. 11;) but now it shall appear to all those cursed Esaus that you are the true Jacobs that shall receive your heavenly Father's blessing; and blessed shall you be. Your fathers, mothers, and nearest kindred, forsook and cast you off for my truth's sake which you maintained (Psal. xxvii. 10; Matt. xix. 29;) but now my Father will be unto you a father, and you shall be his sons and daughters for ever (John xx. 17; 2 Cor. vi. 18.) You were cast out of your lands and livings, and forsook all for my sake and the gospel's: but that it may appear that you have not lost your gain, but gained by your loss, instead of an earthly inheritance and possessions, you shall possess with me the inheritance of my heavenly kingdom; where you shall be for love, sons; for birth-right, heirs; for dignity, kings; for holiness, priests; and you may be bold to enter into the possession of it now, because my Father prepared and kept it for you ever since the first foundation of the world was laid.

Immediately after this sentence of absolution and benediction, every one receiveth his crown, which Christ the righteous Judge puts upon their heads, as the reward which he hath promised, of his grace and mercy to the faith and good works of all them that loved bis appearing (2 Tim. iv. 8; 1 Pet. v. 4.) Then every one taking his crown from bis head, shall lay it down, as it were, at the feet of Christ; and prostrating themselves, shall with one heart and voice, in an heavenly sort and consort, say, "Praise, and honour, and glory, and power, and thanks, be unto thee, O blessed Lamb, who sittest upon the throne, wert killed, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, to reign with thee in thy kingdom for evermore. Amen." (Rev. iv. 10.)

Then shall they sit in their thrones and order, as judges of the reprobates, and evil angels (1 Cor. vi. 1, 2, 3, &c.; Matt. xix. 13), by approving, and giving testimony to the righteous sentence and judgment of Christ the Supreme Judge.

After the pronouncing of the reprobates' sentence and condemnation, Christ will perform two solemn actions—

1. The presenting of all the elect unto his Father; "Behold, O righteous Father, these are they whom thou gavest me: I have kept them, and none of them is lost. I gave them thy word, and they believed it, and the world hated them, because they were not of the world, even as I was not of the world. And now, Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; and that I may

be in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one: that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." (John xvii. 12, 14, 23, 24.)

2. Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that is, shall cease to execute his office of mediatorship (1 Cor. xxv. 24;) whereby, as he is King, Priest, Prophet, and Supreme Head of the Church, he suppressed his enemies, and ruled his faithful people by his spirit, word, and sacraments: so that his kingdom of grace over his church in this world ceasing, he shall rule immediately, as he is God, equal with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, in his kingdom of glory evermore. Not that the dignity of his manhood shall be any thing diminished; but that the glory of his Godhead shall be more manifested: so that as he is God, he shall from thenceforth in all fulness, without all external means, rule all in all.

From this tribunal-seat, Christ shall arise, and with all his glorious company of elect angels and saints, he shall go up triumphantly, in order and array, unto the heaven of heavens, with such a heavenly noise and music, that now may that song of David be truly verified, "God is gone up with a triumph, the Lord with the sound of the trumpets. Sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises: for God is the King of all the earth, he is greatly to be exalted." (Psal. xlvii. 4, 5, 6, 8.) And that marriage-song of John, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. Allelujah; for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." (Rev. xix. 6, 7.)

The third and last degree of the blessed state of a regenerate man after death, begins after the pronouncing of the sentence, and lasteth eternally without all end.

[35]Par eat potestas Dei ad instituendos, et restituendos homines.—Athenagor.

[36]Near this valley was Mount Moriah, where Abraham sacrificed Isaac (Gen. xxii;) Jacob saw angels ascending and descending on a ladder (Gen. xxviii;) the angel put up his sword, and fire from heaven burnt the sacrifice in Araunah's floor (2 Sam. xxiv;) Solomon builded the Temple (2 Chr. iii. 1;) Christ preached the gospel, suffered his passion, and entered into his glory.—Carth. in Gen. xxviii.

[37]The sea beyond Jordan towards Tyrus cutteth the midst of the world. And Hezekiah saith of Jerusalem, In medio gentium posui eam, That from Sion, as from a centre, the law should be published to all nations; and there all nations shall be judged according to the law (Rom. ii. 12.)

Meditations of the blessed state of a Regenerate Man in Heaven.

Meditations of the blessed state of a Regenerate Man in Heaven.

Here my meditation dazzles, and my pen falls out of my hand; the one being not able to conceive, nor the other to describe, that most excellent bliss, and eternal weight of glory (2 Cor. iv. 17; Rom. viii. 18)—whereof all the afflictions of this present life are not worthy—which all the elect shall with the blessed Trinity enjoy, from that time that they shall be received with Christ, as joint-heirs (Rom. viii. 17) into that everlasting kingdom of joy.

Notwithstanding, we may take a scantling thereof. The holy scriptures thus set forth (to our capacity) the glory of our eternal and heavenly life after death, in four respects—1st, Of the place; 2d, Of the object; 3d, Of the prerogatives of the elect there; 4th, Of the effects of these prerogatives.

1. Of the Place.

The place is the heaven of heavens, or the third heaven, called paradise (Psal. xix. 5; 2 Cor. xii. 24;) whither Christ (in his human nature) ascended far above all visible heavens. The bridegroom's chamber (Psal. xix. 5; Matt. xxv. 10), which by the firmament, as by an azured curtain spangled with glittering stars, and glorious planets, is hid, that we cannot behold it with these corruptible eyes of flesh. The Holy Ghost framing himself to our weakness, describes the glory of that place (which no man can estimate) by such things as are most precious in the estimation of man; and therefore likeneth it to a great and holy city, named the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. 2, &c.), where only God and his people who are saved, and written in the Lamb's book (ver. 24 & 27), do inhabit; all built of pure gold, like unto clear glass or crystal (ver. 11, 18, 19, 20;) the walls of jasper-stone: the foundations of the walls garnished with twelve manner of precious stones, having twelve gates, each built of one pearl (ver. 21:) three gates towards each of the four corners of the world (ver. 13), and at each gate an angel (ver. 12), as so many porters, that no unclean thing should enter into it (ver. 27.) It is four square (ver. 16), therefore perfect: the length, the breadth, and height of it are equal, 12,000 furlongs every way; therefore glorious and spacious. Through the midst of her streets ever runneth a pure river of the water of life, as clear as crystal (Rev. xxii. 1); and on the other side the river is the tree of life (ver. 2), ever growing, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and gives fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree are health to the nations. There is therefore no place so glorious by creation, so beautiful with delectation, so rich in possession, so comfortable for habitation. For there, the king is Christ-—the law is love—the honour, verity—the peace, felicity—the life, eternity. There is light without darkness, mirth without sadness, health without sickness, wealth without want, credit

without disgrace, beauty without blemish, ease without labour, riches without rust, blessedness without misery, and consolation that never knoweth an end. How truly may we cry out with David, of this city, “Glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou city of God!” Psal. lxxxvii. 3; and yet all these things are spoken but according to the weakness of our capacity. For heaven exceedeth all this in glory, so far, as that no tongue is able to express, nor heart of man to conceive, the glory thereof, as witnesseth St. Paul (2 Cor. xii. 4; 1 Cor. ii. 5), who was in it, and saw it. O let us not then dote so much upon these wooden cottages, and houses of mouldering clay, which are but the tents of ungodliness, and habitation of sinners; but let us look rather, and long for this heavenly city, whose builder and maker is God (Heb. xi. 10;) which he, who is not ashamed to be called our God hath prepared for us (Heb. xi. 6.}

2. Of the Object.

The blissful and glorious object of all intellectual and reasonable creatures in heaven is the Godhead, in Trinity of Persons, without which there is neither joy nor felicity; but the very fulness of joy consisteth in enjoying the same.

This, object we shall enjoy two ways:—

1. By a beatific vision of God.

2. By possessing an immediate communion with this divine nature.

The beatifical vision of God is that only that can content the infinite mind of man. For every thing tendeth to its centre. God is the centre of the soul: therefore, like Noah’s dove, she cannot rest nor joy till she return and enjoy him.

All that God bestowed upon Moses could not satisfy his mind, unless he might see the face of God (Exod. iii. 13:) therefore the whole church prayeth so earnestly, “God be merciful unto us, and cause his face to shine upon us.” (Psal. lxvii. l, and lxxx. 1.) When Paul once had seen this blessed sight, he ever after counted all the riches and glory of the world (in respect of it) to be but dung (Phil. iii. 8, 11); and all his life after was but a sighing out (cupio dissolvi), “I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ.” (Phil. i. 23.) And Christ prayed for all his elect in his last prayer, that they might obtain this blessed vision: “Father, I will that they which thou hast given me be (where?) even where I am, (to what end?) that they may behold my glory,” &c. (John xvii. 14.) If Moses’s face did so shine, when he had been with God but forty days, and seen but his back parts (Exod. xxxiv. 29; xxxiii. 31), how shall we shine, when we shall see him face to face for ever, and know him as we are known, and as he is! (1 Cor. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. iii. 18; 1 John iii. 2.) Then shall the soul no longer be termed Marah, bitterness, but Naomi, beautifulness; for the Lord shall turn her short bitterness to an eternal beauty and blessedness (Ruth i. 20.)

The second means to enjoy this object is, by having-an immediate and an eternal communion with God in heaven. This we have,—first, by being, as members of Christ, united to his manhood, and as by the manhood, personally united to the Word, we are united to him, as he is God; and, by his Godhead, to the whole Trinity. Reprobates at the last day see God, as a just Judge, to punish them; but, for lack of this communion, they shall have neither grace with him, nor glory from him. For want of this communion, the devils, when they saw Christ, cried out, Quid nobis tecum? "What have we to do with thee, O Son of the most high God?" (Mark v. 7.) But, by virtue of this communion, the penitent soul may boldly go and say unto Christ, as Ruth unto Boaz (Ruth iii. 9), "Spread, O Christ, the wing of the garment of thy mercy over thine handmaid; for thou art my kinsman." This communion God promised Abraham, when he gave himself for his great reward (Gen. xv. 1.) And Christ prayeth for his whole church to obtain it (John xvii. 20, 21.) This communion St. Paul expresseth in one word, saying, that God shall be all in all to us (1 Cor. xv. 28.) Indeed, God is now all in all to us; but by means, and in a small measure. But in heaven, God himself immediately, in fulness of measure, without all means, will be unto us all the good things that our souls and bodies can wish or desire. He himself will be salvation and joy to our souls, life and health to our bodies, beauty to our eyes, music to our ears, honey to our mouths, perfume to our nostrils, light to our understandings, contentment to our wills, and delight to our hearts. And what can be lacking, where God himself will be the soul of our souls? Yea, all the strength, wit, pleasures, virtues, colours, beauties, harmony, and goodness, that are in men, beasts, fishes, fowls, trees, herbs, and all creatures, are nothing but sparkles of those things which are in infinita perfection in God. And in him we shall enjoy them in a far more perfect and blessed manner. He himself will then supply their use: nay, the best creatures which serve us now shall not have the honour to serve us then. There will be no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine in that city; for the glory of God doth light it (Rev. xxi. 23.) No more will there be any need or use of any creature, when we shall enjoy the Creator himself.

When, therefore., we behold anything that is excellent in any creatures, let us say to ourselves, How much more excellent is he who gave them this excellency! When we behold the wisdom of men, who overrule creatures stronger than themselves; outrun the sun and moon in discourse, prescribing many years before in what courses they shall be eclipsed; let us say to ourselves, How admirable is the wisdom of God, who made men so wise! When we consider the strength of whales and elephants, the tempest of winds, and terror of thunder, let us say to ourselves, How strong, how mighty, how terrible is that God, that makes these mighty and fearful creatures! When we taste things that are delicately sweet, let us say to ourselves, O how sweet is that God from whom all these creatures have received their sweetness! When

we behold the admirable colours which are in flowers and birds, and all the lovely beauty of nature, let us say, How fair is that God that made these so fair!

And if our loving God hath thus provided us so many excellent delights, for our passage through this Bochim (Judg. ii. 5), or valley of tears, what are those pleasures which he hath prepared for us, when we shall enter into the palace of our Master’s joy! How shall our souls be there ravished with the love of so lovely a God! So glorious is the object of heavenly saints: so amiable is the sight of our gracious Saviour.

Of the Prerogatives which the Elect shall enjoy in Heaven.

3. Of the Prerogatives which the Elect shall enjoy in Heaven.

By reason of this communion with God, the elect in heaven shall have four superexcellent prerogatives:—

1. They shall have the kingdom of heaven for their inheritance (Matt. xxv.; 1 Pet. i. 4), and they shall be free denizens of the heavenly Jerusalem (Eph. ii. 19; Heb. xii. 22.) St. Paul, by being a free citizen of Rome (Acts xxi. 26), escaped whipping; but they who are once free citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, shall ever be freed from the whips of eternal torments. For this freedom was bought for us, not with a great sum of money (Acts xxii. 28), but with the precious blood of the Son of God (1 Pet. i. 18.)

2. They shall all be kings and priests (Rev. v. 10; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Rom. xvi. 10:) spiritual kings, to reign with Christ, and to triumph over Satan and the world; and spiritual priests, to offer to God the spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for evermore (1 Pet. ii. 5; Heb. xiii. 15.) And therefore they are said to wear both crowns and robes. O what a comfort is this to poor parents that have many children! If they breed them up in the fear of God, and to be true Christians, then are they parents to so many kings and priests.

3. Their bodies shall shine as the brightness of the sun in the firmament, like the glorious body of Christ (Matt. xiii. 43), which shined brighter than the sun at noon, when it appeared to Paul (Phil. iii. 21; Acts xii. 6.) A glimpse of which glorious brightness appeared in the bodies of Moses and Elias, transfigured with our Lord in the holy mount (Luke ix. 30; Mark ix. 5.) Therefore, saith the apostle, it shall rise a glorious body; yea, a spiritual body, not in substance, but in quality (1 Cor. xv. 43, 44:) preserved by spiritual means, and having (as an angel) agility to ascend or descend. O what an honour is it, that our bodies (falling more vile than carrion) should thus arise in glory, like unto the body of the Son of God! (1 Thess. iv. 1.)

4. Lastly, They (together with all the holy angels) there keep, without any labour to distract them, a perpetual Sabbath, to the glory, honour, and praise of God, for the creating, redeeming, and sanctifying the church; and for his power, wisdom, justice, mercy, and goodness, in the government of heaven and earth. When thou hearest a sweet concert of music, meditate how happy thou shalt be, when, with the quire of heavenly angels and saints, thou shalt sing a part in that spiritual Allelujah, in that eternal blessed Sabbath, where there shall be such variety of pleasures, and satiety of joys, as neither know tediousness in doing, nor end in delighting.

Of the Effects of those Prerogatives.

4. Of the Effects of those Prerogatives.

From these prerogatives there will arise to the elect in heaven, five notable effects:—

1. They shall know God with a perfect knowledge (1 Cor. i. 10), so far as creatures can possibly comprehend the Creator. For there we shall see the Word, the Creator; and in the Word, all creatures that by the Word were created; so that we shall not need to learn (of the things which were made) the knowledge of him by whom all things were made. The most excellent creatures in this life, are but as a dark veil (1 Cor. xxiii. 12; 2 Cor. iii. 16) drawn between God and us; but when this veil shall be drawn aside, then shall we see God face to face, and know him as we are known. We shall know the power of the, Father, the wisdom of the Son, the grace of the Holy Ghost, and the indivisible nature of the blessed Trinity. And in him we shall know, not only all our friends who died in the faith of Christ, but also all the faithful that ever were, or shall be. For,

(1.) Christ tells the Jews that they shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God (Luke xiii. 28); therefore we shall know them.

(2.) Adam in his innocency knew Eve to be bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh (Gen. ii. 23), as soon as he waked; much more then shall we know our kindred, when we shall awake perfected and glorified in the resurrection.

(3.) The apostles knew Christ after his resurrection, and the saints which rose with him, and appeared in the holy city (Matt. xxvii. 53.)

(4.) Peter, James, and John, knew Moses and Elias in the transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 4;) how much more shall we know one another, when We shall be all glorified?

(5.) Dives knew Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom (Luke xvi. 23;) much more shall the elect know one another in heaven.

(6.) Christ saith that the twelve apostles shall sit upon twelve thrones (Matt. xix. 28), to judge (at that day) the twelve tribes (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3;) therefore they shall be known, and consequently the rest of the saints.

(7.) Paul saith, that at that day we shall know as we are known of God (1 Cor. xiii. 11;) and Augustine out of this place comforteth a widow, assuring her, that as in this life she saw her husband with external eyes, so in the life to come she should know his heart, and what were all his thoughts and imaginations. Then, husbands and wives, look to your actions and thoughts; for all shall be made manifest one day (See 1 Cor. iv. 5.)

(8.) The faithful in the Old Testament, are said to be gathered to their fathers (Gen. xxv. 35; 2 Kings xxii;) therefore the knowledge of our friends remains.

(9.) Love never falleth away (1 Cor. xiii. 8); therefore knowledge, the ground thereof, remains in another life.

(10.) Because the last day shall be a declaration of the just judgment of God, when he shall reward every man according to his works (Rom. ii. 5; Rev. xxii. 12; Eccles. xii. 14; Rom. ii. 16;) and if every man's work be brought to light, much more the worker. And if wicked men shall account for every idle word (Matt. xii. 36), much more shall the idle speakers themselves be known. And if the persons be not known, in vain are the works made manifest. "Therefore," saith the apostle "every man shall appear, to account for the work that he hath done in his body," &c., 1 Cor. v. 10. Though the respect of diversities of degrees and callings in magistracy, ministry, and economy shall cease; yea, Christ shall then cease to rule, as he is Mediator (I Cor. xv. 14, 28), and rule all in all, as he is God equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

The greatest knowledge that men can attain to in this life (1 Cor. xiii. 11) comes as far short of the knowledge which we shall have in heaven, as the knowledge of a child that cannot yet speak plain, comes of the knowledge of the greatest philosopher in the world. They who thirst for knowledge, let them long to be students of this university. For all the light by which we know anything in this world, is nothing but the very shadow of God;[38] but when we shall know God in heaven, we shall in him know the manner of the work of the creation, the mysteries of the work of our redemption; yea, so much knowledge as a creature can possibly conceive and comprehend of the Creator and his works. But whilst we are in this life, we may say with Job, "How little a portion hear we of him?" Job xxvi. 14.

2. They shall love God with as perfect and absolute a love as possibly a creature can do. The manner of loving God, is to love him for himself (1 Cor. xiii. 12); the measure is to love him without measure. For in this life (knowing God but in part) we love him but in part; but when the elect in heaven shall fully know God, then they will perfectly love God: and for the infinite causes of love, which they shall know to be in Him, they shall be infinitely ravished with the love of Him.

3. They shall be filled with all manner of divine pleasures. "At thy right hand," saith David, "there are pleasures for evermore," Psal. xvi. 11: "Yea, they shall drink," saith he, "out of the river of pleasures," Psal. xxxvi. 8. For as soon as the soul is admitted into the actual fruition of the beatifical essence of God, she hath all the goodness, beauty, glory, and perfection of all creatures, in all the world, united together, and at once presented to her in the sight of God. If any delight in fairness, the fairest beauty is but a dusky shadow to that.

He that delights in pleasures shall there find infinite varieties, without either interruption of grief, or distraction of pain. He that loveth honour shall there enjoy it, without the disgrace of cankered envy. He that loveth treasure shall there possess it, and never be beguiled of it. There they shall have knowledge void of all ignorance, health that no sickness shall impair, and life that no death can determine. How happy, then, shall we be, when this life is changed, and we translated thither!

4. They shall be replenished with an unspeakable joy. “In thy presence,” saith David, “is the fulness of joy.” (Psal. xvi. 11.) And this joy shall arise chiefly from the vision of God, and partly from the sight of all the holy angels, and blessed souls of just and perfect men, who are in bliss and glory with them; but especially from the blissful sight of Jesus, the Mediator of the New Testament, our Emmanuel, God made man. His sight will be the chief cause of our bliss and joy. If the Israelites in Jerusalem so shouted for joy, that the earth rang again, to see Solomon crowned, how shall the elect rejoice in heaven, to see Christ, the true Solomon, adorned with glory! If John Baptist, at his presence, did leap in his mother’s womb for joy, how shall we exult for joy, when he will be with us in heaven! If the wise men rejoiced so greatly to find him a babe, lying in a manger, how great shall the joy of the elect be, to see him sit, as a king, in his celestial throne! If Simeon was glad to see him an infant, in the temple, presented by the hands of the priest, how great shall our joy be to see him a king, ruling all things, at the right hand of his Father! If Joseph and Mary were so joyful to find him in the midst of the doctors in the temple, how glad shall our souls be, to see him sitting, as Lord, among angels in heaven! This is that joy of our Master, which, as the apostle saith, “the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man can conceive.” (1 Cor. ii. 5; Matt. xxv. 21;) which, because it cannot enter into us, we shall enter into it.

5. Lastly, They shall enjoy this blissful and glorious state for evermore: therefore it is termed everlastings life (John xvii. 3.) And Christ saith, that our joy shall no man take from us. All other joys, be they never so great, have an end. Ahasuerus’s feast lasted an hundred and eighty days (Esth. i. 3): but he, and it, and all his joys are gone. For mortal man to be assumed to heavenly glory, to be associated to angels, to be satiated with all delights and joys, but for a time, were much: but to enjoy them for ever, without intermission or end, who can hear it, and not admire? All the saints of Christ, as soon as they felt once but a true taste of these eternal joys, counted all the riches and pleasures of this life to be but loss and dung, in respect of that (Phil. iii. 8.) And therefore, with incessant prayers, fasting, alms-deeds, tears, faith, and good life, they laboured to ascertain themselves of this eternal life; and for the love of it, they willingly either sold or parted with all their earthly goods and possessions (Acts ii. 45.)

Christ calleth Christians merchants (Luke xix.), and eternal life a precious pearl, which a wise merchant will purchase, though it cost him all that he hath (Matt. xiii.)

Alexander hearing the report of the great riches of the eastern country, divided forthwith among his captains and soldiers all his kingdom of Macedonia. Hephæstion asking him, What he meant in so doing? Alexander answered, That he preferred the riches of India (whereof he hoped shortly to be master) before all that his father Philip had left him in Macedonia. And should not Christians, then, prefer the eternal riches of heaven, so greatly renowned (which they shall enjoy ere long), before the corruptible things of this world, which last but for a season?

Abraham and Sarah left their own country and possessions, to look for a city whose builder and maker is God (Heb. xi. 10, 15, 16;) and therefore bought no land but only a place of burial. David preferred one day in this place before a thousand elsewhere; yea, to be a door-keeper in the house of God, rather than to dwell in the richest tabernacles of wickedness (Psal. lxxxiv. 10.) Elias earnestly besought the Lord to receive his soul into his kingdom (1 Kings xix. 4), and went willingly, though in a fiery chariot, thither (2 Kings ii. 11.) St. Paul, having once seen heaven, continually desired to be dissolved, that he might be with Christ (Phil. i. 23.) Peter, having espied but a glimpse of that eternal glory in the Mount, wished that he might dwell there all the days of his life, saying, “Master, it is good for us to be here.” (Matt. xvii. 4.) How much better does Peter now think it to be in heaven itself! Christ, a little before his death, prayeth his Father to receive him into that excellent glory (John xvii. 5.) And the apostle witnesseth, that “for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, and despised the shame.” Heb. xi. 2. If a man did but once see those joys (if it were possible), he would endure an hundred deaths to enjoy that happiness but one day.

Augustine saith, that he would be content to endure the torments of hell to gain this joy, rather than to lose it. Ignatius, Paul’s scholar, being threatened, as he was going to suffer, with the cruelty of torments, answered, with great courage of faith, “Fire, gallows, beasts, breaking of my bones, quartering of my members, crushing of my body, all the torments of the devil together, let them come upon me, so I may enjoy my Lord Jesus, and his kingdom.” The like constancy shewed Polycarp, who could not by any terrors of any kind of death, be moved to deny Christ in the least measure. With the like resolution Basil answered his persecutors, when they would terrify him with death: “I will never,” said he, “fear death, which can do no more than restore me to him that made me.” If Ruth left her own country, and followed Naomi, her mother-in-law, to go and dwell with her in the land of Canaan (which was but a type of heaven), only upon the fame which she heard of the God of Israel (though she had no promise of any portion in it), how shouldst thou follow

Christ into the heavenly Canaan, where God has given thee an eternal inheritance, assured by an holy covenant, made in the word of God, signed with the blood of his Son, and sealed with his Spirit and sacraments! This shall be thine eternal happiness in the kingdom of heaven, where thy life shall be a communion with the blessed Trinity; thy joy, the presence of the Lamb; thy exercise, singing; thy song, hallelujah; thy consorts, saints and angels: where youth flourishes, that never waxeth old; beauty lasts, that never fadeth; love abounds, that never cooleth; health continues, that never slacketh; and life remains, that never endeth.

[38]Lumen est umbra Dei, et Deus est lumen luminis. Plato, Pol. 6.

Meditations directing a Christian how to apply to himself, without delay, the foresaid knowledge of God and himself.

Meditations directing a Christian how to apply to himself, without delay, the foresaid knowledge of God and himself.

Thou seest, therefore, O man, how wretched and cursed thy state is, by corruption of nature, without Christ! insomuch, that as the scriptures liken wicked men to lions, bears, bulls, horses, dogs, and such like savage creatures, in their lives, it is certain that the condition of an unregenerate man is in his death more vile than a dog, or the filthiest creature in the world. For the beast, being made but for man's use, when he dies, ends all his miseries with his death; but man, endued with a reasonable and an immortal soul, made after God's image, to serve God, when he ends the miseries of this life, must account for all his misdeeds, and begin to endure those miseries that never shall know end. No creature but man is liable to yield at his death an account for his life. The brute creatures, not having reason, shall not be required to make any account for their deeds: and good angels, though they have reason, yet shall they yield no account, because they have no sin. And as for evil angels, they are without all hope already condemned, so that they need not make any further accounts: man only in his death must be God's accountant for his life.

On the other side thou seest, O man, how happy and blessed thy estate is, being truly reconciled to God in Christ; in that, through the restoration of God's image, and thy restitution into thy sovereignty over other creatures, thou art in this life little inferior to the angels, and shalt be in the life to come equal to the angels: yea, in respect of thy nature, exalted by a personal union to the Son of God, and by him to the glory of the Trinity, superior to the angels, a fellow-brother with angels in spiritual grace and everlasting glory.

Thou hast seen how glorious and perfect God is, and how that all thy chief bliss and happiness consists in having an eternal communion with him.

Now, therefore, O impenitent sinner! in the bowels of Christ Jesus I entreat thee, nay, I conjure thee, as thou tenderest thine own salvation, seriously to consider with me, how false, how vain, how vile, are those things which still retain and chain thee in this wretched and cursed estate wherein thou livest, and which hinder thee from the favour of God, and the hope of eternal life and happiness.

MEDITATIONS ON THE HINDRANCES WHICH KEEP BACK A SINNER FROM THE PRACTICE OF PIETY.

Those hindrances are chiefly seven:—

I. An ignorant mistaking of the true meaning of certain places of the holy Scriptures, and some other chief grounds of Christian religion.

The Scriptures mistaken are these:

1. Ezek. xxxiii. 14, 16, “At what time soever a sinner repenteth him of his sin, I will blot out all,” &c. Hence the carnal Christian gathers, that he may repent when he will. It is true, whensoever a sinner does repent, God will forgive; but the text saith not, that a sinner may repent whensoever he will, but when God will give him grace. Many, saith the scripture, when they would have repented, were rejected, and could not repent, though they sought it carefully with tears (Heb. xii. 17; Luke xiii. 24, 27.) What comfort yields this text to thee who hast not repented, nor knowest whether thou shalt have grace to repent hereafter?

2. Matt. xi. 28, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Hence the lewdest man collects, that he may come unto Christ when he list; but he must know that no man ever comes to Christ, but he who, as Peter saith, having known the way of righteousness, hath escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Pet. ii. 20, 22.) To come unto Christ is to repent and believe (Isa. i. 18; John vi. 35;) and this no man can do, except his heavenly Father draw him by his grace (John vi. 4.)

3. Rom. viii. 1, “There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” True; but they are such who walk not after the flesh, as thou dost, but after the Spirit, which thou didst never yet resolve to do.

4. 1 Tim. i. 15, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” &c. True; but such sinners, who like St. Paul, are converted from their wicked life; not like thee, who still continuest in thy lewdness: “For that grace of God which bringeth salvation unto all men, teacheth us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” (Tit. ii. 11, 12.)

5. Prov. xxiv. 16, “A just man falleth seven times in a day, and riseth,” &c. [in a day is not in the text:] which means not falling into sin, but falling into trouble, which his malicious enemy plots against the just, and from which God delivers him (Psal. xxxiv. 19.) And though it meant falling in and rising out of sin, what is this to thee, whose falls all men may see every day? but neither God nor man can at any time see thy rising-again by repentance.

6. Isa. lxiv. 6, “All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” Hence the carnal Christian gathers, that, seeing the best works of the best saints are no better, then his are good enough; and therefore he needs not much grieve that his devotions are so imperfect. But Isaiah means not in this place the righteous works of the regenerate, as fervent prayers in the name of God; charitable alms from the bowels of mercy; suffering in the gospel’s defence, the spoil of goods, and spilling of blood, and such works which Paul calls the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. v. 22;) but the prophet, making an humble confession in the name of the Jewish church, when she had fallen from God to idolatry, acknowledges, that whilst they were by their filthy sins separated from God, as lepers are from men by their infecting sores and polluted clothes, their chief righteousness could not be but abominable in his sight. And though our best works, compared with Christ’s righteousness, are no better than unclean rags; yet, in God’s acceptation for Christ’s sake, they are called white raiment (Rev. iii. 18), yea, pure fine linen and shining (Rev. xix. 8), far unlike the leopard’s spots (Jer. xiii. 23) and filthy garments (Zech. iii. 4.)

7. James iii. 2, “In many things we sin all.” True; but God’s children sin not in all things as thou doest, without either bridling their lusts or mortifying their corruptions. And though the relics of sin remain in the dearest children of God, that they had need daily to cry, “Our Father which art in heaven, forgive us our trespasses;” yet, in the New Testament, none are properly called sinners, but the unregenerate (Gal. i. 15; Rom. v. 8; John ix. 31;) but the regenerate, in respect of their zealous endeavour to serve God in unfeigned holiness, are everywhere called saints; insomuch that St. John saith, “Whosoever is born of God sinneth not,” (1 John iii. 9; v. 18;) that is, liveth not in wilful filthiness, suffering sin to reign in him, as thou dost. Deceive not thyself with the name of a Christian: whosoever liveth in any customary gross sin, he liveth not in the state of grace. “Let, therefore,” saith St. Paul, “every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2 Tim. ii. 19.) The regenerate sin, but upon frailty; they repent, and God doth pardon; there they sin not to death (1 John v. 16.) The reprobate sin maliciously, sinfully, and delight therein; so that by their good will, sin shall leave them before they will leave it; they will not repent, and God will not pardon; therefore their sins are mortal, saith St. John, or rather immortal, as saith St. Paul (Rom. ii. 5.) It is no excuse, therefore, to say, we are all sinners: true Christians, thou seest, are all saints.

8. Luke xxiii. 43. The thief converted at the last gasp, was received to paradise. What then? if I may have but time to say, when I am dying, “Lord have mercy upon me,” I shall likewise be saved. But what if thou shalt not? and yet many in that day shall say, Lord, Lord, and the Lord will not know them (Matt. vii. 22, 23.) The thief was saved, for he repented; but his fellow had no grace to repent, and was damned. Beware, therefore, lest, trusting to late

repentance at thy last end on earth, thou be not driven to repent too late without end in hell.

9. 1 John i. 7, “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.” And 1 John ii. 1, “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,” &c. O comfortable! but hear what St. John saith in the same place, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not;” if, therefore, thou leavest thy sin, these comforts are thine—else they belong not to thee.

10. Rom. v. 20, “Where sin abounded, grace did abound much more.” O sweet! but hear what St. Paul addeth, “What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (Rom. vi. 1, 2.) This place teacheth us not to presume, but that we should not despair. None, therefore, of these promises, promiseth any grace to any but to the penitent heart.

The grounds of religion mistaken are these:—

1. From the doctrine of justification by faith only, a carnal Christian gathers, that good works are net necessary. He commends others that do good works, but he persuades himself that he shall be saved by his faith, without doing any such matter. But he should know, that though good works are not necessary to justification, yet they are necessary to salvation: “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath predestinated that we should walk in them.” (Eph. ii. 10.) Whosoever, therefore, in years of discretion, brings not forth good works after he is called, he cannot be saved; neither was he ever predestinated to life eternal (Fulk. Rhem. Test. Annot. in Eph. ii. 2.) Therefore the Scripture saith, that Christ will reward every man according to his works (Rom. ii. 6; 2 Cor. ix. 6; Rev. xxii. 12.) Christ respects in the angels of the seven churches nothing but their works (Rev. ii. 2;) and at the last day he will give the heavenly inheritance only to them who have done good works—in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, &c. At that day righteousness shall wear the crown (Matt. xxv.; 2 Tim. iv. 8.) No righteousness, no crown—no good works, according to a man’s talent, no reward from God, unless it be vengeance (Rom. ii. 8.) To be rich in good works, is the surest foundation of our assurance to obtain eternal life (1 Tim. vi. 19;) for good works are the true fruits of a true faith, which apprehendeth Christ, and his obedience unto salvation. And no other faith availeth in Christ, but that which worketh by love (Gal. v. 6;) and (but in the act of justification) that faith which only justifieth, is never alone, but ever accompanied with good works: as the tree with his fruits, the sun with his light, the fire with his heat, and water with his moisture. And the faith which does not justify herself by good works before men, is but dead faith, which will never justify a man’s soul before God

(James ii. 26.) But a justifying faith purifieth the heart and sanctifieth the whole man throughout (Acts xv. 9; xvi. 18; 1 Thess. v. 23.)

2. From the doctrine of God's eternal predestination (Matt. xxv. 24; Eph. i. 4; Eccles. iii. 14) and unchangeable decree, he gathers, that if he be predestinated to be saved, he cannot but be saved; if to be damned, no means can do any good; therefore all works of piety are but in vain. But he should learn, that God hath predestinated to the means, as well as to the end. Whom, therefore, God hath predestinated to be saved, which is the end (1 Pet. i. 9), he hath likewise predestinated to be first called, justified, and made conformable to the image of his Son, which is the means (Rom. viii. 29, 30; John xv. 16.) And they, saith St. Peter, who are elect unto salvation, are also elect unto the sanctification of the spirit (1 Pet. i. 2.) If, therefore, upon thy calling, thou conformest thyself to the word and example of Christ thy master, and obeyest the good motions of the Holy Spirit, in leaving sin, and living a godly life, then assure thyself, that thou art one of those who are infallibly predestinated to everlasting salvation. If otherwise, blame not God's predestination, but thine own sin and rebellion. Do thou but return to God, and God will graciously receive thee, as the father did the prodigal son, and by thy conversion, it shall appear both to angels and men, that thou didst belong to his election (Luke xv. 10, 24.) If thou wilt not, why should God save thee?

3. When a carnal Christian hears that man hath not free-will unto good, he looseth the reins to his own corrupt will, as though it lay not in him to bridle, or to subdue it: implicitly making God the author of sin, in suffering man to run into this necessity. But he should know that God gave Adam free-will, to stand in his integrity if he would; but man, abusing his free-will, lost both himself and it. Since the fall, man in his state of corruption hath free-will to evil, but not to good; for in this state, we are not, saith the apostle, sufficient to think a good thought (2 Cor. iii. 5.) And God is not bound to restore us what we lost so wretchedly, and take no more care to recover again. But as soon as a man is regenerated, the grace of God freeth his will unto good; so that he doth all the good things he doth with a free-will: for so the apostle saith, that God of his own good pleasure, worketh both the will and the deed in us,[39] who, as the apostle expoundeth, cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and finish our sanctification in the fear of God (Phil. ii. 12, 13; 2 Cor. vii. 1.) And in this state, every true Christian has free-will, and as he increases in grace, so does his will in freedom: "For when the Son shall make us free, then shall we be free indeed," (1 John viii. 36;) and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (2 Cor. iii. 17;) for the Holy Spirit draws their minds, not by coaction, but by the cords of love (Cant. i. 4), by illuminating their minds to know the truth; by changing their hearts to love the known truth; and by enabling every one of them (according to the measure of grace which he has received) to do the good which he loveth. But thou wilt not use the freedom of

thy will, so far as God has freed it; for thou dost many times wilfully against God's law, to the hazard of thy soul, which, if the king's law forbade under the penalty of death, or loss of thy worldly estate, thou wouldst not do. Make not, therefore, thy want of free-will to good, to be so much the cause of thy sin, as thy want of a loving heart to serve thy heavenly Father.

4. When the natural man hears that no man, since the fall, is able to fulfil the law of God, and to keep all his commandments, he boldly presumes to sin as others do; he contents himself with a few good thoughts: and if he be not altogether as bad as the worst, he concludes that he is as truly regenerate as the best. And every voluntary refusal of doing good, or withstanding evil, he counts the impossibility of the law. But he should learn, that though, since the fall, no man but Christ, who was both God and man, did, or can perfectly fulfil the whole law, yet every true Christian, as soon as he is regenerate, begins to keep all God's commandments in truth, though he cannot in absolute perfection. Thus, with David, they apply their hearts to fulfil God's commandments always unto the end (Psal. cxix. 112.) And then the Spirit of grace, which was promised to be more abundantly poured forth under the gospel, helps them in their good endeavours, and assists them to do what he commands them to do (Joel ii. 28, 29; Zech. xii. 10.) And in so doing, God accepts their good will and endeavour (2 Cor. viii. 12), Christ having fulfilled the law for us. And in this respect St. John saith, that God's commandments are not burthenous (1 John v. 3.) And St. Paul saith, "I am able to do all things, through the help of him that strengtheneth me." (Phil. iv. 13.) And Zachary and Elizabeth are said to walk in all the commandments of the Lord without reproof (Luke i. 6.) Hereupon Christ commends to his disciples the care of keeping his commandments, as the truest testimony of our love unto him (John xv. 10.) So far, therefore, doth a man love Christ, as he makes conscience to walk in his commandments; and the more unto Christ is our love, the less will our pains seem in keeping his law. The law's curse, which, under the Old Testament, was so terrible, is, under the New, by the death of Christ, abolished to the regenerate. The rigour which made it so impossible to our nature before, is now to the newborn so mollified by the Spirit, that it seems facile and easy. The apostles, indeed, pressed on the unconverted Jews and Gentiles the impossibility of keeping the law by ability of nature corrupted; but when they have to do with regenerate Christians, they require to the law, which is the rule of righteousness, true obedience in word and deed; the mortifying of their members; the crucifying of the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof; resurrection to newness of life; walking in the Spirit; overcoming of the world by faith (Rom. xv. 18; Col. iii. 5; Gal. v. 24, 25; Rom. vi. 4, 5, 12, 13; viii. 11; 1 John v. 4.) So that, though no man can say as Christ, Which of you can rebuke me of sin? (John viii. 46), yet every regenerate Christian can say of himself, Which of you can rebuke me of being an adulterer,

whoremonger, swearer, drunkard, thief, usurer, oppressor, proud, malicious, covetous, profaner of the Sabbath, a liar, a neglector of God's public service, and such like gross sins? else he is no true Christian. When a man casts off the conscience of being ruled by God's law, then God gives him over to be led by his own lusts, the surest sign of a reprobate sense (Rom. i. 24, 28.) Thus the law, which, since the fall, no man by his own natural ability can fulfil, is fulfilled in truth of every regenerate Christian, through the gracious assistance of Christ's Holy Spirit (Rom. viii. 9, &c.) And this Spirit God will give to every Christian that will pray for it, and will incline his heart to keep his laws (Luke xi. 13; James i. 5.)

5. When the unregenerate man hears that God delighteth more in the inward mind than in the outward man, then he feigns within himself that all outward reverence and profession is but either superstitious or superfluous. Hence it is that he seldom kneels in the church; that he puts on his hat at singing of psalms, and the public prayers; which the profane varlet would not offer to do in the presence of a prince or a nobleman. And so that he keep his mind unto God, he thinks he may fashion himself, in other things, to the world. He divides his thoughts, and gives so much to God, and so much to his own lusts; yea, he will divide with God the Sabbath, and will give him almost the one half, and spend the other wholly in his own pleasures. But know, O carnal man, that Almighty God will not be served by halves, because he has created and redeemed the whole man! And as God detests the service of the outward man, without the inward heart, as hypocrisy; so he counts the inward service, without all external reverence, to be mere profaneness: he requires both in his worship. In prayer, therefore, bow thy knees, in witness of thy humiliation; lift up thine eyes and thy hands, in testimony of thy confidence; hang down thy head and smite thy breast, in token of thy contrition; but especially call upon God with a sincere heart—serve him holily, serve him wholly, serve him only; for God and the Prince of this world are two contrary masters, and therefore no man can possibly serve both.

6. The unregenerate Christian holds the hearing of the gospel preached, to be but an indifferent matter, which he may use, or not use, at his pleasure. But whosoever thou art, that wilt be assured in thy heart that thou art one of Christ's elect sheep, thou must have a special care and conscience (if possibly thou canst) to hear God's word preached. For, First, the preaching of the gospel is the chief ordinary means which God has appointed to convert the souls of all that he hath predestinated to be saved (Acts xiii. 48:) therefore it is called "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Rom. i. 16.) And where this divine ordinance is not, the people perish (Prov. xxix. 18;) and whosoever shall refuse it, "it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for these people." (Matt. x. 22.) Secondly, the preaching of the gospel is the standard or ensign of Christ (Isa.

xi. 1), to which all soldiers and elect people must assemble themselves: when this ensign is displayed, as upon the Lord's day, he is none of Christ's people that flocks not unto it (Isa. ii. 2;) neither shall any drop of the rain of his grace light on their souls (Zech. xiv. 17.) Thirdly, it is the ordinary means by which the Holy Ghost begetteth faith in our hearts (Rom. x. 14), without which we cannot please God (Heb. xi. 6.) If the hearing of Christ's voice be the chief mark of Christ's elect sheep, and of the bridegroom's friend (John x. 27; iii. 29), then must it be a fearful mark of a reprobate goat (Heb. ii.; John viii. 47) either to neglect or contemn to hear the preaching of the gospel. Let no man think this position foolish, for "by this foolishness of preaching it pleaseth God to save them which believe." (1 Cor. i. 11.) Their state is therefore fearful who live in peace, without caring for the preaching of the gospel. Can men look for God's mercy, and despise his means? "He," saith Christ of the, preachers of his gospel, "that despiseth you, despiseth me." (Luke x. 16.) "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." (John viii. 4, 7.) Had not the Israelites heard the message of Phineas, they had. never wept (Judges ii. 1, &c.) Had not the Baptist preached, the Jews had never mourned (Luke vii. 32, 33.) Had not they who crucified Christ heard Peter's sermon, their hearts had never been pricked (Acts ii. 37.) Had not the Ninevites heard Jonah's preaching, they had never repented (Jonah iii. 5;)—and if thou wilt not hear, and repent, thou shalt never be saved (Prov. xxviii. 9; Luke xiii. 5.)

7. The opinion that the sacraments are but bare signs and seals of God's promise and grace to us, doth not a little hinder piety: whereas, indeed, they are seals, as well of our service and obedience unto God; which service if we perform not to him, the sacraments seal no grace to us. But if we receive them, upon the resolution to be his faithful and penitent servants, then the sacraments do not only signify and offer, but also seal and exhibit indeed the inward spiritual grace which they outwardly promise and represent. And to this "end baptism is called the "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," (Tit. iii. 5;) and the Lord's Supper, "the communion of the body and blood of Christ." (1 Cor. x. 16.) Were this truth believed, the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper would be more often, and with greater reverence received.

8. The last, and not the least block at which piety stumbles in the course of religion, is by adorning vices with the names of virtues: as to call drunken carousing, drinking of healths; spilling innocent blood, valour; gluttony, hospitality; covetousness, thriftiness; whoredom, loving a mistress; simony, gratuity; pride, gracefulness; dissembling, compliment; children of Belial, good-fellows; wrath, hastiness; ribaldry, mirth: so, on the other side, to call sobriety in words and actions, hypocrisy; alms-deeds, vain-glory; devotion, superstition; zeal in religion, Puritanism; humility, crouching; scruple of

conscience, preciseness, &c. And whilst thus we call evil good, and good evil, true piety is much hindered in her progress.

And thus much of the first hindrance of piety, by mistaking the true sense of some special places of Scripture, and grounds of Christian religion.

The Second Hindrance of Piety.

II. The evil example of great persons, the practice of whose profane lives they prefer for their imitation before the precepts of God's holy word: so that, when they see the greatest men in the state, and many chief gentlemen in their country, to make neither care nor conscience to hear sermons, to receive the communion, nor to sanctify the Lord's Sabbaths, &c., but to be swearers, adulterers, carousers, oppressors, &c., then they think that the using of these holy ordinances are not matters of so great moment; for if they were, such great and wise men would not set so little value on them. Hereupon they think that religion is not a matter of necessity; and therefore, where they should, like Christians, row against the stream of impiety towards heaven, they suffer themselves to be carried with the multitude downright to hell, thinking it impossible that God will suffer so many to be damned: whereas, if the god of this world had not blinded the eyes of their minds, the holy Scriptures would teach them, that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called," &c. (1 Cor. i. 26;) but that for the most part the poor receive the gospel, and that few rich men shall be saved (Matt. xi. 5; xix. 23, 24;) and that howsoever many are called, yet the chosen are but few. Neither did the multitude ever save any from damnation (Matt. xxii. 14.) As God has advanced men in greatness above others, so does God expect that they in religion and piety should go before others; otherwise greatness abused, in the time of their stewardship, shall turn to their greater condemnation in the day of their accounts. At what time sinful great and mighty men, as well as the poorest slaves and bondmen, shall wish that the rocks and mountains should fall upon them, and hide them from the presence of the Judge, and from his just deserved wrath (Rev. vi. 15, 16, &c.), it will prove but a miserable solace to have a great company of great men partakers with thee of thine eternal torments. The multitude of sinners doth not extenuate, but aggravate sin, as in Sodom. Better it is, therefore, with a few to be saved in the ark, than, with the whole world, to be drowned in the flood. Walk with the few godly in the narrow path to heaven; but crowd not with the godless multitude in the broad way to hell (Exod. xxiii. 2.) Let not the example of irreligious great men hinder thy repentance; for their greatness cannot at that day exempt themselves from their own most grievous punishment.

The Third Hindrance of Piety.

III. The long escaping of deserved punishment in this life. "Because sentence," saith Solomon, "is not speedily executed against an evil worker,

therefore the hearts of the children of men are fully set in them to do evil, not knowing that the bountifulness of God leadeth them to repentance." (Eccl. viii. 11; Rom. ii. 4; 2 Pet. iii. 10.) But when his patience is abused, and man's sins are ripened, his justice will at once both begin, and make an end of the sinner (1 Sam. iii. 12; Ezek. xxxix. 8;) and he will recompense the slowness of his delay with the grievous-ness of his punishment. Though they were suffered to run on the score all the days of their life, yet they shall be sure to pay the utmost farthing at the day of their death. And whilst they suppose themselves to be free from judgment, they are already smitten with the heaviest of God's judgments—a heart that cannot repent (Rom. ii. 5.) The stone in the reins or bladder is a grievous pain that kills many a man's body; but there is no disease to the stone in the heart, whereof Nabal died, and which kills millions of souls (1 Sam. xxv. 17.) They refuse the trial of Christ and his cross; but they are stoned by hell's executioner to eternal death.

Because many nobles and gentlemen are not smitten with present judgment for their outrageous swearing, adultery, drunkenness, oppression, profaning of the Sabbath, and disgraceful neglect of God's worship and service, they begin to doubt of divine providence and justice, both which two eyes they would as willingly put out in God, as the Philistines bored out the eyes of Sampson. It is greatly therefore to be feared lest they will provoke the Lord to cry out against them, as Sampson against the Philistines (Judges xvi. 21.) By neglecting the law, and walking after their own hearts, they put out, as much as in them lieth, the eyes of my providence and justice: lead me therefore to these chief pillars (Judges xvi. 26, &c.) whereupon the realm standeth, that I may pull the realm upon their heads, and be at once avenged of them for my two eyes. Let not God's patience hinder thy repentance; but because he is so patient, therefore do thou the rather repent.

The Fourth Hindrance of Piety.

IV. The presumption of God's mercy: For when men are justly convinced of their sins, forthwith they betake themselves to this shield—Christ is merciful: so that every sinner makes Christ the patron of his sin: As though he had come into the world to bolster sin, and not to destroy the works of the devil (John iii. 3.) Hereupon the carnal Christian presumes, that though he continues a while longer in his sin, God will not shorten his days. But what is this but to be an implicit atheist? Doubting that either God seeth not his sins; or if he does, that he is not just: for if he believes that God is just, how can he think that God, who for sin so severely punishes others, can love him who still loveth to continue in sin? True it is, Christ is merciful; but to whom? Only to them that repent and turn from iniquity in Jacob. (Isa. lix 20.) But if any man bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, although I walk according to the stubbornness of mine own heart, thus adding drunkenness to thirst, the Lord will not be merciful to him, &c. (Deut. xxix. 19.) O madmen! who dare bless

themselves, when God pronounceth them accursed! Look, therefore, how far thou art from finding repentance in thyself; so far art thou from any assurance of finding mercy in Christ. “Let, therefore, the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous his own imaginations, and return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he is very ready to forgive.” (Isa. lv. 7.)

Despair is nothing so dangerous as presumption; for we read not in all the Scriptures of above three or four whom roaring despair overthrew: but secure presumption hath sent millions to perdition without any noise. As, therefore, the damsels of Israel sang in their dances, “Saul hath killed his thousands and David his ten thousands,” (1 Sam. xviii. 7;) so may I say, that despair of God’s mercy hath damned thousands, but the presumption of God’s mercy hath damned ten thousands, and. sent them quick to hell, where now they remain in eternal torments, without all help of ease, or hope of redemption. God spared the thief but not his fellow (Luke xxiii. 43.) God spared one, that no man might despair: God spared but one, that no man should presume. Joyful assurance to a sinner that repents: no comfort to him that remains impenitent. God is infinite in mercy, but to them only who turn from their sins, to serve him in holiness, “without which no man shall see the Lord.” (Heb. xii. 14.) To keep thee, therefore, from presuming, remember that as Christ is a Saviour, so Moses is an accuser (John v. 45.) Live, therefore, as though there were no gospel: die as though there were no law. Pass thy life as though thou wert under the conduct of Moses: depart this life as if thou knewest none but Christ, and him crucified. Presume not if thou wilt not perish: repent if thou wilt be saved.

The Fifth Hindrance of Piety.

V. Evil company, commonly termed good-fellows;—but indeed, the devil’s chief instruments, to hinder a wretched sinner from repentance and piety. The first sign of God’s favour to a sinner is, to give him grace to forsake evil companions: such who wilfully continue in sin, contemn the means of their calling, gibing at the sincerity of profession in others, and shaming the Christian religion by their own profane lives. These sit in the seat of the scorners (Psal. i. 1.) For as soon as God admits a sinner to be one of his people, he bids him come out of Babylon (Rev. xviii. 4.) Every lewd company is a Babylon, out of which, let every child of God either keep himself; or if he he be in, think that he hears his Father’s voice sounding in his ear, “Come out of Babylon, my child.” As soon as Christ looked in mercy upon Peter, he went out of the company that was in the high priest’s hall, and wept bitterly for his offence (Luke xxii. 62.) David vowing (upon recovery) a new life, said, “Away from me, all ye workers of iniquity,” &c. (Psal. vi. 8), as if it were impossible to become a new man, till he had shaken off all old evil companions. The truest proof of a man’s religion is the quality of his companions. Profane companions

are the chief enemies of piety, and quellers of holy motions. Many a time is poor Christ {offering to be new-born in thee) thrust into the stable, {Luke ii. 7), when these lewd companions, by their drinking, plays, and jests, take up all the best rooms in the inn of thy heart. O let not the company of earthly sinners hinder thee from the society of heavenly saints and angels!

The Sixth Hindrance of Piety.

VI. A conceited fear, lest the practice of piety should make a man (especially a young man) to wax too sad and pensive: whereas, indeed, none can better joy nor have more cause to rejoice, than pious and religious Christians. For as soon as they are justified by faith they have peace with God (Rom. v. 2), than which there can be no greater joy. Besides, they have already the kingdom of grace descended into their hearts, as an assurance that, in God's good time, they shall ascend into his kingdom of glory. This kingdom of grace consists in three things—First, Righteousness (Rom. xiv. 17;) for having Christ's righteousness to justify them before God, they endeavour to live righteously before men. Secondly, Peace; for the peace of conscience inseparably follows a righteous conversation. Thirdly, The joy of the Holy Ghost; which joy is only felt in the peace of a good conscience: and is so great, that it passeth all understanding (Phil. iv. 7.) No tongue can express it, no heart can conceive it, but only he that feels it. This is that fulness of joy which Christ promised his disciples in the midst of their troubles, a joy that no man could take from them (John xvi. 22.) The feeling of this joy, David, upon his repentance, begged so earnestly at the hand of God—" Restore me to the joy of thy salvation." (Psal. li. 12.) And if the angels in heaven rejoice so much at the conversion of a sinner, the joy of a sinner converted must needs be exceeding great in his own heart (Luke xv. 7, 10.) It is worldly, sorrow that snows so timely upon men's heads, and fills the furrows of their hearts with the sorrows of death (2 Cor. vii. 10.) The godly sorrow of the godly (when God thinks it meet to try them) causeth in them repentance not to be repented of: for it doth but further their salvation. And in all such tribulation, they shall be sure to have the Holy Ghost to be their comforter (John xiv. 16, 17;) who will make our consolations to abound through Christ, as the sufferings of Christ shall abound in us (2 Cor. i. 5.) But whilst a man lives in impiety, he hath no peace, saith Esai (Isa. lvii. 21.) His laughter is but madness, saith Solomon (Eccl. ii. 9;) his riches are but, clay, saith Habakkuk (Hab. ii. 6:) nay, the apostle esteems them no better than dung in comparison of the pious man's treasure (Phil. iii. 8; Luke vi. 25;) all his joys shall end in woe, saith Christ. Let not, therefore, this fake fear hinder thee from the practice of piety. Better it is to go sickly (with Lazarus) to heaven, than full of mirth and pleasure, with the rich man to hell. Better it is to mourn for a time with men, than to be tormented for ever with devils.

The Seventh, Hindrance of Piety.

VII. And lastly, the hope of long life: For, were it possible that a wicked liver thought this year to be his last year, this month his last month, this week his last week,[40] but that he would change and amend his wicked life? No verily, he would use the best means to repent, and to become a new man. But as the rich man in the gospel promised himself many years to live in ease, mirth, and fulness (Luke xii. 19, 20), when he had not one night to live longer: so many wicked epicures falsely promise themselves the age of many years, when the thread of their life is already almost drawn out to an end. So Jeremiah ascribes the cause of the Jews' sins and calamities to this, that she remembered not her last end (Lam. i. 9.)

The longest space between a man's coming by the womb, and going by the grave, is but short: for "man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live," (Job xiv. 1;) he has but a few days, and those full of nothing but troubles. And except the practice of piety, how much better is the state of the child that yesterday was baptized, and to-day is buried, than Methusalem's, who lived nine hundred sixty-nine years, and then died? Of the two, happier the babe, because he had less sin, and fewer sorrows. And what now remains of both, but a bare remembrance? What trust should a man repose in long life? seeing the whole life of man is nothing but a lingering death; so that, as the apostle protests, a man dieth daily.

Hark in thine ear, O secure fellow! thy life is but a puff of breath in thy nostrils; trust not to it (Isa. ii. 22.) Thy soul dwells in a house of clay, that will fall ere it be long; as may appear by the dimness of thine eyes, the deafness of thine ears, the wrinkles in thy cheeks, the rottenness of thy teeth, the weakness of thy sinews, the trembling of thy hands, the kalendar in thy bones, the shortness of thy sleep, and every grey hair, as so many summoners, bid thee prepare for thy long home. Come, let us in the meanwhile walk to thy father's coffin: break open the lid; see here, how that "corruption is thy father, and the worm thy mother and sister." (Job xvii. 14.) Seest thou how these are? so must thou be ere long. Fool! thou knowest not how soon. Thy hour-glass runneth apace, and in all places; death in the meanwhile waiteth for thee.

The whole life of man, save what is spent in God's service, is but foolery: for a man lives forty years before he knows himself to be a fool; and by that time he seeth his folly, his life is finished.[41]

Hark, husbandman, before thou seest many more crops of harvest, thyself shall be ripe, and death will cut thee down with his sickle. Hark, tradesman, ere many six months go over, thy last month will come on; after which, thou shalt trace away, and trade no longer. Hark, most grave judge, within a few terms, the term of thy life approacheth, wherein thou shalt cease to judge others, and go thyself to be judged. Hark, O man of God, that goest to the pulpit, preach this sermon as it were the last that thou shouldst make to thy

people. Hark, nobleman, lay aside the high conceit of thy honour: death, ere it be long, will lay thy honour in the dust, and make thee as base as the earth that thou treadest under thy feet. Hark, thou that now readest this book, assure thyself, ere it be long there will be but two holes where now thy two eyes are placed; and others shall read the truth of this lesson upon thy bare skull, which now thou readest in this little book. How soon I know not; but this I am sure of, that thy time is appointed, thy months are determined; thy days are numbered, and thy very last hour is limited (Job xiv. 5, 14; Psal. xc. 12; Dan. v. 26; xi. 8), beyond which thou shalt not pass. For then the first-born of death, mounted on his pale horse (Rev. vi. 8), shall alight at thy door; and, notwithstanding all thy wealth, thy honour, and the tears of thy dearest friends, will carry thee away, bound hand and foot, as his prisoner, and keep thy body under a load of earth, until that day come wherein thou must be brought forth to receive according to the things which thou hast done in that body, whether it be good or evil (2 Cor. v. 10.) O let not, then, the false hope of an uncertain long-life hinder thee from becoming a present practiser of religious piety! God offereth grace to-day; but who promiseth to-morrow? (Psal. xcv. 7; Heb. iii. 7, 13.) There are now in hell many young men who had purposed to repent in their old age; but death cut them off in their impenitency, ere ever they could attain to the time they set for their repentance. The longer a man runs in a disease, the harder it is to be cured: for custom of sin breeds hardness of heart, and the impediments which hinder thee from repenting now, will hinder thee more when thou art more aged.

A wise man being to go a far and foul journey, will not lay the heaviest burthen upon the weakest horse. And with what conscience canst thou lay the great load of repentance on thy feeble and tired old age? whereas now in thy chiefest strength thou canst not lift it, but art ready to stagger under it. Is it wisdom for him that is to sail a long and dangerous voyage, to lie playing and sleeping whilst the wind serveth, and the sea is calm, the ship sound, the pilot well, mariners strong; and then set forth when the winds are contrary, the weather tempestuous, the sea raging, the ship rotten, the pilot sick, and the sailors languishing? Therefore, O sinful soul, begin now thy conversion to God, whilst life, health, strength, and youth last: “before those years draw nigh, when thou shalt say.. I have no pleasure in them.” (Eccl. xii. 1.) God ever required in his service the first-born, and the first-fruits, and those to be offered to him without delay (Exod. xiii. 2; xxii. 29.) So just Abel offered to God his firstlings and fattest lambs (Gen. iv. 4;) and good reason that the best Lord should be first and best served. All God’s servants should therefore remember to serve their Creator in the days of their youth (Eccl. xii. 12), and early in the morning, like Abraham, to sacrifice unto God the young Isaac of their age (Gen. xxii. 3.) “Ye shall not see my face,” saith Joseph to his brethren, “except you bring your brother with you.” (Gen. xliii. 3.) And how shalt thou look in the

face of Jesus, if thou givest thy younger years to the devil, and bringest him nothing but thy blind, lame, and decrepit old age? “Offer it unto thy prince,” saith Malachi. (Mal. i. 8.) If he will not accept such a one to serve him, how shall the Prince of princes admit such a one to be his servant? If the king of Babel would have young men (well-favoured, and such as had ability in them) to stand in his palace, shall the King of heaven have none to stand in his courts but the blind and lame, such as the soul of David hated? (Dan. i. 4; 2 Sam. v. 8.) Thinkest thou, when thou hast served Satan with thy prime years, to satisfy God with thy dotage? Take heed lest God turn thee over to thy old master again; that as thou hast all the days of thy life done his work, so he may in the end pay thee thy wages. Is that time fit to undertake, by the serious exercises of repentance (which is the work of works), to turn thy sinful soul to God, when thou art not able with all thy strength to turn thy weary bones on thy soft bed? If thou findest it so hard a matter now, thou shalt find it far harder then. For thy sin will wax stronger, thy strength will grow weaker, thy conscience will clog thee, pain will distract thee, the fear of death will-amaze thee, and the visitation of friends will so disturb thee, that if thou be not furnished aforehand with store of faith, patience, and consolation, thou shalt net be able either to meditate thyself, or to hear the word of comfort from others; not to pray alone, nor to join with others who pray for thee. It may be thou shalt be taken with a dumb palsy, or such a deadly senselessness, that thou shalt neither remember God, nor think upon thine own state: and dost thou not well deserve that God should forget to save thee in thy death, who art so unmindful now to serve him in thy life? The fear of death will drive many at that time to cry, Lord, Lord! but Christ protesteth that he will not then know them for his (Matt. vii. 22.) Yea, many shall then, like Esau, with tears seek to repent, and yet then find no place of repentance (Heb. xii. 17.) For man hath not free-will to repent when he will, but when God will give him grace. And if Mercy shewed herself so inexorable, that she would not open her gates to so tender suitors as virgins, to so earnest suitors as knockers, because they knocked too late (Matt. xxv. 11), how thinkest thou that she will ever suffer thee to enter her gates, being so impure a wretch that never thinkest to leave sin till sin first leaveth thee, and didst never yet knock with thine own fists upon the breasts of a penitent heart? And justly does grace deny to open the gates of heaven, when thou knockest in thine adversity, who in thy prosperity wouldst not suffer Christ, whilst he knocked, to enter in at the door of thy heart (Rev. iii. 20.)—Trust not either late repentence or long life. Not late repentance; because it is much to be feared lest the repentance which the fear of death enforces, dies with a man dying; and the hypocrite, who deceived others in his life, may deceive himself in his death. God accepteth none but free-will offerings, and the repentance that pleaseth him must be voluntary, and not of constraint. Not long life, for old age will fall upon the neck of youth: and as nothing is more sure than death, so

nothing is more uncertain than the time of dying. Yea, often when ripeness of sin is hastened by outrageousness of sinning, God suddenly cutteth off such vicious livers, either with the sword, intemperateness, luxury, surfeit, or some other fearful manner of sickness. Mayest thou not see that it is the evil spirit that persuades thee to defer thy repentance till old age, when experience tells thee that not one of a thousand that takes thy course ever attains to it? Let God's Holy Spirit move thee not to give thyself any longer to eat and drink with the drunken, lest thy Master send death for thee in a day when thou lookest not for him, and in an hour that thou art not aware of, and so suddenly cut thee off, and appoint thee thy portion with the hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. xxvii. 49, 50, 51.) But if thou lovest long life, fear God, and long for life everlasting (Deut. xxx. 16; Prov. iii. 2; Psal. xxxiv. 11, &c.) The longest life here, when it comes to the period, will appear to have been but as a tale that is told, a vanishing vapour, a flitting shadow, a seeming dream, a glorious flower, growing and flourishing in the morning, but in the evening cut down and withered (Psal. xc. 9; James iv. 14; Psal. cix. 23; lxxvi. 5; xc. 5, 6; 1 Pet. i. 24;) or like a weaver's shuttle, which, by winding here and there swiftly, unwindeth itself to an end (Isa. xxxviii. 12.) It is but a moment, saith St. Paul (2 Cor. iv. 17.) O then the madness of man, that for a moment of sinful pleasure will hazard the loss of an eternal weight of glory! (Heb. xi. 25; 2 Cor. iv. 17.)

These are the seven chief hinderers of piety, which must be cast out, like Mary Magdalene's seven devils, before ever thou canst become a true practiser of piety, or have any sound hope to enjoy either favour from Christ by grace, or fellowship with him in glory (Mark xvi. 9; Luke viii. 2.)

The Conclusion.

To conclude all. Forasmuch as thou seest that without Christ thou art but a slave of sin, death's vassal, and the meat of worms, whose thoughts are vain—whose deeds are vile—whose pleasures have scarce beginnings—whose miseries never know end: what wise man would incur these hellish torments, though he might, by living in sin, purchase to himself for a time the empire of Augustus, the riches of Croesus, the pleasures of Solomon, the policy of Achitophel, the voluptuous fare and fine apparel of the rich man? For what should it avail a man, as our Saviour saith, to win the whole world for a time, and then to lose his soul in hell for ever?

And seeing that likewise thou seest how great is thy happiness in Christ, and how vain are the hindrances that debar thee from it; beware, as the apostle exhorts, of the deceitfulness of sin (Heb. iii. 13;) for that sin, which seems now to be so pleasing to thy corrupt nature, will one day prove the bitterest enemy to thy distressed soul, and in the meanwhile harden, unawares, thine impenitent heart.

Sin, as a serpent, seems beautiful to the eye, but take heed of the sting behind, whose venomous effects, if thou knewest, thou wouldst as carefully fly from sin as from a serpent. For,

1. Sin did never any man good: and the more sin a man has committed, the more odious he has made himself to God, the more hateful to all good men.

2. Sin brought upon thee all the evil, crosses, losses, disgraces, and sicknesses, that ever befel thee: “Fools,” saith David, “by reason of their transgressions, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.” (Psal. cvii. 17.) Jeremiah in a lamenting manner asks the question, “Wherefore is the living man sorrowful?” (Lam. iii. 20.) The Holy Ghost answereth him, “Man suffereth for his sin.” Hereupon the prophet takes up that doleful outcry against sin, as the cause of all their miseries, “Woe now unto us that ever we have sinned!” (Lam. v. 16.)

3. If thou dost not speedily repent thee of thy sins, they will bring upon thee yet far greater plagues, losses, crosses, shame, and judgments, than hitherto ever befel thee. (Read Lev. xxvi. 18, &c.; Deut. xxviii. 15, &c.)

4. And lastly, If thou wilt not cast off thy sin, God, when the measure of thine iniquity is full, will cast thee off for thy sin (Gen. xv. 6;) for as he is just, so he has power to kill and cast into hell all hardened and impenitent sinners. If, therefore, thou wilt avoid the cursed effects of sin in this life, and the eternal wrath due to it in the world to come, and be assured that thou art not one of those who are given over to a reprobate sense; let then, O sinner, my counsel be acceptable unto thee! break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy towards the poor: O let there at length be an healing of thine error! (Dan. iv. 27.) Nathan used but one parable, and David was converted (Sam. xii. 13;) Jonas preached but once to Nineveh, and the whole city repented (Jonas iii. 5, &c.;) Christ looked but once on Peter, and he went out and wept bitterly (Luke 22:62.) And now that thou art oft and so lovingly entreated, not by a prophet, but by Christ the Lord of prophets; yea, that God himself, by his ambassadors, prays thee to be reconciled to him (2 Corinthians 5:20), leave off thine adultery with David; repent of thy sins like a true Ninevite; and whilst Christ looketh in mercy upon thee, leave thy wicked companions, and weep bitterly for thy offences. Content not thyself with that formal religion which unregenerate men have framed to themselves, instead of sincere devotion; for in the multitude of opinions, most men have almost lost the practice of true religion. Think not that thou art a Christian good enough, because thou dost as the most, and art not so bad as the worst. No man is so wicked that he is addicted to all kind of vices, for there is an antipathy between some vices; but remember that Christ saith, “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. v. 20.) Consider with

thyself how far thou comest short of the Pharisees, in fasting, praying, frequenting the church, and giving of alms: think with thyself how many pagans who never knew baptism, yet in moral virtues and honesty of life, do go far beyond thee;—where is then the life of Christ thy master? and how far art thou from being a true Christian? If them dost willingly yield to live in any one gross sin, thou canst not have a regenerate soul, though thou reformest thyself, like Herod, from many other vices. A true Christian must have respect to walk, in the truth of his heart, in all the commandments of God alike (Mark vi. 20:) "For," saith St. James, "he that shall offend in one point of the law" (wilfully) "is guilty of all." (James ii. 10.) And Peter bids us lay aside, not some, but "all malice, guile, and hypocrisies," &c. (1 Pet. ii. 1.) One sin is enough to damn a man's soul, without repentance. Dream not to go to heaven by any nearer or easier way than Christ hath trained unto us in his word: the way to heaven is not easy or common, but straight and narrow (Matt. vii. 14;) yea, so narrow, that Christ protesteth that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. xix. 23), and that those that enter are but a few (Matt. vii. 14; xxii. 14), and that those few cannot get in but by striving (Luke xiii. 24), and that some of those who strive to enter in shall not be able. This all God's saints, whilst they lived here, knew well; when with so often fastings, so earnest prayers, so frequent hearing the word, and receiving the sacraments, and with such abundance of tears they devoutly begged at the hands of God, for Christ's sake, to be received into his kingdom.

If thou wilt not believe this truth, I assure thee that the devil, who persuades thee now that it is easy to attain heaven, will tell thee hereafter that it is the hardest business in the world. If, therefore, thou art desirous to purchase sound assurance of salvation to thy soul, and to go the right and safe way to heaven, get forthwith, like a wise virgin (Matt. xxv. 1), the oil of piety in the lamp of thy conversation, that thou mayest be in a continual readiness to meet the bridegroom, whether he cometh by death or by judgment: Which, that thou mayest the better do, let this be thy daily practice.

[39]Acti agimus, The will is passive in receiving the first grace, afterwards active in all goodness.

[40]Fleres, si scires unum tua tempora mensem: rides, quum non sit forsitam una dies.—T. Morus.

[41]Homo est fatuus usque ad 40 annum, deinde ubi agnovit se esse fatuum, vita consumpta est.—Luth.

HOW A PRIVATE MAN MUST BEGIN THE MORNING WITH PIETY.

As soon as ever thou awakest in the morning, keep the door of thy heart fast shut, that no earthly thought may enter, before that God come in first; and let him, before all others, have the first place there. So all evil thoughts either will not dare to come in, or shall the easier be kept out; and the heart will more savour of piety and godliness all the day after; but if thy heart be not, at thy first waking, filled with some meditations of God and his word, and dressed, like the lamp in the tabernacle (Exod. xxvii. 20, 21), every morning and evening, with the oil-olive of God's word, and perfumed with the sweet incense of prayer (Exod. xxx. 6, 7), Satan will attempt to fill it with worldly cares or fleshly desires, so that it will grow unfit for the service of God all the day after, sending forth nothing but the stench of corrupt and lying words, and of rash and blasphemous thoughts.

Begin, therefore, every day's work with God's word and prayer; and offer up to God upon the altar of a contrite heart, the groans of thy spirit, and the calves of thy lips, as thy morning sacrifice, and the first fruits of the day (Psal. li. 17; Rom. viii. 22; Hos. xiii. 2; Psal. cxxx. 6;) and as soon as thou awakest say to him thus:

My soul waiteth on thee, O Lord, more than the morning watch watcheth for the morning! O God, therefore be merciful unto me, and bless me, and cause thy face to shine upon me! Fill me with thy mercy this morning, so shall I rejoice and be glad all my days.

Meditations for the Morning

Meditations for the Morning.

1. Almighty God can, in the resurrection, as easily raise up thy body out of the grave, from the sleep of death, as he hath this morning wakened thee in thy bed, out of the sleep of nature. At the dawning of which resurrection day, Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints; and every one of the bodies of the thousands of his saints, being fashioned like unto his glorious body, shall shine as bright as the sun (2 Thess. i. 10; Jude, ver. 14; Phil. iii. 21; Luke ix. 31;) all the angels shining likewise in their glory; the body of Christ surpassing them all in splendour and glory; and the Godhead excelling it. If the rising of one sun make the morning sky so glorious, what a bright shining and glorious morning will that be, when so many thousand thousands of bodies, far brighter than the sun, shall appear and accompany Christ as his glorious train, coming to keep his general session of righteousness, and to judge the wicked angels, and all ungodly men (Acts xvii. 31; 1 Cor. vi. 3; Jude, ver. 15;) and let not any transitory profit, pleasure, or vain glory of this day, cause thee to lose thy part and portion of the eternal bliss and glory of that day, which is properly termed the resurrection of the just (Luke xiv. 14.) Beasts have bodily eyes to see the ordinary light of the day: but endeavour thou with the eyes of faith, to foresee the glorious light of that day.

2. Thou knowest not how near, the evil spirit which night and day, like a roaring lion, walketh about seeking to devour thee (1 Pet. v. 8; Job i. 7) was to thee while thou wast asleep and not able to help thyself; and thou knowest not what mischief he would have done to thee, had not God hedged thee and thine with his ever-waking Providence, and guarded thee with his holy and blessed angels (Job i. 10; Psal. cxxi. 4; Psalm 34:7; Gen. xxxii. 1, 2; 2 Kings vi. 16.)

3. If thou hearest the cock crow, remember Peter, to imitate him (Luke xxii. 61, 62;) and call to mind that cock-crowing sound of the last trumpet, which shall waken thee from the dead. And consider in what case thou wert, if it sounded now, and become such as thou wouldst then wish to be; lest at that day thou shouldst wish that thou hadst never seen this; yea, curse the day of thy natural birth, for want of being new-born by spiritual grace (Jer. xx. 14; Job iii. 1; Tit. iii. 5.) When the cock crows the thief despairs of his hope, and gives over his night’s enterprise: so the devil ceases to tempt, or attempt any further, when he hears the devout soul wakening herself with morning prayer.

4. Remember that Almighty God is about thy bed, and seeth thy down-lying, and thy up-rising; under-standeth thy thoughts, and is acquainted with all thy ways (Psal. cxxxix. 2, 3.) Remember likewise that his holy angels, who guarded and watched over thee all night, do also behold how thou wakest and risest

(Gen. xxxi. 55; xxxii. 1, 2.) Do all things, therefore, as in the awful presence of God, and in the sight of his holy angels (Psal. xci. 5, 11; Acts xii. 11.)

5. As thou art putting on thine apparel, remember that they were first given as coverings of shame, being the effects of sin; and that they are made but of the offals of dead beasts. Therefore, whether thou respect the stuff, or the first institution, thou hast so little cause to be proud of them, that thou hast great cause to be humbled at the sight and wearing of them, seeing the richest apparel are but fine covers of shame. Meditate rather, that as thine apparel serves to cover thy shame, and to fence thy body from cold, so thou shouldst be as careful to cover thy soul with that wedding garment which is the righteousness of Christ (because apprehended by our faith), called the righteousness of the saints (Matt. xxii. 11; Rom. xiii. 14; 1 Cor. i. 30; Philippians 3:9; Revelation 19:8; Ephesians 4:24;) lest, while we are richly apparelled in the sight of men, we be not found to walk naked (so that all our filthiness be seen) in the sight of God (Rev. xvi. 15.) But that with his righteousness, as with a robe, we may cover ourselves from perpetual shame; and shield our souls from that fiery cold that will procure eternal weeping, and gnashing of teeth (Matt. xxii. 13.) And withal consider how blessed a people were our nation, if every silken suit did cover a sanctified soul. And yet a man would think, that on whom God bestowed most of these outward blessings, of them he should receive greatest inward thanks (Luke xii. 48.) But if it prove otherwise, their reckoning will prove the heavier in the day of their accounts.

6. Consider how God’s mercy is renewed unto thee every morning, in giving thee, as it were, a new life Lam. iii. 23; Psal. xix. 5), and in causing the sun, after his incessant race, to rise again to give thee light. Let not, then, this glorious light burn in vain; but prevent rather (as oft as thou canst) the sun rising to give God thanks (Luke xii. 48;) and kneeling down at thy bedside, salute him at the day-spring with some devout antelucanum or morning soliloquy: containing an humble confession of thy sins, seeking the pardon of all thy faults, a thanksgiving for all his benefits, and a craving of his gracious protection to his church, thyself, and all that belong to thee.

BRIEF DIRECTIONS HOW TO READ THE HOLY SCRIPTURES ONCE EVERY YEAR OVER, WITH EASE, PROFIT, AND REVERENCE.

But forasmuch, that as faith is the soul, so reading and meditating on the word of God, are the parent's of prayer, therefore, before thou prayest in the morning, first read a chapter in the word of God; then meditate awhile with thyself, how many excellent things thou canst remember out of it.

As—First, what good counsels or exhortations to good works and to holy life.

Secondly, what threatenings of judgments against such and such a sin; and what fearful examples of God's punishment or vengeance upon such and such sinners.

Thirdly, what blessings God promiseth to patience, chastity, mercy, alms-deeds, zeal in his service, charity, faith and trust in God, and such like Christian virtues.

Fourthly, what gracious deliverance God hath wrought, and what special blessings he hath bestowed upon them who were his true and zealous servants.

Fifthly, apply these things to thine own heart, and read not these chapters as matter of historical discourse, but as if they were so many letters or epistles sent down from God out of heaven to thee; for whatsoever is written, is written for our learning (Rom. xv. 4.)

Sixthly, read them, therefore, with that reverence as if God himself stood by, and spake these words to thee, to excite thee to those virtues, to dissuade thee from those vices: assuring thyself that if such sins (as thou readest there) be found in thee, without repentance, the like plagues will fall upon thee; but if thou dost practise the like piety and virtuous deeds, the like blessings shall come to thee and thine.

In a word; apply all that thou readest in holy Scripture, to one of these two heads chiefly; either to confirm thy faith, or to increase thy repentance: for, as sustine et abstine, bear and forbear, was the epitome of a good philosopher's life;[42] so crede et resipisce, believe and repent, is the whole sum of a true Christian's profession, One chapter thus read with understanding, and meditated with application, will better feed and comfort thy soul than five read and run over without marking their scope or sense, or making any use of them to thine ownself. If in this manner thou shalt read three chapters every day—one in the morning, another at noon, and the third at night (reading so many psalms instead of a chapter), thou shall read overall the canonical scriptures in a year, except six chapters, which thou mayest add to the duties of the last day of the year.[43] The reading of the Bible in order, will help thee

better to understand both the history and scope of the holy Scripture. And as for the Apocrypha, being but penned by man's spirit, thou mayest read them at thy pleasure; but believe, them so far only as they agree with the canonical Scripture, which is edited by the Holy Ghost.

But it may be thou wilt say, that thy business will not permit thee so much time, as to read every morning a chapter, &c. O man, remember that thy life is but short, and that all this business is but for the use of this short life; but salvation or damnation is everlasting! Rise up, therefore, every morning by so much time the earlier: defraud thy foggy flesh of so much sleep; but rob not thy soul of her food, nor God of his service; and serve the Almighty duly whilst thou hast time and health.

Having thus read thy chapter, as thou art about to pray, remember that God is a God of holiness (Exod. xxvi. 36;) whereof he warns us by repeating so often, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." (Levit. xxi. 44; xix. 2; xx. 7.) And when he devoured with a sudden fire Nadab and Abihu, for offering to him incense with strange fire (Lev. x. 2),—like these now a-days, who offer prayers from hearts fraught with the fire of lust and malice,—would give no other reason of his judgment but this, "I will be sanctified in them that come near me." (Lev. x. 3.) As if he should have said, If I cannot be sanctified by them who are my servants, in serving me with that holiness that they should, I will be sanctified on them, by confounding them with my just judgments, which their lewdness deserves. God cannot abide any wilful uncleanness or sin in them who serve him: "For the Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp to deliver thee, and to give thee thine enemies before thee: therefore the host shall be holy." (Deut. xxiii. 13, 4.)

Zophar in Job saith, "If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hand towards God to pray; if iniquity be in thy hand, put it far away, and let no wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle." (Job xi. 13, 14.) For, as Esai saith, "If there be any uncleanness in our hands" (that is, any sin whereof we have not repented) "though we stretch out our hands unto him, and. make many prayers, the Lord will hide his eyes from us, and will not hear our prayers." (Isai. i. 15.) Therefore, before thou prayest, let God see that thy heart is sorrowful for thy sin, and that thy mind is resolved (through the assistance of his grace) to amend thy faults. And then, having washed thyself, and adorned thy body with apparel which beseemeth thy calling, and the image of God, which thou bearest, shut thy chamber-door, and kneel down at thy bedside, or some other convenient place; and in reverent manner lifting up thy heart, together with thy hands and eyes, as in the presence of God who seeth the inward intention of thy soul, offer up to God from the altar of a contrite heart, thy prayer, as a morning sacrifice, through the mediation of Christ, in these or the like words:—

[42] Epicteti dict.

[43]In the canonical books of the Old Testament there are 931 chapters: but distributing the 150 Psalms into 60 parts, thou shalt find but 841; which being added to 260, the number of the chapters in the New Testament, will amount to 1101; dividing which by three into 365, the number of the days of the year, there will remain but six, which thou mayest dispose of as is prescribed.

A Prayer for the Morning.

A Prayer for the Morning.

O most mighty and glorious God! full of incomprehensible power and majesty; whose glory the very heaven of heavens is not able to contain! Look down from heaven upon me, thine unworthy servant, who here prostrate myself at the footstool of thy throne of grace. But look upon me, O Father, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, in whom only thou art well pleased! For of myself, I am not worthy to stand in thy presence, or to speak with mine unclean lips to so holy a God as thou art. For thou knowest that in sin I was conceived and born, and that I have lived ever since in iniquity: so that I have broken all thy holy commandments by sinful motions, unclean thoughts, evil words, and wicked works; omitting many of those duties which thou requirest for thy service, and committing many of those vices which thou, under the penalty of thy displeasure, hast forbidden.

[Here thou mayest confess to God thy secret sins, which do most burthen thy conscience, saying, But more especially, O Lord, I do here with grief of heart confess unto thee, &c.]

And for these my sins, O Lord, I stand here guilty of thy curse, with all the miseries of this life, and everlasting torments in hell-fire, when this wretched life is ended, if thou shouldst deal with me according to my deserts. Yea, Lord, I confess, that it is thy mercy which endureth for ever, and thy compassion which never fails, that is the cause that I have not been long ago consumed. But with thee, O Lord, there is mercy, and plenteous redemption. In the multitude, therefore, of thy mercy, and confidence in Christ’s merits, I entreat thy divine Majesty that thou wouldst not enter into judgment with thy servant, neither be extreme to mark what I have hitherto done amiss: for if thou dost, then no flesh can be justified in thy sight, nor any living stand in thy presence. But be thou merciful unto me, and wash away all the uncleanness of my sin, with the merits of that precious blood which Jesus Christ hath shed for me. And seeing that he hath borne the burthen of that curse which was due to my transgressions, O Lord deliver me from my sins, and from all those judgments which hang over my head, as due unto me for them, and separate them as far from thy presence as the east is from the west! bury them in the burial of Christ, that they may never have power to rise up against me, to shame me in this life, or to condemn me in the world which is to come. And I beseech thee, O Lord, not only to wash away my sins with the blood of thine immaculate Lamb, but also to purge my heart, by thy Holy Spirit, from the dross of my natural corruption; that I may feel thy Spirit more and more killing my sin, in the power and practice thereof, so that this day I may with more freedom of mind and liberty of will serve thee, the everlasting God, in righteousness and holiness. And give me grace, that by the direction and assistance of the same

Holy Spirit, I may persevere to be thy faithful and unfeigned servant to my life's end; that when this mortal life is ended, I may be made a partaker of immortality and everlasting happiness in thy heavenly kingdom. In the meantime, O Lord, whilst it is thy blessed will and pleasure that I may continue" to spend and end that small number and remnant of days which thou hast appointed for me to live in this vale of misery, teach me so to number my days that I may apply my heart unto wisdom: and as thou dost add days unto my life, so, good Lord, I beseech thee, add repentance and amendment to my days, that as I grow in years, so I may increase in grace and favour with thee and all thy people. And to this end, give unto me a supply of all those graces which thou knowest to be wanting in me, and necessary for me, with an increase of all those good gifts wherewith thou hast already endowed me; that so I may be the better enabled to lead such a godly life, and honest conversation, as that thy name may thereby be glorified, others may take good example by me, and my soul may more cheerfully feed on the peace of a good conscience, and be more replenished with the joy of the Holy Ghost. And here, O Lord, according to my bounden duty, I give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all those blessings which of thy goodness thou hast bestowed upon me. And namely, for that thou hast of thy free love, according to thine eternal purpose, elected me, before the foundation of the world was laid, unto salvation in Jesus Christ;—for that thou hast created me after thine own image, and hast begun to restore that in me which was lost in our first parents;—for that thou hast effectually called me, by the working of thy Spirit, in the preaching of the gospel, and the receiving of the sacraments, to the knowledge of thy saving grace, and obedience to thy blessed will;—for that thou hast bought and redeemed me, with the blood of thine only-begotten Son, from the torments of hell, and thrall of Satan;—for that thou hast, by faith in Christ, freely justified me, who am by nature the child of wrath;—for that thou hast in good measure sanctified me by thy Holy Spirit, and given me so large a time to repent, together with the means of repentance. I thank thee likewise, good Lord, for my life, health, wealth, food, raiment, peace, prosperity, and plenty; and for that thou hast preserved me this night from all perils and dangers of body and soul, and hast brought me safe to the beginning of this day. And as thou hast now wakened my body from sleep, so, I beseech thee, waken my soul from sin, and carnal security; and as thou hast caused the light of the day to shine in my bodily eyes, so, good Lord, cause the light of thy Word and Holy Spirit to illuminate my heart; and give me grace, as one of thy children of light, to walk in all holy obedience before thy face this day; and that I may endeavour to keep faith and a clear conscience towards thee, and towards all men, in all my thoughts, words, and dealings. And so, good Lord, bless all my studies and actions which I shall take in hand this day, as that they may tend to thy glory, the good of others, and the comfort of my own soul and conscience in that day

when I shall make my final account to thee. O my God, keep thy servant, that I do no evil to any man this day; and let it be thy blessed will not to suffer the devil nor his wicked angels, nor any of his evil members, or my malicious enemies, to have any power to do me hurt or violence. But let the eye of thy holy Providence watch over me for good and not for evil; and command thy holy angels to pitch their tents round about me, for my defence and safety in my going out and coming in, as thou hast promised they should do about them that fear thy name. Into thy hands, O Father, I do here commend my soul and body, my actions, and all that ever I have, to be guided, defended, and protected by thee; being assured, that whatsoever thou takest into thy custody cannot perish, nor suffer any hurt or harm. And if I at any time this day shall through frailty forget thee, yet, Lord, I beseech thee, do thou in mercy remember me. And I pray not unto thee, O Father, for myself alone; but I beseech thee also be merciful unto thy whole church, and chosen people, wheresoever they live upon the face of the earth. Defend them from the rage and tyranny of the devil, the world, and antichrist. Give thy gospel a free and a joyful passage through the world, for the conversion of those who belong to thine election and kingdom.

Bless the churches and kingdoms wherein we live with the continuance of peace, justice, and true religion. Bless our sovereign the Queen, and all the royal family, Increase in them all heroical gifts and spiritual graces which may make them fit for those places for which thou hast ordained them. Direct all the nobility, ministers, and magistrates of this church and commonwealth, to govern the people in true religion, justice, obedience, and tranquillity. Be merciful unto all the brethren which fear thee, and call upon thy name. And comfort as many among them as are sick and comfortless in body or mind; especially be favourable to all such as suffer any trouble or persecution for the testimony of thy truth, and holy gospel; and give them a gracious deliverance out of all their troubles, which way it shall seem best to thy wisdom, for the glory of thy name, the further enlarging of the truth, and the more ample increase of their own comfort and consolation. Hasten thy coming, O blessed Saviour, and end these sinful days; and give me grace, that like a wise virgin I maybe prepared with oil in my lamp to meet thee, the blessed bridegroom, at thy coming, whether it be by the day of death, or of judgment; and then, Lord Jesus, come when thou wilt, even Lord Jesus come quickly. These, and all other graces which thou knowest needful and necessary for me, this day and evermore, I humbly beg and crave at thy hands, O Father, giving thee thy glory, in that form of prayer, which Christ himself hath taught me to say unto thee:

“Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,” &c.

Meditations to Stir Us Up to Morning Prayer.

Meditations to stir us up to Morning Prayer.

1. If, when thou art about to pray, Satan shall suggest that thy prayers are too long, and that therefore it were better either to omit prayers, or else to cut them shorter, meditate that prayer is thy spiritual sacrifice, wherewith God is well pleased (Heb. xiii. 15, 16;) and therefore it is so displeasing to the devil, and so irksome to the flesh. Bend therefore thy affections (will they, nill they) to so holy an exercise; assuring thyself, that it doth by so much the more please God, by how much the more it is unpleasing to thy flesh.

2. Forget not that the Holy Ghost puts it down as a special note of reprobates, “They call not upon the Lord, they call not upon God.” (Psal. xiv. 4; liii. 4.) And when Eliphaz supposed that Job had cast off the fear of God, and that God had cast Job out of his favour, he chargeth him that he restrained prayer before God (Job xv. 4;) making that a sure note of the one, and a sufficient cause of the other. On the other side, that God has promised that “whosoever shall call on his name shall be saved.” (Rom. x. 13.) It is certain that he who makes no conscience of the duty of prayer, has no grace of the Holy Spirit in him, for the spirit of grace and of prayer are one (Zech. xii. 10:) and therefore grace and prayer go together. But he that can from a penitent heart morning and evening pray to God, it is sure that he has his measure of grace in this world, and he shall have his portion of glory in the life which is to come.

3. Remember, that as loathing of meat, and painfulness of speaking, are two symptoms of a sick body; so irksomeness of praying when thou talkest with God, and carelessness in hearing, when God, by his word, speaks unto thee, are two sure signs of a sick soul.

4. Call to mind the zealous devotions of the Christians in the primitive church, who spent many whole nights and vigils in watching and praying for the forgiveness of their sins, and that they might be found ready at the coming of Christ; and that David was not content to pray at morning, at evening, and at noon (Psal. lv. 16, 17), but he would also rise up at midnight to pray unto God (Psal. cxix. 62.) And if Christ did chide his disciples, because they would not watch with him one hour in praying {Matt. xxvi. 40), what chiding dost thou deserve, who thinkest it too long to continue in prayer but one quarter of an hour? If thou hast spent divers hours at a vain ball or play; yea whole days and nights in carding and dicing, to please thy flesh, be ashamed to think that praying for a quarter of an hour is too long an exercise for the service of God.

5. Consider, that if the papists, in their blind superstition, do in an unknown, and therefore unedifying tongue, fit only for the children of mystical Babylon (1 Cor. xiv. 14; Gen. xi. 79; Rev. xvii. 5), mutter over upon their beads every

morning and evening so many scores of ave-maries, paternosters, and idolatrous prayers, how shall they, in their superstitious devotion, rise up in judgment against thee, professing thyself to be a true worshipper of Christ? If that thou thinkest these prayers too long a task, being shorter for quantity than theirs, but far more profitable for quality, tending only to God's glory, and thy good; and so compiled of Scripture phrase, as that thou mayest speak to God, as well in his own holy words, as in thine own native language: be ashamed that papists, in their superstitious worshipping of creatures, should show themselves more devout than thou in the sincere worshipping of the true and only God (John xvii. 3.) And indeed a prayer in private devotion should be one continued speech, rather than many broken fragments.

6. Lastly, when such thoughts come into thy head, either to keep thee from prayer, or to distract thee in praying, remember that those are the fowls which the evil one sends to devour the good seed, and the carcases of thy spiritual sacrifices; but endeavour with Abraham, to drive them away (Gen. xv. 11.) Yet notwithstanding, if thou perceivest at times, that thy spirits are dull, and thy mind not apt for prayer and holy devotion, strive not too much for that time, but humbling thyself at the sense of thine infirmity and dulness, knowing that God accepteth the willing mind, though it be oppressed with the heaviness of the flesh (Matt. xxvi. 41; 2 Cor. viii. 12), endeavour the next time to recompense this dulness, by redoubling thy zeal, and for the time present, commend thy soul to God in this, or the like short prayer:—

Another Short Morning Prayer.

Another short Morning Prayer.

O most gracious God, and merciful Father! I thine unworthy servant do here acknowledge that as I have been born in sin, so I have lived in iniquity, and broken every one of thy commandments, in thought, word, and deed; following the desires of mine own will, and lusts of my flesh, not caring to be governed by thy holy word and Spirit; and therefore I have justly deserved all shame and misery in this life, and everlasting condemnation in hell-fire, if thou shouldst but deal with me according to thy justice, and my desert. Wherefore, O heavenly Father, I beseech thee, for thy Son Jesus Christ's sake, and for the merits of that bitter death and bloody passion which I believe that he hath suffered for me, that thou wouldst pardon and forgive me all my sins, and deliver me from the shame and vengeance which is due to me for them. And send thy Holy Spirit into my heart, which may assure me that thou art my Father, and that I am thy child, and that thou lovest me with an unchangeable love; and let the same good Spirit lead me in thy truth, and crucify in me more and more all worldly and carnal lusts, that my sins may more and more die in me, and that I may serve thee in unfeigned righteousness and holiness this day, and all the days of my life; that when this mortal life is ended, I may, through thy mercy in Christ, be made a partaker of everlasting glory in thy heavenly kingdom. And here, O Lord, from the bottom of my heart, I thank thee for all thy blessings, which thou hast bestowed upon my soul and body; for electing me in thy love, redeeming me by thy Son, sanctifying me by thy Spirit, and preserving me from my youth up, until this present day and hour, by thy most gracious providence.

I thank thee more especially, for that thou hast defended me this night from all perils and dangers, and hast brought me safe to the beginning of this day. And now, good Lord, I beseech thee, keep me this day from all evil that may hurt me, and from falling into any gross sin that should offend thee. Set thy fear before my eyes, and let thy Spirit so rule my heart, that all that I shall think, do, or speak this day, may tend to thy glory, the good of others, and the peace of mine own conscience. And to this end I commend myself, and all my ways and actions, together with all that belong to me, unto thy gracious direction and protection; praying thee to keep both them and me from all evil, and to give a blessing to all our honest labours and endeavours. Defend thy whole church from the tyranny of the world, and of Antichrist. Preserve our Queen from all conspiracies and treasons: grant her a long and prosperous reign over us. Bless the rest of the royal family; endow them with thy grace, and defend them from all evil. Bless all our ministers and magistrates with those graces and gifts which thou knowest necessary for their places. Be favourable to all that fear thee, and tremble at thy judgments. Comfort all

those that are sick and comfortless. Lord, keep me in a continual readiness, by faith and repentance, for my last end, that whether I live or die, I may be found thine own, to thine eternal glory, and mine everlasting salvation, through Jesus Christ my only Saviour: In whose blessed name I beg these mercies at thy hands, and give unto thee thy praise and glory, in that prayer which he has sanctified with his own lips:—“Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,” &c.

Farther Meditations to Stir Up to Prayer in the Morning.

Farther Meditations to stir up to Prayer in the Morning.

Think not any business or haste, though never so great, a sufficient excuse to omit prayer in the morning: But meditate—

1. That the greater thy business is, by so much the more need thou hast to pray for God's good speed and blessing upon it, seeing it is certain that nothing can prosper without his blessing.

2. That many a man, when he thought himself surest, has been soonest crossed; so mayest thou.

3. That many a man has gone out of his door, and never come in again: many a man who rose well and lively in the morning, has been seen a dead man ere night.[44] So may it befall thee: And if thou be so careful, before thou goest abroad, to eat and drink, to fence thy body from ill airs, how much more careful shouldst thou be to pray to preserve thy soul from evil temptations?

4. That the time spent in prayer never hinders, but furthers and prospers a man's journey and business.

5. That in going abroad into the world, thou goest into a forest full of unknown dangers, where thou shalt meet many briers to tear thy good name, many snares to trap thy life, and many hunters to devour thy soul; it is a field of pleasant grass, but full of poisonous serpents: adventure not, therefore, to go naked amongst these briers, till thou hast prayed Christ to clothe thee with his righteousness; nor to pass through these snares and ambushments, till thou hast prayed for God's providence to be thy guide; nor to walk barefoot through this snaky field, till having thy feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, thou hast prayed to have still the brazen serpent in the eyes of thy faith; that so if thou comest not home holier, thou mayest be sure not to return worse than when thou wentest out of thy door.

Therefore, though thy haste be never so much, or thy business never so great, yet go not about it, nor out of thy doors, till thou hast at least used this or the like short prayer:—

[44]Quem dies vidit veniens superbum: hunc dies videt fugiens jacentem.—Senec. Nescis quid vesper serus vehat.—Varro.

A Brief Prayer for the Morning.

A brief Prayer for the Morning.

O merciful Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, I beseech thee forgive me all my known and secret sins which in thought, word, or deed, I have committed against thy Divine Majesty, and deliver me from all those judgments which are due to me for them, and sanctify my heart with thy Holy Spirit, that I may henceforth lead a more godly and religious life! And here, O Lord, I praise thy holy name, for that thou hast refreshed me this night with moderate sleep and rest; I beseech thee likewise defend me this day from all perils and dangers of body and soul: and to this end I commend myself and all my actions to thy blessed protection and government, beseeching thee, that whether I live or die, I may live and die to thy glory, and the salvation of my poor soul, which thou hast bought with thy precious blood. Bless me, therefore, O Lord, in my going out and coming in, and grant that whatsoever I shall think, speak, or take in hand this day, may tend to the glory of thy name, the good of others, and the comfort of mine own conscience, when I shall come to make before thee my last account. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ thy Son's sake: in whose blessed name I give thee thy glory, and beg at thy hands all other graces which thou seest to be needful for me this day and ever, in that prayer which Christ himself has taught me, "Our Father," &c.

MEDITATIONS DIRECTING A CHRISTIAN HOW HE MAY WALK ALL THE DAY WITH GOD, LIKE ENOCH.

Having thus begun, keep all the day after as diligent a watch as thou canst over all thy thoughts, words, and actions, which thou mayest easily do, by craving the assistance of God’s Holy Spirit, and observing these few rules:—

First, For Thy Thoughts.

First, For thy Thoughts.

1. Be careful to suppress every sin in the first motion; dash Babylon's children, whilst they are young, against the stones; tread, betimes, the cockatrice's egg, lest it break out into a serpent; let sin be to thy heart a stranger, not a home-dweller: take heed of falling oft into the same sin, lest the custom of sinning take away the conscience of sin, and then shalt thou wax so impudently wicked, that thou wilt neither fear God nor reverence man.

2. Suffer not thy mind to feed itself upon any imagination which is either impossible for thee to do, or unprofitable if it be done; but rather think of the world's vanity, to condemn it—of death, to expect it—of judgment, to avoid it—of hell, to escape it—and of heaven, to desire it.

3. Desire not to fulfil thy mind in all things; but learn to deny thyself those desires, though never so pleasing to thy nature, which, being attained, will draw either scandal on thy religion, or hatred to thy person. Consider in everything the end before attempting the action.

4. Labour daily more and more to see thine own misery, through unbelief, self-love, and wilful breaches of God's laws; and the necessity of God's mercy, through the merits of Christ's passion, to be such, that if thou wert demanded, What is the vilest creature upon earth? thy conscience may answer, Mine ownself, by reason of my great sins. And if, on the other side, thou wert asked, What thou esteemest to be the most precious thing in the world? thy heart might answer, One drop of Christ's blood, to wash away my sins.

5. As thou tenderest the salvation of thy soul, live not in any wilful sin. Approve thyself to be a true servant of Christ, not only in thy general calling, as in the frequent use of the word and sacraments, but also, in particular, in making conscience to avoid every known sin, for true faith and the purpose of sinning can never stand together; and to obey God in every one of his commandments, like Josias, who turned to God with all his heart according to all the law of Moses; and Zachary and Elizabeth, who walked in all the commandments of God without reproof. But if at any time through frailty, thou slippest into any sin, lie not in it, but speedily rise out of it by unfeigned repentance; praying for pardon till thy conscience be pacified, thy hatred of sin increased, and thy purpose of amendment confirmed..

6. Beware of affecting popularity by adulation—the end never proves good; and though attained by due deserts, yet manage it wisely, lest it prove more dangerous than contempt; for states desire but to keep down whom they contemn for their unworthiness, but to cut off whom they envy for their greatness. He therefore is truly prudent who, considering the premises, neither affects nor neglects popularity; but in any wise take heed of

harbouring a discontented mind, for it may work thee more woe than thou art aware of: it is a special mercy, in the multitude of so many blessings as thou dost enjoy, to have some crosses. God gives thee many blessings, lest through want, being his child, thou shouldst despair; and he sends thee some crosses, lest by too much prosperity, playing the fool, thou shouldst presume. Many who have mounted to great dignities, would have contented themselves with meaner, had they known their great dangers: affect therefore competency rather than eminency; and in all thy will ever have an eye to God's will, lest thy self-action turn to thine own destruction. Happy is the man who in this life is least known of the world, so that he doth truly know God and himself! Whatsoever cross, therefore, thou hast to discontent thee, remember that it is less than thy sins have deserved; count, therefore, Christ thy chiefest joy, and sin thy greatest grief: esteem no want to the want of grace, nor any loss to the loss of God's favour; and then the discontentment for outward means shall the less perplex thine inward mind; and as oft as Satan shall offer any motion of discontentment to thy mind, remember St. Paul's admonition, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out: and having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." Pray, therefore, with wise Agur, "O Lord, give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be too full and deny thee, and say. Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

7. Bestow no more thought upon wordly things than thou needs must, for the discharge of thy place and the maintenance of thy estate; but still let thy care be greater for heavenly than earthly things, and be more grieved for a dishonour done to God than for any injury offered to thyself: but if any injury be offered to thee, bear it as a Christian, with patience. Never was an innocent man wronged, but if he patiently bore his cross, he overcame in the end.[45] But if thy good name in the meanwhile is wounded, bear that also with patience: for he that at the last day will give thy body a resurrection, will as sure, in his good time, grant a resurrection to thy good name. If impatiently thou frettest and vexest at thy wrongs, the hurt which thou dost thyself is more than that which thine enemy can do to thee. Neither canst thou more rejoice him than to hear that it thoroughly vexeth thee. But if thou canst shew patience on earth, God will shew himself just from heaven. Pray for him: for if thou be a good man thyself, thou canst not but rejoice if thou shouldst see thy worst enemy become a good man too. But if he still continueth in his malice, and increaseth in his mischief, give thou thyself to prayer, committing thyself and commending thy cause to the righteous Judge of heaven and earth, saying with Jeremiah, "O Lord of hosts, that judgest righteously, and triest the reins and the heart, vengeance is thine, and unto thee have I opened my cause." (Jer. xi. 20.) In the

meanwhile, “wait” (with David) “on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall comfort thine heart.”

8. The more others commend thee for an excellent act, be thou the more humble in thine own thoughts.[46] Affect not the vain praises of men: the blessed Virgin was troubled when she was praised of an angel. They shall be praised of angels in heaven, who have eschewed the praises of men on earth. Neither needest thou praise thyself; deal but uprightly, others will do that for thee (Psal. xlix. 18.) Be not thou curious to know other men’s doings, but rather be careful that no man know any ill dealings by thee.

9. Esteem no sin little; for the curse of God is due to the least; and the least would have condemned thee, had not the Son of God died for thee. Bewail, therefore, the misery of thine own state; and, as occasion is ministered, mourn for the iniquity of the time (Ezek. ix. 4; Psal. lxix. 9, 10; Mark iii. 5.) Pray to God to amend it, and be not thou one of them that make it worse.

10. Lastly, think often of the shortness of thy life, and certainty of death; and wish rather a good life than a long. For as one day of man’s life is to be preferred before the longest age of a stag or raven, so one day spent religiously is to be higher valued than a man’s whole life that is consumed in profaneness.

Cast over, therefore, once every day, the number of thy days, by subtracting, those that are past (as being vanished like yesternight’s dream), contracting them that are to come (since the one half must be slept out, the rest made uncomfortable by the troubles of the world, thy own sickness, and the death of friends), counting the only present day thine; which spend, as if thou wert to spend no more.

[45] Nobile vincendi genus est patientia: vincit qui patitur: si vis vincere, disce pati. Optima injuriæ ultio est oblivio, efficit enim ut animum levet, nec magis lædat, quam si facta non esset.

[46] Ne verbis quod seis ostentes, sed rebus te ostende scire.

Secondly, for Thy Words.

Secondly, for thy Words.

1. Remember, that thou must answer for every idle word, that in multiloquy, the wisest man shall overshoot himself. Avoid, therefore, all tedious and idle talk, from which seldom arises comfort, many times repentance: especially beware of rash answers, when the tongue outruns the mind. The word was thine whilst thou didst keep it in; it is another's as soon as it is out. O the shame, when a man's own tongue shall be produced a witness, to the confusion of his own face!

Let, then, thy words be few, but advised; forethink whether that which thou art to speak be fit to be spoken; affirm no more than what thou knowest to be true; and be rather silent than speak to an ill, or to no purpose.

2. Let thy heart and tongue ever go together in honesty and truth; hate dissembling and lying in another; detest it in thyself, or God will detest thee for it; for he hateth alike a liar, and his father, the devil. And if once thou be discovered to make no conscience of lying, no man will believe thee when thou speakest a truth; but if thou lovest truth, more credit will be given to thy word than to a liar's oath. Great is the possession which Satan has in those who are so accustomed to lying, that they will lie though they get nothing by it themselves, nor are compelled to it by others. Let not thine anger remain when thou seest the cause removed; and ever distinguish between him that offends of infirmity (or against his will), and him who offends maliciously, and of set purpose: let the one have pity, and the other justice.

3. Keep thy speech as clean from all obscenity as thou wouldst thy meat from poison; and let thy talk be gracious, that he who hears thee may grow better by thee: And be ever more earnest when thou speakest of religion than when thou talkest of worldly matters.

If thou perceivest that thou hast erred, persevere not in thine error; rejoice to find the truth, and magnify it. Study, therefore, three things especially—to understand well, to say well, and to do well.

And when thou meetest with God's children, be sure to make some holy advantage by them; learn of them all the good that thou canst, and communicate with them all the good things that thou knowest. The more good thou teachest others, the more will God still minister unto thee. For as the gifts of men, by much using, do perish and decrease; so the gifts of God, by much using, do the more grow and increase; like the widow's pitcher of oil, which the more it poured to fill other vessels, the more it was still replenished in itself.

4. Beware that you believe not all that is told you, and that you tell not all that you hear; for if you do, you shall not long enjoy true friends, nor ever want great troubles. Therefore, in accusations, be first, assured of the truth, then censure. And as thou tenderest the reputation of an honest heart, never let malice in hatred make thee to reveal that which love in friendship bound thee a long time to conceal. But for fear of such afterclaps, observe two things—First, though thou hast many acquaintance, yet make not any thy familiar friend, but he that truly fears God: such an one thou never needest to fear, for though you should in some particulars fall out, yet Christian love, the main ground of your friendship, will never fall away; and the fear of God will never suffer him to do thee any villany. Secondly, do nothing in the sight of a civil friend, for which thou canst not be safe, unless it be concealed, nor anything for which, if just cause be offered, thou needest fear him, if he proves thine unjust enemy. If thou hast done anything amiss, ask forgiveness of God, and persuade thyself, rather than thy friend, to keep thine own counsel. For be assured that what friendship soever is grounded upon any other cause than true religion; if ever that cause fail, the friendship falleth off: and the rather, because that as God diffuses among men, truth, peace, and amity, that we should live to do one another good; so the devil daily sows falsehood, discord, and enmity, to cause, if he can, the dearest friends to devour one another.

5. Make not a jest of another man's infirmity: remember thine own. Abhor the frothy wit of a filthy nature, whose brains having once conceived an odd scoff, his mind travails till he be delivered of it; yea, he had rather lose bis best friend, than his worst jest; but if thou be disposed to be merry, have a special care to three things (Phil. iv. 4; Prov. xxiii. 17)—1st, That thy mirth be not against religion; 2d, That it be not against charity; 3d, That it be not against chastity, and then be as merry as thou canst, only in the Lord.

6. Rejoice not at the fall of thine enemy, for thou knowest not what shall be the manner of thine own end; but be more glad to see the worst man's amendment, than his punishment. Hate no man, for fear Christ loves him, who will not take it well, that thou shouldst hate whom he loveth. Christ loved thee, when thou wast his enemy; by the merits, therefore, of his blood, he requires thee, for his sake, to love thine enemy; deny him being a Christian if thou darest. He asks but forgiveness for forgiveness: The forgiveness of one hundred pence, for the forgiveness of ten thousand talents—of sixty hundred thousand crowns, for ten crowns—petty forgiveness of man, for the infinite forgiveness of Almighty God. Though thou thinkest thine enemy unworthy to be forgiven, yet Christ is worthy to be obeyed.

7. When the glory of God, or good of thy neighbour requires it, speak the truth, and fear not the face of man. The frown of a prince may sometimes be the favour of God. Neither shall flattery still hold in credit, nor truth always continue in disgrace.

8. Ever think him a true friend, who tells thee secretly and plainly of thy faults. He that sees thee offend, and tells thee not of thy fault, eithers flatters thee for favour, or dares not displease thee for fear. Miserable is his case, who when he needs has none to admonish him. Reprehension, be it just, be it unjust; come it from the mouth of a friend, or from a foe, never does a wise man harm; for if it be true, thou hast a warning to amend—if it be false, thou hast a caveat what to avoid. So every way it makes a wise man better, or more wary. But if thou canst not endure to be reprehended, do then nothing worthy of reprehension.

9. Speak not of God but with fear and reverence, and as in his sight and hearing (Deut. xxviii. 58.) For seeing we are not worthy to use his holy name in our mouths, much less ought we to abuse it vainly in our talk. But ordinarily to use it in vain, rash, or false oaths, is an undoubted sign of a soul that never truly feared God. Pray, therefore, with David, when thou art to speak in any matter that may move passion, “Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.” (Psal. cxli. 3.)

10. Lastly, in praising, be discreet (1 Pet. v. 12;) in saluting, courteous (Rom. xii. 10;) in admonishing, friendly (1 Thess. v. 26; 2 Thess. iii. 5; Lev. xix. 17;) in forgiving, merciful; in promising, faithful (Psal. xv. 4;) and bountiful in recompensing good service (Deut. xv. 13, 14;) making not the rewards of virtue the gifts of favour.

Thirdly, for Thy Actions.

Thirdly, for thy Actions.

1. Do no evil, though thou mightest; for God will not suffer the least sin, without bitter repentance, to escape unpunished. Leave not undone any good that thou canst. But do nothing without a calling, nor anything in thy calling, till thou hast first taken counsel at God's word (1 Sam. xxx. 8) of its lawfulness, and pray for his blessings upon thy endeavour; and then do it in the name of God, with cheerfulness of heart, committing the success to him, in whose power it is to bless with his grace whatsoever business is intended to his glory.

2. When thou art tempted to do an evil work (1 Cor. vii. 4), remember that Satan is where his business is, Let not the child of God he the instrument of so base a slave; hate the work, if thou abhorrest the author. Ask thy conscience these two questions—Would I have another to do this to me? (Matt. vii. 12)—What shall I answer Christ in the day of my accounts, if, contrary to my knowledge and conscience, I shall do this wickedness, and sin against him? (Luke xvi. 2; 2 Cor. vi. 2; v. 10;) and remember with Joseph (Gen. xxxix. 9, 11, &c), that though no man seeth, yet God seeth all. Fly, therefore, with Joseph, from all sins, as well those that are secret in the sight of God, as those that are manifest in the eyes of men. For God, as he is just, without speedy repentance will bring the secret sins, as he did David's, to the open light, before all Israel, and before the sun (2 Sam. xii. 12.) Be therefore as much afraid of secret sins as of open shame (Luke viii. 17; xii. 2.) And so avoid all in general, as that thou dost not allow to thyself any one particular or darling sin, which the corruption of thy nature could best agree withal (Prov. v. 8; vi. 27;) for the crafty devil can hold a man's soul as fast by one as by many sins; and faster by that one which pleases thee, than by all those which begin to be abominable to thee. And as thou desirest to avoid a sin, so be careful to shun the occasion.

3. In affecting good actions, which are within the compass of thy calling, distrust not God's providence, though thou seest the means either wanting or weak (Judges vii. 7.) And if means offer themselves, be sure that they be lawful; and having gotten lawful means, take heed that thou rely not more upon them than upon God himself. Labour, in a lawful calling, is God's ordinary means by which he blesseth his children with outward things. Pray, therefore, for God's blessing upon his own means. In earthly business bear an heavenly mind: do thou thy best endeavour, and commit the whole success to the fore-ordaining wisdom of Almighty God. Never think to thrive by those means which God hath accursed. That will not in the end prove gain which is gotten with the loss of thy soul (Matt. xvi. 26.) In all, therefore, both actions and means, endeavour, with Paul, to have always a clear conscience towards God and towards men (Acts xxiv. 16.)

Look to yourselves what conscience ye have;

For conscience shall damn, and conscience shall save.

4. Love all good things for God's sake, but God for his own sake. Whilst thou holdest God thy friend, thou needst not fear who is thy enemy (Psal. cxviii. 6, 7; Rom. viii. 31; Prov. xvi. 7:) for either God will make thy enemy to become thy friend, or will bridle him that he cannot hurt thee (Gen. xxxii. 3, &c.; xxxi. 7.) No man is overthrown by his enemy, unless that first his sin hath prevailed over him, and God hath left him to himself (Num. xiv. 42, 43, &c.) He that would therefore be safe from the fear of his enemies, and live still in the favour of his God (Psal. xxxvii. 11, 12, 13), let him redeem the folly of the time past with serious repentance, look to the time present with religious diligence, and take heed to the time to come with careful providence.

5. Give every man the honour due to his place, but honour a man more for his goodness than for his greatness. And of whomsoever thou hast received a benefit, unto him, as God shall enable thee, remember to be thankful: acknowledge it lovingly to men, and pray for him heartily to God. And count every blessing received from God as a pledge of his eternal love, and a spur to a godly life.

6. Be not proud for any external worldly goods, nor for any internal spiritual gifts. Not for external goods; because, as they came lately, so they will shortly be gone again; their loss, therefore, is the less to be grieved at. Not for any internal gifts: for as God gave them, so will he likewise take them away; if, forgetting the Giver, thou shalt abuse his gifts, to puff up thy heart with a pride of thy own worth, and contemn others, for whose good Almighty God bestowed those gifts upon thee. Hast thou any one virtue that moves thee to be self-conceited? thou hast twenty vices that may better vilify thee in thine own eyes.

Be the same in the sight of God, who beholds thy heart, that thou seemest to be in the eyes of men, that see thy face. Content not thyself with an outward good name, when thy conscience shall inwardly tell thee it is undeserved, and therefore none of thine. A deserved good name for anything but for godliness, lasts little, and is less worth. In all the holy Scriptures, I never read of a hypocrite's repentance; and no wonder, for whereas after sin conversion is left as a means to cure all other sinners, what means remain to recover him who has converted conversion itself into sin? Woe, therefore, to the soul that is not, and yet still seemeth religious!

7. Mark the fearful ends of notorious evil men, to abhor their wicked actions: mark the life of the godly, that thou mayest imitate it, and his blessed end, that it may comfort thee (Num. xxiii. 10; Psalm 37:35,36,37.) Obey thy betters, observe the wise, accompany the honest, and love the religious. And seeing the corrupt nature of man is prone to hypocrisy, beware that thou use

not the exercises of religion as matters of course and custom, without care and conscience to grow more holy and devout thereby. Observe, therefore, how, by the continual use of God's means, thou feelest thy special corruptions weakened, and thy sanctification more and more increased; and make no more shew of holiness outwardly to the world, than thou hast in the sight of God inwardly in thine heart (Isa. li. 5, 6; Matt. xxiii. 27, 28; Psal. li. 5, 6.)

8. Endeavour to rule those who live under thine authority rather by love than by fear: for to rule by love is easy and safe, but tyranny is ever accompanied with care and terror. Oppression will force the oppressed to take any advantage to shake off the yoke that they are not able to bear: neither will God's justice suffer to continue long the sway that is grounded on tyranny. Remember, that though by human ordinance they serve thee, yet by a more peculiar right they are God's servants (1 Pet. ii. 13;) yea, now being Christians, not as thy servants, but above servants, brethren beloved in the Lord (Philem. ver. 16; 1 Cor. ix. 5.) Rule, therefore, over Christians (being a Christian) in love and mercy, like Christ thy Master.

9. Remember, that of all actions none makes a magistrate more like God, whose vicegerent he is, than doing justice justly. For the due execution whereof—

First, Have ever an open ear to the just complaints of unjust dealings.

Secondly, So lend one ear to the accuser, as that thou keep the other for the accused: for he that decrees for either part before both be heard, the decree may be just, but himself is unjust.

Thirdly, In hearing both parts, incline not to the right hand of affection, nor to the left of hatred; as to believe arguments of persuasion for a friend, before arguments concluding for a foe.

Fourthly, Deny not justice, which is regia mensura, to the meanest subject; but let the cause of the poor and needy come in equal balance with the rich and mighty. If thou perceivest on the one side in a cause, the high hills of cunning advantage, powerful combination, and violent prosecution, and on the other side, the low valleys of poverty, and simplicity, and desolation, prepare thy way, as God doth, to judgment, by raising valleys, and taking down hills (Luke iii. 4, 5; Isa. xl. 3), equalling inequality, that so thou mayest lay the foundation of thy sentence upon an even ground. In matters of right and wrong between party and party, let thy conscience be careful rather, jus dicere, to pronounce the law that is made secundum allegata et probata, than jus dare, to make a law of thine own (2 Chron. xix. 10), upon the authority of sic volo, sic jubeo, fearing that fearful malediction, "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark." (Deut. xxvii. 17; Hab. v. 1.) In trials of life and death, let judges, like Elohim, in justice remember mercy; and so cast the severe eye of justice upon the fact, as that they look with the pitiful eye of mercy upon the

malefactor, wresting the favour of life where grace promises amendment: but if justice requires that one, rather than unity, must perish, and that a rotten member must be cut off, to save the whole body from putrifying, fiat justitia. But whilst thou art pronouncing the sentence of judgment on another, remember that thine own judgment hangs over thy head. In all causes, therefore, judge aright; for thou shalt be sure to find a righteous Judge, before whom thou must shortly appear to be judged thyself;—at what time thou mayest leave to thy friend this for thine epitaph:

Nuper eram judex, jam judicis ante tribunal

Subsistens, paveo: judicor ipse modo.

Many, I know not upon what grounds, seem to be much aggrieved with the laws of the land. But wiser men may answer them with the apostle, Nos scimus bonam esse legem, modo judex eâ legitime utatur, “We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully.” (1 Tim. i. 8.) And he shall be unto me a righteous judge, whose heart neither corruption of bribes, fear of foes, nor favour of friends, can withdraw from the conscionable practice of these precepts. And to that rare and venerable judge I say with Jehoshaphat, “Be of good courage, and do justice, and the Lord will be with thee.” (2 Chron. xix. 11.)

10. Lastly, Make not an occupation of any recreation. The longest use of pleasure is but short; but the pains of pleasure abused are eternal. Use, therefore, lawful recreation so far as it makes thee the fitter in body and mind to do more cheerfully the service of God and the duties of thy calling (Prov. xxi. 17; Phil. iv. 8.) Thy work is great, thy time is but short; and he who will recompense every man according to his works standeth at the door (Rev. xxii. 12.) Think how much work is behind, how slow thou hast wrought in the time which is past, and what a reckoning thou shouldst make, if thy Master should call thee this day to thy accounts (James v. 9.) Be therefore careful henceforth to make the most advantage of thy short time that remains, as a man would of an old lease that was near expiring: And when thou disposest to recreate thyself, remember how small a time is allotted for thy life; and that therefore much of that is not to be consumed in idleness, sports, plays, and toyish vanities, seeing the whole is but a short while, though it be all spent in doing the best good that thou canst: for a man was not created for sports, plays, and recreation, but zealously to serve God, and conscionably to serve his neighbour in his vocation, and by both to ascertain himself of eternal salvation. Esteem, therefore, the loss of time one of the greatest losses (Eph. v. 16.) Redeem it carefully, to spend it wisely; that when that time cometh that thou mayest be no longer a steward on earth (Luke xvi. 2), thy Master may welcome thee with an Euge bone serve, and give thee a better heaven, where thou shalt joyfully enjoy thy Master’s joy for evermore (Matt. xxv. 21.)

MEDITATIONS FOR THE EVENING.

At evening, when thou preparest thyself to take thy rest, meditate on these few points:—

1. That seeing thy days are numbered (Psal. xc.; Job xiv. 5), there is one more of thy number spent, and thou art now the nearer to thy end by a day.

2. Sit down a while before thou goest to bed, and consider with thyself what memorable thing thou hast seen, heard, or read that day, more than thou sawest, heardst, or knewest before, and make the best use of them; but especially call to mind what sin thou hast committed that day against God or man, and what good thou hast omitted, and humble thyself for both. If thou findest that thou hast done any goodness, acknowledge it to be God's grace, and give him the glory; and count that day lost wherein thou hast not done some good. Heu perdidi diem!

3. If, by frailty or strong temptation, thou shalt perceive that thou hast committed any grievous sin or fault, presume not to sleep till thou have upon thy knees made a particular reconciliation with God in Christ, both by confessing the fault, and by fervently praying for pardon. Thus making thy score even with Christ every night, thou shalt have the less to account for when thou art to make thy final reckoning before his majesty in the judgment-day.

4. If thou hast fallen out with any in the day, let not the sun go down on thine anger that night (Eph. iv. 26.) If thy conscience tell thee that thou hast wronged him, acknowledge thine offence, and entreat him to forgive thee. If he have wronged thee, offer him reconciliation; and if he will not be reconciled, yet do thou from thy heart forgive him (Matt. v. 23.) But in any case presume not to be thine own revenger, for in so doing thou doest God a double injury—First, in offering to take the sword of justice out of his hand, as though he were not just, having reserved the execution of vengeance to himself (Rom. xii. 19.) Secondly, in usurping authority over his servant, without referring the cause to his hearing and censure, being his and thy Master. Besides, thou art too partial to be a revenger: for if thou be to execute revenge on thyself, thou wilt do it too lightly; if on thy enemy, too heavily. It belongeth, therefore, to God to revenge, to thee to forgive.

And in testimony that thou hast freely forgiven him, pray to God for the forgiveness of his fault and the amendment of his life; and the next time that occasion is offered, and it lies in thy power, do him good, and rejoice in doing it: for he that doth good to his enemies shews himself the child of God (Matt. iii. 39; Rom. xii. 20), and his reward is with God his Father.

5. Use not sleep as a means to satiate the foggy litherness of thy flesh, but as a medicine to refresh thy tired senses and members: sufficient sleep

quickens the mind, and revives the body; but immoderate sleep dulls the one, and fattens the other.

6. Remember that many go to bed, and never rise again till they be wakened and raised up by the fearful sound of the last trumpet; but he that sleepeth and wakeneth with prayer, sleepeth and wakeneth with Christ. If, therefore, thou desirest to sleep securely and safely, yield up thyself into the hands of God whilst thou art waking, and so go to bed with a reverence of God's majesty and consideration of thine own misery, which thou mayest imprint in thy heart in some measure by these and the like meditations:

Read a chapter in the same order as was prescribed in the morning; and when thou hast done, kneel down on thy knees at the bedside, or some other convenient place in thy chamber, and lifting up thy heart, thine eyes, and hands, to thy heavenly Father, in the name and mediation of his holy Son Jesus, pray to him, if thou have the gift of prayer—

1. Confessing thy sins, especially those which thou hast committed that day.

2. Craving most earnestly, for Christ's sake, pardon and forgiveness for them.

3. Requesting the assistance of his holy Spirit for amendment of life.

4. In giving thanks for benefits received, especially for thy preservation that day.

5. Praying for rest and protection that night.

6. Remembering the state of the church, the queen, and the royal posterity, our ministers and magistrates, and all our brethren visited or persecuted.

7. Lastly, Commending thyself and all thine to his gracious custody.

All which thou mayest do in these or the like words:

A Prayer for the Evening.

A Prayer for the Evening.

O most gracious God and loving Father, who art about my bed and knowest my down-lying and my uprising, and art near unto all that call upon thee in truth and sincerity, I, wretched sinner, do beseech thee to look upon me with the eyes of thy mercy, and not to behold me as I am in myself; for then thou shalt see but an unclean and defiled creature, conceived in sin, and living in iniquity, so that I am ashamed to lift up mine eyes to heaven, knowing how grievously I have sinned against heaven and before thee; for, O Lord, I have transgressed all thy commandments and righteous laws, not only through negligence and infirmity, but oftentimes through wilful presumption, contrary to my knowledge; yea, contrary to the motions of thy Holy Spirit reclaiming me from them: so that I have wounded my conscience, and grieved thy Holy Spirit, by whom thou hast sealed me to the day of redemption. Thou hast consecrated my soul and body to be the temples of the Holy Ghost; I, wretched sinner, have defiled both with all manner of pollution and uncleanness: my eyes, in taking pleasure to behold vanity; mine ears, in hearing impure and unchaste speeches; my tongue, in leasing and evil speaking; my hands are so full of impurity, that I am ashamed to lift them up unto thee; and my feet have carried me after mine own ways; my understanding and reasoning, which are so quick in all earthly matters, are only blind and stupid when I come to meditate or discourse of spiritual and heavenly things; my memory, which should be the treasury of all goodness, is not so apt to remember anything, as those things which are vile and vain; yea, Lord, by woful experience I find, that naturally all the imaginations of the thoughts of my heart are only evil continually; and my sins are more in number than the hairs which grow upon mine head, and they have grown over me like a loathsome leprosy, that from the crown of my head to the sole of my feet, there remains no part which they have not infected; they make me seem vile in mine own eyes—how much more abominable must I then appear in thy sight! And the custom of sinning hath almost taken away the conscience of sin, and brought upon me such dulness of sense and hardness of heart, that thy judgments denounced against my sins by the faithful preachers of thy word, do not terrify me to return unto thee by unfeigned repentance for them; and if thou, Lord, shouldst but deal with me according to thy justice and my desert, I should utterly be confounded and condemned; but seeing that of thine infinite mercy thou hast spared me so long, and still waitest for my repentance, I humbly beseech thee, for the sake of the bitter death and bloody passion which Jesus Christ hath suffered for me, that thou wouldst pardon and forgive me all my sins and offences, and open unto me that ever-streaming fountain of the blood of Christ, which thou hast promised to open under the New Testament to the penitent of the house of David; that all my sins and

uncleanness may be so bathed in his blood, buried in his death, and hid in his wounds, that they may never more be seen, to shame me in this life, or to condemn me before thy judgment-seat in the world which is to come. And forasmuch, O Lord, as thou knowest that it is not in man to turn his own heart, unless thou dost first give him grace to convert; and seeing that it is as easy with thee to make me righteous and holy, as to bid me to be such, O my God, give me grace to do what thou commandest, and then command what thou wilt,[47] and thou shalt find me willing to do thy blessed will: and to this end give me thy Holy Spirit, which thou hast promised to give, to the world's end, to all thy elect people; and let the same Holy Spirit purge my heart, heal my corruption, sanctify my nature, and consecrate my soul and body, that they may become the temples of the Holy Ghost, to serve thee in righteousness and holiness all the days of my life; that when, by the direction and assistance of thy Holy Spirit, I shall finish my course in this short and transitory life, I may cheerfully leave this world, and resign my soul into thy fatherly hands, in the assured confidence of enjoying everlasting life with thee in thine heavenly kingdom, which thou hast prepared for thy elect saints, who love the Lord Jesus and expect his appearing.

In the meanwhile, O Father, I beseech thee let thy Holy Spirit work in me such a serious repentance, as that I may with tears lament my sins past, with grief of heart be humbled for my sins present, and with all my endeavour resist the like sins in time to come. And let the same Holy Spirit likewise keep me in the unity of thy church, lead me in the truth of thy word, and preserve me, that I never swerve from the same, to Popery nor any error or false worship. And let thy Spirit open my eyes more and more, to see the wondrous things of thy law: and open my lips, that my mouth may daily defend thy truth, and set forth thy praise. Increase in me those good gifts, which of thy mercy thou hast already bestowed upon me, and give me a patient spirit, a chaste heart, a contented mind, pure affections, wise behaviour, and all other graces which thou seest to be necessary for me to govern my heart in thy fear, and to guide all my life in thy favour; that whether I live or die, I may live and die unto thee, who art my God and my Redeemer.

And here, O Lord, according as I am bound, I render unto thee from the altar of my humblest heart, all possible thanks for all those blessings and benefits which so graciously and plenteously thou hast bestowed upon my soul and body, for this life, and for that which is to come; namely, for my election, creation, redemption, vocation, justification, sanctification, and preservation from my childhood until this present day and hour; and for the firm hope which thou hast given me of my glorification: likewise for my health, wealth, food, raiment, and prosperity; and more especially, for that thou hast defended me this day now past, from all perils and dangers both of body and soul, furnishing me with all necessary good things that I stand in need of; and as thou hast

ordained the day for man to travel in, and the night for him to take his rest, so, I beseech thee, sanctify unto me this night's rest and sleep, that I may enjoy the same as thy sweet blessing and benefit; that so this dull and wearied body of mine, being refreshed with moderate sleep and rest, I may be the better enabled to walk before thee, doing all such good works as thou hast appointed, when it shall please thee by thy divine power to waken me the next morning. And whilst I sleep, do thou, O Lord, who art the keeper of Israel, that neither slumberest nor sleepest, watch over me in thy holy providence, to protect me from all dangers, so that neither the evil angels of Satan, nor any wicked enemy, may have any power to do me any harm or evil; and to this end, give a charge unto thy holy angels, that they, at thine appointment, may pitch their tents roundabout me, for my defence and safety; as thou hast promised that they should do about them that fear thy name. And knowing that thy name is a strong tower of defence unto all those that trust therein, I here recommend myself, and all that belong to me, unto thy holy protection and custody. If it be thy blessed will to call for me in my sleep, O Lord, for Christ's sake, have mercy upon me, and receive my soul into thy heavenly kingdom; and if it be thy blessed pleasure to add more days to my life, O Lord, add more amendment to my days, and wean my mind from the love of the world and worldly vanities, and cause me more and more to settle my conversation on heaven and heavenly things. And perfect daily in me, that good work which thou hast begun, to the glory of thy name, and the salvation of my sinful soul.

O Lord, I beseech thee likewise, save and defend from all evil and danger, thy holy church, the Queen, and all the royal family; keep them all in the sincerity of thy truth, and prosper them in all grace and happiness. Bless the nobility, ministers, and magistrates of these churches and kingdoms, each of them with those graces which are expedient for their place and calling. And be thou, O Lord, a comfort and consolation to all thy people whom thou hast thought meet to visit with any kind of sickness, cross, or calamity. Hasten, O Father, the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Make me ever mindful of my last end, and of the reckoning that I am then to make unto thee; and in the meanwhile, careful so to follow Christ in the regeneration during this life, as that with Christ I may have a portion in the resurrection of the just, when this mortal life is ended. These graces, and all other blessings, which thou, O Father, knowest to be requisite and necessary for me, I humbly beg and crave at thy hands, in the name and mediation of Jesus Christ thy Son, and in that form of prayer which he himself hath taught me to say unto thee:—

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," &c.

[47]Da Domine quod jubes, et jube quod vis.—Aug.

Another Shorter Evening Prayer.

Another shorter Evening Prayer.

O eternal God and heavenly Father, if I were not taught and assured by the promises of thy gospel, and the examples of Peter, Mary Magdalene, the publican, the prodigal child, and many other penitent sinners, that thou art so full of compassion, and so ready to forgive the greatest sinners, who are heaviest laden with sin, at what time soever they return unto thee with penitent hearts, lamenting their sins, and imploring thy grace, I should despair for mine own sins, and be utterly discouraged from presuming to come into thy presence; considering the hardness of my heart, the unruliness of my affections, and the uncleanness of my conversation, by means of which I have transgressed all thy laws, and deserved thy curse, which might cause my body to be smitten with some fearful disease, my soul to languish with the death of sin, my good name to be traduced with scandalous reproaches, and make mine estate liable to all manner of crosses and casualties. And I confess, Lord, that thy mercy is the cause that I have not been long ago confounded. But, O my God, as thy mercy only staid thy judgment from falling upon me hitherto, so I humbly beseech thee, in the bowels of the mercy of Jesus Christ, in whom only thou art well pleased, that thou wilt not deal with me according to my deserts, but that thou wouldst freely and fully remit unto me all my sins and transgressions; and that thou wouldst wash them clean from me, with the virtue of that most precious blood, which thy Son Jesus Christ hath shed for me: for he alone is the physician, and his blood only is the medicine that can heal my sickness; and he is the true brazen serpent, that can cure that poison wherewith the fiery serpents of my sins have stung and poisoned my sick and wounded soul; and give me, I beseech thee, thine Holy Spirit, which may assure me of mine adoption, and that may confirm my faith, increase my repentance, enlighten my understanding, purify my heart, rectify my will and affections, and so sanctify me throughout, that my whole body, soul, and spirit may be kept unblameable until the glorious coming of my Lord Jesus Christ. And now, O Lord, I give thee hearty thanks and praise for that thou hast this day preserved me from all harms and perils, notwithstanding all my sins and evil deserts; and I beseech thee likewise, defend me this night from the roaring lion which night and day seeketh to devour me. Watch thou, O Lord, over me this night, to keep me from his temptations and tyranny, and let thy mercy shield me from his unappeasable rage and malice; and to this end, I commend myself into thy hands and protection: beseeching thee, O my Lord and God, not to suffer Satan, nor any of his evil members, to have power to do me any hurt or violence this night. And grant, good Lord, that whether I sleep or wake, live or die, I may sleep, wake, live, and die unto thee, and to the glory of thy name, and the salvation of my soul. Lord, bless and defend all thy chosen people

everywhere. Grant our Queen a long and happy reign over us; bless all the royal family, together with all our magistrates and ministers; comfort them who are in misery, need, or sickness; good Lord, give me grace to be one of those wise virgins, which may have my heart prepared like a lamp furnished with the oil of faith, and light of good works, to meet the Lord Jesus, the heavenly bridegroom, at his second and sudden coming in glory. Grant this, good Father, for Christ Jesus' sake, my only Saviour and Mediator, in whose blessed name, and in whose own words, I call upon thee, as he hath taught me:—

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," &c.

Thy grace, O Lord Jesus Christ; thy love, O heavenly Father; thy comfort and consolation, O holy and blessed Spirit, be with me, and dwell in my heart this night and evermore. Amen.

Then rising up in holy reverence, meditate as thou art putting off thy clothes—

1. That the day is coming when thou must be barely unstript of all that thou hast in the world, as thou art now of thy clothes; thou hast, therefore, here but the use of all things, as a steward, for a time, and that upon accounts (Luke xvi. 2;) whilst, therefore, thou art trusted with this stewardship be wise and faithful (Matt. xxiv. 2.)

2. When thou seest thy bed, let it put thee in mind of thy grave (Job. xvii. 13), which is now the bed of Christ: for Christ, by laying his holy body to rest three days and three nights in the grave (Matt. xii. 40), hath sanctified, and, as it were, warmed it for the bodies of his saints to rest and sleep in (1 Thess. iv. 13), till the morning of the resurrection; so that now, unto the faithful, death is but a sweet sleep, and the grave but Christ's bed, where their bodies rest and sleep in peace (Isa. lvii. 2), until the joyful morning of the resurrection day shall dawn unto them (Isa. xxvi. 20.)

Let, therefore, thy bed-clothes represent to thee the mould of the earth that shall cover thee; thy sheets, thy winding-sheet; thy sleep, thy death; thy waking, thy resurrection: and being laid down in thy bed, when thou perceivest sleep to approach, say, "I will lay me down and sleep in peace, for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." (Psal. iv. 8.)

Thus religiously opening every morning thy heart, and shutting it up again every evening with the word of God and prayer, as it were with a lock and key; and so beginning the day with God's worship, continuing it in his fear, and ending it in his favour, thou shalt be sure to find the blessing of God upon all thy day's labours and good endeavours; and at night thou mayest assure thyself thou shalt sleep safely and sweetly in the arms of thy heavenly Father's providence.

Thus far of the piety which every Christian, in private, ought to practise every day. Now followeth that which he, being a householder, must practise publicly with his family.

MEDITATIONS FOR HOUSEHOLD PIETY.

1. If thou be called to the government of a family, thou must not hold it sufficient to serve God and live uprightly in thy own person, unless thou cause all under thy charge to do the same with thee. For the performance of this duty God was so well pleased with Abraham, that he would not hide from him his counsel: “For,” saith God, “I know him that he will command his sons and his household after him that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that he hath spoken unto him.” (Gen. xviii. 19.) And Abraham had 318 men-servants, which were thus born and catechised in his house (Gen. xiv. 14;) with whose help he rescued also his nephew Lot from the captivity of his enemies. And religiously valiant Joshua protesteth before all the people, that if they all would fell away from the true worship of God, yet that he and his house would serve the Lord (Josh. xxiv. 15.) And God himself gives a special charge to all householders, that they instruct their family in his word, and train them up in his fear and service: “These words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt whet them continually upon thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou tarriest in thine house, and as thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up,” &c. “Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve him.” (Deut. vi. 6, 7.) David, according to this law, had so ordered his family, that no deceitful person should dwell in his house, but such as would serve God and walk in his way (Psal. ci. 6, 7.). And religious Esther had taught her maids to serve God in fasting and prayer (Esth. iv. 16.) And, the more to further thy family in the zeal of religion, settle ever thy chiefest affection on those whom thou shalt perceive to be best addicted to true religion. This also will turn to thine own advantage in a double respect—First, God will the rather bless and prosper the labour and handiwork of such godly servants; for Laban perceived that God blessed him for Jacob’s sake (Gen. xxx. 27;) and Potiphar saw that the Lord made all that Joseph did to prosper in his hand (Gen. xxxix. 3;) yea, when innocent Joseph was cast into prison, his keeper saw that whatsoever he did the Lord made it to prosper (Gen. xxxix. 22, 23;) and therefore the keeper committed all the charge of the prisoners into Joseph’s hand. Secondly, the trulier a man serves God, the more faithfully he will serve thee.

2. If every householder were thus careful, according to his duty, to bring up his children and family in the service and fear of God in his own house, then the house of God should be better filled, and the Lord’s table more frequented every Sabbath day, and the pastors’ public preaching and labour would take more effect than it doth;—the streets of towns and cities would not abound with so many drunkards, swearers, whoremongers, and profane scorners of true piety and religion;—our courts would not be so full of contentions,

wrangling suits, and unchristian debates;—and the prisons would not be every session so full of thieves, robbers, traitors, murderers. But alas! most householders make no other use of their servants than they do of their beasts: whilst they may have their bodies to do their service, they care not if their souls serve the devil. Yet the common complaint is, that faithful and good servants are scarce to be found. True, but the reason is, because there are so many profane and irreligious masters; for the example and instruction of a godly and religious master will make a good and a faithful servant; as may witness the examples of Abraham, Joshua, David, Cornelius, &c., who had good servants because they were religious masters, such as were careful to make their servants God's servants.

It is the chief labour and care of most men to raise and to advance their house: yet let them "rise up early and lie down late, and eat the bread of carefulness," all will be but in vain; for "except the Lord build a house," that is, raise up a family, "they labour in vain." (Psal. cxxvii. 1, 2.) For God hath sealed this as an irrevocable decree, that he will pour out his wrath upon the families that call not upon his name (Jer. x. 25;) yea, "God will take the wicked, and pluck him out of his tabernacle, and root him out of the land," &c. (Psal. lii. 5;) yea, when his iniquities are full (Gen. xv. 16), he will make the land to spue out every Canaanite (Lev. xviii. 25.) Religion, then, and the service of God in a family, is the best building, and surest entailing of house and land to a man and his posterity; for "the righteous man shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever." (Psal. xxxvii. 29.)

Therefore, if thou desirest to have the blessing of God upon thyself and upon thy family, either before or after thy own private devotions, call every morning all the family to some convenient room; and first either read to them thyself a chapter in the word of God, or cause it to be read distinctly by some other. If leisure serve, thou mayest admonish them of some remarkable notes;[48] and then kneeling down with them in reverent sort, as is before described, pray with them in this manner:—

[48]Origen would have the word expounded in Christian houses.—Hom. 9, in Lev. Augustine saith, That what the preacher is in the pulpit, the same the householder is in the house.

Morning Prayer for a Family.

Morning Prayer for a Family.

O Lord our God and heavenly Father, who art the only Creator and Governor of heaven and earth, and all things contained therein, we confess that we are unworthy to appear in thy sight and presence, considering our manifold sins which we have committed against Heaven and before thee; and that we have been born in sin, and daily break thy holy laws and commandments, contrary to our knowledge and consciences; although we know that thou art our Creator, who hast made us—our Redeemer, who hast bought us with the blood of thine only-begotten Son—and our Comforter, who bestowest upon us all the good and holy graces which we enjoy in our souls and bodies. And if thou shouldst but deal with us as our wickedness and unthankfulness have deserved, what other thing might we, O Lord, expect from thee but shame and confusion in this life, and in the world to come, wrath and everlasting condemnation? Yet, O Lord, in the obedience of thy commandment, and in the confidence which we have in thy unspeakable and endless mercy in thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, we thy poor servants, appealing from thy throne of justice, where we are justly lost and condemned, to thy throne of grace, where mercy reigneth to pardon abounding sin, do from the bottom of our hearts most humbly beseech thee to remit and forgive unto us all our offences and misdeeds; that by the virtue of the precious blood of Jesus Christ, thine innocent Lamb, which he so abundantly shed to take away the sins of the world, all our sins, both original and actual, may be so cleansed and washed from us, as that they may never be laid to our charge, nor ever have power to rise up in judgment against us. And we beseech thee, good Father, for Christ's death and passion's sake, that thou wilt not suffer to fall upon us that fearful curse and vengeance which thy law hath threatened, and our sins have justly deserved. And forasmuch, O Lord, as we are taught by thy word, that idolaters, adulterers, covetous men, contentious persons, drunkards, gluttons, and such-like inordinate livers, shall not inherit the kingdom of God, pour the grace of thy Holy Spirit into our hearts, whereby we may be enlightened to see the filthiness of our sins, to abhor them, and may be more and more stirred up to live in newness of life, and love of thy majesty, so that we may daily increase in the obedience of thy word, and in a conscientious care of keeping thy commandments.

And now, O Lord, we render unto thee most hearty thanks for that thou hast elected, created, redeemed, called, justified, and sanctified us in good measure in this life, and given us an assured hope that thou wilt glorify us in thy heavenly kingdom when this mortal life is ended. Likewise we thank thee for our life, health, wealth, liberty, prosperity, and peace; especially, O Lord, for the continuance of thy holy gospel among us, and for sparing us so long, and

granting us so gracious a time of repentance. Also we praise thee for all other mercies bestowed upon us, more especially for preserving us this night past, from all danger that might have befallen our souls or bodies. And seeing thou hast now brought us safe to the beginning of this day, we beseech thee protect and direct us in the same. Bless and defend us in our going out and coming in this day, and evermore. Shield us, O Lord, from the temptations of the devil, and grant us the custody of thy holy angels to defend and direct us in all our ways.

And to this end we recommend ourselves, and all those that belong to us, and are abroad from us, into thy hands and almighty tuition. Lord, defend them from all evil, prosper them in all graces, and fill them with thy goodness. Preserve us likewise this day from falling into any gross sin, especially those to which our natures are most prone. Set a watch before the door of our lips, that we offend not thy majesty by any rash or false oaths, or by any lewd or lying speeches. Give to us patient minds, pure hearts, and all other graces of thy Spirit which thou knowest to be needful for us, that we may the better be enabled to serve thee in holiness and righteousness. And seeing that all man's labour without thy blessing is in vain, bless every one of us in our several places and callings; direct thou the work of our hands upon us, even prosper thou our handiwork; for except thou guide us with thy grace, our endeavours can have no good success. And provide for us all things which thou, O Father, knowest to be needful for every one of us, in our souls and bodies, this day. And grant that we may so pass through the pilgrimage of this short life, that our hearts being not settled upon any transitory things which we meet with in the way, our souls may every day be more and more ravished with the love of our home, and thy everlasting kingdom.

Defend likewise, O Lord, thy universal church, and every particular member thereof: especially we beseech thee to continue the peace and prosperity of these churches and kingdoms wherein we live. Preserve and defend from all evils and dangers our gracious Queen, with all the royal family; multiply their days in bliss and felicity, and afterwards crown them with everlasting joy and glory. Bless all our ministers and magistrates, with all graces needful for their places; and govern thou them, that they may govern us in peace and godliness. And of thy mercy, O Lord, comfort all our brethren that are distressed, sick, or any way comfortless, especially those who are afflicted either with an evil conscience, because they have sinned against thy word, or for a good conscience, because they will not sin against thy truth. Make the first to know, that not one drop of the blood of Christ was a drop of vengeance, but all drops of grace, powerful to procure pardon upon repentance, for the greatest sins of the chiefest sinner in the world. And for the other, let not, O Lord, thy long sufferance either too much discourage them, or too much encourage their enemies: but grant them patience in suffering, and a gracious and speedy

deliverance, which way may stand best with their comfort and thy glory. Give every one of us grace to be always mindful of his last end, and to be prepared with faith and repentance, as with a wedding-garment, against the time that thou shalt call for us out of this sinful world. And that in the meanwhile we may so in all things, and above all things, seek thy glory, that when this mortal life is ended, we may then be made partakers of immortality and life eternal, in thy most blessed and glorious kingdom.

These, and all other graces, which thou, O Father, seest to be necessary for us, and for thy whole church, we humbly beg and crave at thy hands; concluding this our imperfect prayer, in that absolute form of prayer which Christ himself hath taught us—"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," &c.

After prayers, let every one of thy household (taking in the fear of God such a breakfast or refreshing as is fit) depart—the children to school, the servants to their work: every one to his office, the master and mistress of the family to their callings, or to some honest exercises for recreation, as they think fit.

THE PRACTICE OF PIETY AT MEALS, AND THE MANNER OF EATING.

Before dinner and supper, when the table is covered, ponder with thyself upon these meditations; to work a deeper impression in thy heart of God’s fatherly providence and goodness towards thee.

Meditations before Dinner and Supper.

Meditations before Dinner and Supper.

Meditate that hunger is like the sickness called a wolf; which, if thou dost not feed, will devour thee, and eat thee up; and that meat and drink are but as physic, or means which God hath ordained, to relieve and cure this natural infirmity and necessity of man. Use, therefore, to eat and to drink, rather to sustain and refresh the weakness of nature, than to satisfy the sensuality and delights of the flesh. Eat, therefore, to live, but live not to eat. There is no service so base, as for a man to be a slave to his belly; the apostle terms such, belly-gods (Phil. iii. 19.) Therefore we may boldly term them, as the Scriptures do other idols, gillulim,[49] dung-gods (Hab. ii. 18, 19; 2 Kings xv. 12.) And as no one action (God's ordinances excepted) makes a man more to resemble a beast, than eating and drinking, so the abuse of eating and drinking to surfeiting and drunkenness, makes a man more vile than a beast.

2. Meditate on the omnipotency of God, who made all these creatures of nothing (Heb. xi. 3)—of his wisdom (Psal. cxlv. 15, 16), who feedeth so many infinite creatures through the universal world, maintaining all their lives, which he has given them, which surpasseth the wisdom of all the angels in heaven—and of his clemency and goodness, in feeding also his very enemies (Matt. v. 45, &c.; Acts xiv. 17.)

3. Meditate how many sorts of creatures, as beasts, fish, and fowl, have lost their lives, to become food to nourish thee; and how God's providence from remote places has brought all these portions together on thy table for thy nourishment; and how by these dead creatures he maintains thee in health and life.

4. Meditate that seeing thou hast so many pledges of God's fatherly bounty, goodness, and mercy towards thee, as there are dishes of meat on thy table, O suffer not in such a place, so gracious a God to be abused by scurrility, ribaldry, or swearing; or thy fellow-brother, by disgraceful backbiting, taunting, or slandering.[50]

5. Meditate how that thy master Jesus Christ did never eat any food, but first he blessed the creatures, and gave thanks to his heavenly Father for the same (Luke ix. 16; Matt. xiv. 19; xv. 36; Mark vi. 41; viii. 6; Luke xxiv. 30; John vi. 11.) And after his last supper, we read that he sung a psalm (Matt. xxvi. 30; Mark xiv. 26;) for this was the commandment of God, "When thou hast eaten and filled thyself, thou shalt bless the Lord thy God," &c. (Deut. viii. 10.) This was the practice of the prophets; for "the people would not eat at their feast, till Samuel came to bless their meat," (1 Sam. ix. 13;) and saith Joel to God's people, "Ye shall eat and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God." (Joel ii. 26.) This also was the practice of the apostles; for St. Paul in the

ship, gave thanks before meat, in the presence of all the people that were there (Acts xxvii. 35.) Imitate, therefore, in so holy an action, so blessed a master, and so many worthy precedents that have followed him, and gone before thee. It may be, because thou hast never used to give thanks at meals, therefore thou art now ashamed to begin. Think it no shame to do what Christ did; but be rather ashamed that thou hast so long neglected so Christian a duty. And if the Son of God gave his Father such great thanks for a dinner of barley-bread and broiled fish (John vi. 9, 11), what thanks should such a sinful man as thou art render unto God for such variety of good and dainty cheer? How many a true Christian would be glad to fill his belly with the morsels which thou refusest; and do lack that which thou leavest! how hardly do others labour for that which they eat, and thou hast thy food provided for thee, without either care or labour! To conclude, if pagan idolaters at their feasts were accustomed to praise their false gods (Dan. v. 1, 4), what a shame is it for a Christian, at his dinners and suppers, not to praise the true God, "in whom we live, move, and have our being?" (Acts xvii. 28.)

6. Meditate that thy body, which thou dost now so daintily feed, must be, thou knowest not how soon, meat for worms, "When thou shalt say to corruption, Thou art my father; and to the worm,. Thou art my mother, and my sister." (Job xvii. 44.)

7. Meditate, that many a man's table is made his snare (Psal. lxix. 22;) so that through his intemperance and unthankfulness, the meat which should nourish his body, kills him with a surfeit; insomuch, that more are killed with this snare than with the sword (Gen. iii. 17.) And seeing that since the curse, the use of all creatures, so likewise of meat and drink, is to us unclean, till the same be sanctified by the word of God, and prayer; and that man liveth not by bread only, but by the word of God's ordinance, and his blessing, which is called the staff of bread: sit not therefore down to eat, before you pray, and rise not before you give God thanks. Feed to suffice nature, yet rise with an appetite; and remember thy poor Christian brethren, who suffer hunger, and want those good things wherewith thou dost abound (1 Tim. iv. 4, 5; Matt. iv. 4; Lev. xxvi. 26; Ezek. iv. 16; v. 16; 1 Sam. ix. 13; Matt. xiv. 19; Luke xxiv. 30; 1 Cor. x. 16; Rom. xiv. 6; 1 Thess. v. 18; Eccles. x. 17; Luke xxi. 34; Neh. v. 17; Amos vi. 6.)

These things, or some of them premeditated, if there be not a Samuel present (1 Sam. ix. 13), lift up with all comely reverence (Matt. xiv. 19) thy heart, with thy hands and eyes, to the great Creator and feeder of all creatures, and before meat, pray to him thus:—

[49]Of galal, which signifies dung, as Ezek. iv. 15.

[50]St. Austin had written over his table—Quisquis amat dictis absentem rode e amicum, Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi.—Possid. de vita Aug.

Grace before Meat.

Grace before Meat.

O most gracious God, and loving Father, who feedest all creatures living, which depend upon thy divine providence, we beseech thee, sanctify these creatures, which thou hast ordained for us; give them virtue to nourish our bodies in life and health; and give us grace to receive them soberly and thankfully, as from thy hands; that so, in the strength of these and thy other blessings, we may walk in the uprightness of our hearts, before thy face, this day, and all the days of our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and only Saviour. Amen. (Psal. x. 17; Joel i. 10; Psal. cxlvii. 9; 1 Tim. iv. 5; 1 Kings xix. 8.)

Or thus:

Most gracious God, and merciful Father, we beseech thee, sanctify these creatures to our use, make them healthful for our nourishment, and make us thankful for all thy blessings, through Christ, our Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

Another Grace before Meat.

O eternal God, in whom we live, move, and have our being, we beseech thee bless unto thy servants these creatures, that in the strength of them we may live, to the setting forth of thy praise and glory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

After every meal, be careful of thyself and family, as Job was for himself and his children (Job i. 4), lest that, in the cheerfulness of eating and drinking, some speech has slipped out, which might be either offensive to God or injurious to man; and therefore with the like comely gesture and reverence give thanks to God, and pray in this manner:—

Blessed be thy holy name, O Lord our God, for these thy good benefits, wherewith thou hast so plentifully at this time refreshed our bodies. O Lord vouchsafe likewise to feed our souls with the spiritual food of thy holy word and spirit unto life everlasting. Lord defend and save thy whole church. Forgive us our sins and unthankfulness, pass by our manifold infirmities, make us all mindful of our last end, and of the reckoning we are then to make to thee, and in the meanwhile grant us health, peace, and truth, in Jesus Christ, our Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

Or thus:

Blessed be thy holy name, O Lord, for these thy good benefits wherewith thou hast refreshed us at this time. Lord forgive us all our sins and frailties; save and defend thy whole church; and grant us health, peace, and truth, in Christ our only Saviour. Amen.

Or thus:

We give thee thanks, O heavenly Father, for feeding our bodies so graciously with thy good creatures to this temporal life; beseeching thee likewise to feed our souls with thy holy Word unto life everlasting. Defend, O Lord, thy universal church, the queen, and the royal family; and grant us continuance of thy grace and mercy, in Christ our only Saviour. Amen.

The Practice of Piety at Evening.

The Practice of Piety at Evening.

At evening when the due time of repairing to rest approaches, call together again all thy family; read a chapter in the same manner that was prescribed in the morning; then, in a holy imitation of our Lord and his disciples, sing a psalm: but in singing of psalms, either after supper, or at any other time, observe these rules:

Rules to be Observed in Singing of Psalms.

Rules to be observed in Singing of Psalms.

1. Beware of singing divine psalms for an ordinary recreation, as do men of impure spirits, who sing holy psalms intermingled with profane ballads: They are God's word: take them not in thy mouth in vain.

2. Remember to sing David's psalms with David's spirit (Matt. xxii. 43.)

3. Practise St. Paul's rule—"I will sing with the spirit, but I will sing with the understanding also." (1 Cor. xiv. 15.)

4. As you sing uncover your heads (1 Cor. xi. 4), and behave yourselves in comely reverence as in the sight of God, singing to God in God's own words; but be sure that the matter make more melody in your hearts (Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16) than the music in your ear; for the singing with grace in our hearts is that which the Lord is delighted withal, according to that old verse:

Non vox, sed votum; non miisica chordula, sed cor:

Non clamans, sed amana, psallit in aure Dei.

'Tis not the voice, but vow;

Sound heart, not sounding string;

True zeal, not outward show,

That in God's ear doth ring.

5. Thou mayest, if thou thinkest good, sing all the psalms over in order, for all are most divine and comfortable; but if thou wilt choose some special psalms, as more fit for some times and purposes, and such as, by the oft usage, thy people may the easier commit to memory.

Then sing:

In the morning, Psalm iii. v. xvi. xxii. cxliv. In the evening, Psalm iv. cxxvii. cxli. For mercy after a sin committed, Psalm li. ciii. In sickness or heaviness, Psalm vi. xiii. lxxxviii. xc. xci. cxxxvii. cxlvi. When thou art recovered, Psalm xxx. xxxii. On the Sabbath day, Psalm xix. xcii. xcv. In time of joy, Psalm lxxx. xcviii. cvii. cxxxvi. cxlv. Before sermon, Psalm i. xii. cxlvii. the 1st and 5th parts of the cxix. After sermon, any Psalm which concerneth the chief argument of the sermon. At the communion, Psalm xxii. xxiii. ciii. cxi. cxvi. For spiritual solace, Psalm xv. xix. xxv. xlvi. lxvii. cxii. cxvi. After wrong and disgrace received, Psalm xlii. lxix. lxx. cxl. cxliv.

After the psalm, all kneeling down in a reverent manner, as is before described, let the father of the family, or the chiefest in his absence, pray thus:

Evening Prayer for a Family.

Evening Prayer for a Family.

O eternal God and most gracious Father, we thine unworthy servants here assembled, do cast down ourselves at the footstool of thy grace, acknowledging that we have inherited our fathers' corruption, and actually in thought, word, and deed, transgressed all thy holy commandments, so that in us naturally there dwelleth nothing that is good; for our hearts are full of secret pride, anger, impatience, dissembling, lying, lust, vanity, profaneness, distrust, too much love of ourselves and the world, too little love of thee and thy kingdom, but empty and void of faith, love, patience, and every spiritual grace. If thou, therefore, shouldst but enter into judgment with us, and search out our natural corruption, and observe all the cursed fruits and effects that we have derived from thence, Satan might justly challenge us for his own, and we could not expect anything from thy Majesty but thy wrath, and our condemnation, which we have long ago deserved; but, good Father, for Jesus Christ thy dear Son's sake, in whom only thou art well pleased, and for the merits of that bitter death and bloody passion which we believe that he hath suffered for us, have mercy upon us, pardon and forgive us all our sins, and free us from the shame and confusion which are due unto us for them, that they may never seize upon us to our confusion in this life, nor to our condemnation in the world which is to come. And forasmuch as thou hast created us to serve thee, as all other creatures to serve us, so, we beseech thee, inspire thy Holy Spirit into our hearts, that by his illumination and effectual working, we may have the inward sight and feeling of our sins and natural corruptions, and that we may not be blinded in them through custom, as the reprobates are, but that we may more and more loath them, and be heartily grieved for them, endeavouring by the use of all good means to overcome and get out of them. O let us feel the power of Christ's death killing sin in our mortal bodies (Rom. vi. 6; Phil. iii. 10), and the virtue of his resurrection raising up our souls to newness of life: convert our hearts, subdue our affections, regenerate our minds, and purify our nature, and suffer us not to be drowned in the stream of those filthy vices and sinful pleasures of this time, wherewith thousands are carried headlong to eternal destruction; but daily frame us more and more to the likeness of thy Son Jesus Christ (Rom. viii. 29), that in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. iv. 24), we may so serve and glorify thee, that living in thy fear and dying in thy favour, we may in thine appointed time attain to the blessed resurrection of the just unto eternal life. In the meanwhile, O Lord, increase our faith in the sweet promises of the gospel, and our repentance from dead works, the assurance of our hope in the promises, our fear of thy name, the hatred of all our sins, and our love to thy children, especially those whom we shall see to stand in need of our help and

comfort; that so by the fruits of piety and a righteous life, We may be assured that thy Holy Spirit dwells in us, and that we are thy children by grace and adoption: and grant us, good Father, the continuance of health, peace, maintenance, and all other outward things, so far as thy divine wisdom shall think meet and necessary for every one of us.

And here, O Lord, according to our bounden duty, we confess that thou hast been exceeding merciful unto us all in things of this life, but infinitely more merciful in the things of a better life; and therefore we do here from our very souls render unto thee all humble and hearty thanks for all thy blessings and benefits bestowed upon our souls and bodies, acknowledging thee to be that Father of lights from whom we have received all those good and perfect gifts; and unto thee alone for them we ascribe to be due all glory, honour, and praise, both now and evermore; but more especially we praise thy divine Majesty for that thou hast defended us this day from all perils and dangers, so that none of those judgments, which our sins have deserved, have fallen upon us. Good Lord, forgive us the sins which this day we have committed against thy divine Majesty and our brethren, and for Christ's sake be reconciled unto us for them; and we beseech thee likewise of thine infinite goodness and mercy, to defend and protect us, and all that belong to us, this night from all dangers of fire, robbery, terrors of evil angels, or any other fear or peril, which for our sins might justly fall upon us; and that we may be safe under the shadow of thy wings, we here commend our bodies and souls, and all that we have, unto thine almighty protection. Lord bless and defend both us and them from all evil; and whilst we sleep, do thou, O Father, who never slumberest nor sleepest, watch over thy children, and give a charge to thy holy angels to pitch their tents round about our house and dwelling, to guard us from all dangers, that sleeping with thee, we may in the next morning be awakened by thee, and so being refreshed with moderate sleep, we may be the fitter to set forth thy glory in the conscionable duties of our callings.

And we beseech thee, O Lord, to be merciful likewise to thy whole church, and to continue the tranquillity of these kingdoms wherein we live, turning from us those plagues which the crying sins of this nation do cry for.

Preserve our Queen, with the rest of the royal family; all our magistrates and ministers; all that fear thee, and call upon thy name; all our Christian brethren and sisters, that suffer sicknes6, or any other affliction or misery, especially those who anywhere suffer persecution for the testimony of the holy gospel: grant them patience to bear thy cross, and deliverance when and which way it shall seem best to thy divine wisdom. And, Lord, suffer us never to forget our last end, and those reckonings which then we must render unto thee. In health and prosperity make us mindful of sickness, and of the evil day that is behind, that these things may not overtake us as a snare, but that we may in good measure, like wise virgins, be found prepared for the coming of

Christ, the sweet bridegroom of our souls. And now, O Lord most holy and just, we confess that there is no cause why thou, who art so much displeased with sin, shouldst hear the prayer of sinners, but for his sake only who suffered for sin, and sinned not. In the only mediation, therefore, of thine eternal Son Jesus our Lord and Saviour, we humbly beg these, and all other graces which thou knowest to be needful for us, shutting up these our imperfect requests in that most holy prayer which Christ himself has taught us to say unto thee:—

"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," &c.

Thy grace, O Lord Jesus Christ; thy love, O heavenly Father; thy comfort and consolation, O holy and blessed Spirit, be with us, and remain with us, this night and evermore. Amen.

Then saluting one another, as becometh Christians who are the vessels of grace, and temples of the Holy Ghost, let them in the fear of God depart every one to his rest: using some of the former private meditations for evening.

Thus far of the householder's public practice of piety with his family every day: Now follows his practice of piety with the Church on the Sabbath-day.

MEDITATIONS OF THE TRUE MANNER OF PRACTISING PIETY ON THE SABBATH-DAY.

Almighty God will have himself worshipped, not only in a private manner by private persons and families, but also in a more public sort, of all the godly joined together in a visible church; that by this means he may be known not only to be the God and Lord of every Singular person, but also of the creatures of the whole universal world.

Question—But why do not we Christians under the New, keep the Sabbath on the same seventh day on which it was kept under the Old Testament?

I answer—Because our Lord Jesus, who is the Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. xii. 8), and whom the law itself commands us to hear (Deut. xviii. 18, 19), did alter it from that seventh day to this first day of the week on which we keep the Sabbath. For the holy evangelist notes, that our Lord came into the midst of the holy assembly on the two first days of the two weeks immediately following his resurrection, and then blessed the church, breathed on the apostles the Holy Ghost, and gave them the ministerial keys, and power of binding and remitting sins (John xx. 22, 23.) And so it is most probable he did in a solemn manner every first day of the week, during the forty days he continued on earth between his resurrection and ascension (for the fiftieth day after, being the first day of the week, the apostles were assembled;) during which time he gave commandments unto the apostles, and "spake unto them those things which appertain to the kingdom of God," (Acts i. 2, 3),[51] that is, instructed them how they should, throughout the churches which were to be converted, change the Sabbath to the Lord's day; the bodily sacrifices of beasts, to the spiritual sacrifices of praise, prayer, and contrite hearts; the Levitical priesthood of the law, to the Christian ministry of the gospel (Heb. vii. 11, 12;) the Jewish temples and synagogues, to churches and oratories; the old sacraments of circumcision and passover, to baptism and the Lord's Supper, &c. as may appear by the like phrase (Acts xix. 8; xxviii. 23; Col. iv. 11), put for the whole sum of Paul's doctrine, by which were wrought all these changes, where it took effect. So that as Christ was forty days instructing Moses in Sinai, what he should teach, and how he should rule the church under the law; so he continued forty days teaching his disciples in Sion, what they should preach, and how they should govern the church under the gospel (Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12.) And seeing it is manifest, that within those forty days Christ appointed what ministers should teach, and how they should govern his church to the world's end, it is not to be doubted but that within those forty days he likewise ordained on what day they should keep their Sabbath, and ordinarily do the works of their ministry; especially seeing that under the Old Testament, God shewed himself as careful, both by his moral and ceremonial law, to prescribe the time, as well as the matter of his worship. Neither is it a thing to be

omitted, that the Lord, who hath times and seasons in his own power (Acts i. 7), appointed this first day of the week to be the very day in which he sent down from heaven the Holy Ghost upon the apostles (Acts ii. 1, &c.), so that upon that day they first began, and ever after continued the public exercising of their ministry, in the preaching of the word (Acts ii. 1, 4), the administration of the sacraments (Acts ii. 38, 41, 42), and the loosing of the sins of penitent sinners (Acts ii. 38.) Upon these, and the like grounds, Athanasius plainly affirms that the Sabbath-day was changed by the Lord himself.[52]

As, therefore, our communion is termed the Lord's Supper, because it was instituted of the Lord, for the remembrance of his death; so the Christian Sabbath is called the Lord's day (Rev. i. 10), because it was ordained of the Lord, for the memorial of his resurrection.[53] And as the name of the Lord (1 Cor. xi. 10) honours the one, so does it the other; and as the Lord of the Sabbath, by his royal prerogative, and transcendent authority, could, so he had also reason to change the holy Sabbath from the seventh day to this, on which we keep it; for as concerning the seventh day, which followed the six days in which God finished the creation, there was no such precise institution, or necessity of sanctifying it perpetually, but such as by the same authority, or upon greater reason and occasion, it might very well be changed and altered to some other seventh day; for the commandment does not say, Remember to keep holy the seventh day next following the sixth day of the creation, or this or that seventh day; but indefinitely, Remember that thou keep holy a seventh day.[54] And to speak properly, as we take a day for the distinction of time, called either a day natural, consisting of twenty-four hours, or a day artificial, consisting of twelve hours, from sun rising to sun setting; and withal consider the sun standing still at noon, in Joshua's time (Josh. x. 12, 43) the space of a whole day; and the sun going back ten degrees (2 Kings xx. 11), viz. five hours, almost half an artificial day, in Ezechiah's time; the Jews themselves could not keep their Sabbath upon that precise and just distinction of time, called at the first the seventh day from the creation.

Add to this, that in respect of the diversity of meridians, and the unequal rising and setting of the sun, every day varies in some places a quarter, in some half, in others a whole day. Therefore the Jewish seventh day cannot precisely be kept at the same instant of time every where in the world.

Now our Lord Jesus having authority as Lord over the Sabbath (Matt. xii. 8), had likewise now far greater reason and occasion to translate the Sabbath from the Jewish seventh day to the first day on which Christians keep the Sabbath.

1. Because that by his resurrection from the dead, there is wrought a new spiritual creation of the world, without which all the sons of Adam had been

turned to everlasting destruction, and all the works of the first creation had ministered no consolation to us (Isa. lxv. 17, &c.; lxvi. 22; Psal. xc. 2.)

2. And in respect of this new spiritual creation, the Scripture saith, “That old things are passed away, and all things are become new,” (2 Cor. v. 17)—new creatures (Gal. vi. 15), new people (1 Pet. ii. 10), new men (Eph. iv. 24), new knowledge (Col. iii. 10), new testament (Matt. xxvi. 28), new commandment (John xii. 13), new names (Rev. ii. 17), new way (Heb. x. 10), new song (Rev. iii. 9), new garment (Luke v. 36, 37), new wine, new vessels (Rev. xxi. 2), new Jerusalem (2 Pet. iii. 13), new heaven, and a new earth (Isa. lxvi. 22) And therefore of necessity there must be, instead of the old, a new Sabbath-day (Heb. iv. 9), to honour and praise our Redeemer, and to meditate upon the work of our redemption, and to shew the new change of the Old Testament.

3. Because that on this day Christ rested from all the sufferings of his passion, and finished the glorious work of our redemption. If, therefore, the finishing of the work of the first creation, by which God mightily manifested himself to his creatures, deserved a sabbath to solemnize the memorial of so great a work, to the honour of the worker, and therefore calls it “mine holy day,” (Isa. lviii. 13;) much more does the new creation of the world, effected by the resurrection of Christ, whereby he mightily declared himself to be the Son of God (Rom. i. 4), deserve a sabbath, for the perpetual commemoration of it, to the honour of Christ, and therefore worthily called the Lord’s day (Rev. i. 10.) For, as the deliverance out of the captivity of Babylon, being greater, took away the name from the deliverance out of the bondage of Egypt (Jer. xxiii. 7, 8;) so the day on which Christ finished the redemption of the world did more justly deserve to have the Sabbath kept on it, than on that day on which God ceased from creating the world. As, therefore, in the creation, the first day wherein it was finished, was consecrated for a sabbath; so in the time of redemption, the first day wherein it was perfected must be dedicated to a holy rest; but still a seventh day kept according to God’s moral commandment. The Jews kept the last day of the week, beginning their Sabbath with the night (Gen. ii. 2; Lev. xxiii. 32; Neh. xiii. 19), when God rested; but Christians honour the Lord better, on the first day of the week (Matt. xxviii. 1), beginning the Sabbath with the day when the Lord arose (Acts xx. 7, 11.) They kept their Sabbath in remembrance, of the world’s creation; but Christians celebrate it in memorial of the world’s redemption; yea, the Lord’s day being the first of the creation and redemption, puts us in mind, both of the making of the old, and redeeming of the new world.

As, therefore, under the Old Testament, God, by the glory consisting of seven lamps, seven branches, &c. (Exod. xxv. 31), put them in remembrance of the creation, light, and Sabbath’s rest; so, under the New Testament, Christ, the true light of the world, appears in the midst of the seven lamps, and seven golden candlesticks (Rev. i. 13), to put us in mind to honour our Redeemer in

the light of the gospel of the Lord's seventh day of rest. And seeing the redemption, both for might and mercy, so far exceeds the creation, it stood with great reason that the greater work should carry the honour of the day. Neither does the honourable title of the Lord's day diminish the glory of the Sabbath; but rather, being added, augments the dignity of it; as the name Israel, added to Jacob, made the patriarch the more renowned (Gen. xxxii. 28.)

The reason taken from the example of God's resting from the work of the creation of the world continued in force till the Son of God ceased from the work of the redemption of the world, and then the former gave place to the latter.

4. Because it was foretold in the Old Testament that the Sabbath should be kept under the New Testament on the first day of the week.

For, first, in the 110th Psalm, which is a prophecy of Christ and his kingdom, it is plainly foretold that there should be a solemn day of assembling, wherein all Christ's people should willingly come together in the beauty of holiness (Psal. cx. 3;) insomuch that no rain (of peace) shall be upon those families that in that feast will not go up to Jerusalem (the church) to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts (Zech. xiv. 17.) Now on what day this holy feast and assembly should be kept, David shews plainly in Psalm cxviii., which was a prophecy of Christ, as appears, Matt. xxi. 42; Acts iv. 11; Eph. ii. 20, as also by the consent of all the Jews, as Jerome witnesses. For, shewing how Christ, by his ignominious death, should be as a stone rejected of the builders, or chief rulers of Judea, and yet, by his glorious resurrection, should become the chief stone of the corner, he wishes the whole church to keep holy that day upon which Christ should effect this wonderful work, saying, "This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it." (Psal. cxviii. 24.) And seeing that upon this day that which Peter says of Christ appears to be true, that "God made him both Lord and Christ." (Acts ii. 36.) Therefore the whole church under the New Testament must celebrate the day of Christ's resurrection. Rabbi Bachay also saw, by the fall of Adam on the sixth day, that on the same day Messias should 'finish the work of man's redemption; and, alluding to the speech of Boaz to Ruth, "sleep unto the morning," that Messias should rest in his grave all their Sabbath-day. And he gathers from that speech (Gen. i.) on the first day, "Let there be light," that the Messias should rise on the first day of the week from death to life, and cause the spiritual light of the gospel to enlighten the world, that lay in the shadow of darkness and death. The Hebrew author of the book called Sedar Olam Rabbi (cap. 7) records many memorable things which were done upon the first day of the week, as so many types that the chief worship of God should, under the New Testament, be celebrated upon this day: As, that on this day the cloud of God's majesty first sate upon his people; Aaron and his children first executed their priesthood; God first solemnly blessed his people; the princes of his people first offered

publicly unto God; the first day wherein fire descended from heaven; the first day of the world, of the year, of the month, of the week, &c.; all shadowing that it should be the first and chief holy day of the New Testament. St. Augustine proves, by divers places and reasons out of the holy Scripture, that the fathers, and all the holy prophets under the Old Testament, did foresee and know that our Lord's day was shadowed by their eighth day of circumcision, and that the Sabbath should be changed from the seventh day to the eighth, or first day of the week. And Junius, out of Cyprian, says, that circumcision was commanded on the eighth day, as a sacrament of the eighth day, when Christ should arise from the dead. The council Foro Juliense affirms, that Isaiah prophesied of the keeping of the Sabbath upon the first day of the week. If this mystery was so clearly seen by the Fathers under the shadows of the Old Testament, surely the god of this world has deeply blinded their minds who cannot see the truth of it under the shining light of the gospel (2 Cor. iv. 4.) Therefore this change of the Sabbath-day under the New, was nothing but a fulfilling of that which was prefigured and fore-prophesied under the Old Testament.

5. According to their Lord's mind and commandment, and the direction of the Holy Ghost, which always assisted them in their ministerial office, the apostles, in all the Christian churches which they planted, ordained that the Christians should keep the holy Sabbath upon that seventh day, which is the first day of the week: "Concerning the gathering for the saints, as I have ordained in the churches of Galatia, so do ye also. Every first day of the week," &c. (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.) "When ye come together in the church (being the Lord's day) to eat the Lord's Supper,[55] to remember and shew the Lord's death till he come," &c. (1 Cor. xi. 20, 25, 26.) In which words note—

(1.) That the apostle ordained this day to be kept holy: therefore a divine institution.

(2.) That the day is named the first day of the week: therefore not the Jewish seventh, or any other.

(3.) Every first day of the week, which shews a perpetuity.

(4.) That it was ordained in the churches of Galatia, as well as of Corinth, and he settled one uniform order in all the churches of the saints: therefore it was universal.

(5.) That the exercises of this day were collections for the poor (which appears by Acts ii. 42, and Justin Martyr's testimony, Apolog. ii.[56]), which were gathered in the holy assembly after prayer, preaching of the word, and administration of the sacraments: therefore it was spiritual.

(6.) That he will have the collection, though necessary, removed against his coming; lest it should hinder his preaching; but not their holy meeting on the

Lord's day, for it was the time ordained for the public worship of the Lord, which argues a necessity.

And in the same Epistle St. Paul protests, that he delivered them none other ordinance or doctrine but what he hath received of the Lord (1 Cor. xi. 23.) Insomuch that he charges them, that "if any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (1 Cor. xiv. 37.) But he wrote unto them, and ordained among them to keep their Sabbath on the first day of the week: therefore to keep the Sabbath on that day is the very commandment of the Lord; and how can he be either a true prophet, or have any grace of God's Spirit in his heart, who, seeing so clearly the Lord's day to have been instituted and ordained by the apostles, will not acknowledge the keeping holy of the Lord's day to be a commandment of the Lord?

The Jews confess this change of the Sabbath to have been made by the apostles (Peter Alphon in Dialog, contra Judæos, tit. 12); they are therefore more blind and sottish than the Jews, who profanely deny it.

At Troas likewise St. Paul, together with seven of the chief evangelists of the church, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timotheus, Tychicus, and Trophimus (Acts xx. 4, 5, &c.), and all the Christians that were there, kept the holy Sabbath on the first day of the week, in praying, preaching, and receiving the Lord's Supper.

And it is a thing to be noted, that Luke saith not, that the disciples were sent to hear Paul preach, but the disciples being come together to break bread upon the first day of the week, that is, to be partakers of the holy communion, at what time the Lord's death was by the preaching of the word shewed (1 Cor. xviii. 26), Paul preached unto them, &c. And that none kept those meetings but Christians, who are called disciples (Acts xi. 26.) But at Philippi, where as yet there was no disciples, Paul is said to go on their Sabbath day to the place where the Jews and their proselytes were wont to pray, and there preached unto them (Acts xvi. 12, 13.) So that it is as clear as the sun, that it was the Christians' usual manner to pass over the Jewish seventh day (Acts xxi. 4, &c.), and to keep the Sabbath and their holy meetings on the first day of the week. And why does St. John call this the Lord's day, but because it was a day known to be generally kept holy throughout all the churches which the apostles planted to the honour of the Lord Jesus, who rose from death to life upon that day; which St. John called the Lord's day (Rev. i. 10), the rather to stir up Christians to a thankful remembrance of their redemption by Christ's resurrection from the dead. And with the day, the blessing of the Sabbath is likewise translated to the Lord's day; because all the sanctification belonging to this new world is in Christ (Heb. ii. 5), and from him conveyed to Christians: and because there cannot come a greater authority than that of Christ and his

apostles, nor the like cause as the new creation of the world; therefore the Sabbath can never be altered from this day to any other whilst this world lasts. Add to this, how the Scripture notes, that in the first planting and settling of the church, nothing was done but by the special order and direction of the apostles (1 Cor. xi. 34; xiv. 36, 37; Tit. i. 5; Acts xv. 6, 24), and the apostles did nothing but what they had warrant for from Christ (1 Cor. xi. 23.)

To sanctify, then, the Sabbath on the seventh day is not a ceremonial law abrogated, but the moral and perpetual law of God perfected; so that the same perpetual commandment which bound the Jews to keep the Sabbath on that seventh day, to celebrate the world's creation, binds Christians to solemnize the Sabbath on this seventh day, in memorial of the world's redemption; for the fourth commandment being a moral law, requires a seventh day to be kept holy for ever. And the morality of this, as of the rest of the commandments, is more religiously to be kept of us under the gospel, than of the Jews under the law; by how much we, in baptism, have made a more special covenant with God to keep his commandments; and God has covenanted with us to free us from the curse, and to assist us with his Spirit to keep his laws. And that this commandment of the Sabbath, as well as the other nine, is moral and perpetual, may plainly appear by these reasons:—

[51]Cyril bids us note, that St. John doth not simply set down the manner of Christ's appearing to Thomas, but also the circumstance of the time (post dies octo), whence he concludes thus: Diem igitur octavum Dominicam diem esse necesse est.—Cyril in Johan. lib. xii. cap. 58.

[52]Athan. in frontispicio hom. de sent.

[53]The Scripture of the New Testament gives not this honourable title to anything but only to the blessed Sabbath and holy Supper: For as he substituted the Lord's Supper instead of the Passover, so did he the Lord's day in the Jewish Sabbath's room.

[54] Legis substantia est sex diebus, terrenis negotiis incumbere; septimâ, divino cultui dare operam.

[55]The Syriac, translation hath, "Quum congregamini, non, sicut justum est, in die Domini nostri comeditis et bibitis." The Arabian translation also hath thus: "Non comeditis et bibitis prout verè diebus Domini nostri dicet." And Beza witnesses, that in one ancient Greek copy there is read, την κυριακην, the Lord's day, added to every first day, &c.

[56]As the phrase of "breaking of bread" comprehends all other exercises of religion (Acts xx. 7;) so this phrase of "laying by in store" comprehends all the other exercises of the Sabbath: And why should the apostle require the collections to be made on the first day of the week, but because that on this day the holy assembly was held in the apostles' time?

Ten Reasons demonstrating the Commandment of the Sabbath to Be Moral.

Ten Reasons demonstrating the Commandment of the Sabbath to be moral.

1. Because all the reasons of this commandment are moral and perpetual; and God has bound us to the obedience of this commandment with more forcible reasons than to any of the rest—First, because he foresaw that irreligious men would either more carelessly neglect, or more boldly break this commandment than any other; secondly, because that in the practice of this commandment the keeping of all the other consists; which makes God so often complain that all his worship is neglected or overthrown, when the Sabbath is either neglected or transgressed (Jer. xv. 22; Ezek. xx. 19, 20, 21, 24; xxiii. 38; Neh. ix. 4.) "It would make a man amazed," saith Mr. Calvin, "to consider how oft, and with what zeal and protestation God requireth all, that will be his people, to sanctify the seventh day; yea, how the God of mercy mercilessly punisheth the breach of this commandment with cruel death, as though it were the sum of his whole honour and service."

And it is certain, that he who makes no conscience to break the Sabbath, will not, to serve his turn, make any conscience to break any of the other commandments, so he may do it without discredit of his reputation or danger of man's law. Therefore God placed this commandment in the midst of the two tables, because the keeping of it is the best help to the keeping of all the rest. The conscionable keeping of the Sabbath is the mother of all religion and good discipline in the church. Take away the Sabbath, and let every man serve God when he listeth; and what will shortly become of religion, and that peace and order (1 Cor. xiv. 33, 40) which God will have to be kept in his church? The Sabbath-day is God's market-day, for the week's provision; wherein He will have us to come to him, and buy of him without silver or money (Isa. lv. 1, 2), the bread of angels, and water of life, the wine of the sacrament, and milk of the word to feed our souls; tried gold to enrich our faith (Rev. iii. 18;) precious eye-salve, to heal our spiritual blindness; and the white raiment of Christ's righteousness, to cover our filthy nakedness. He is not far from true piety, who makes conscience to keep the Sabbath-day; but he who can dispense with his conscience to break the Sabbath for his own profit or pleasure, his heart never yet felt what either the fear of God or true religion means; for, of this commandment may that speech of St. James be verified, "He that faileth in one, is guilty of all." (James ii. 10.) Seeing, therefore, that God has fenced this commandment with so many moral reasons, it is evident that the commandment itself is moral.

2. Because it was commanded of God to Adam in his innocency: whilst holding his happiness, not by faith in Christ's merits, but by obedience to God's law, he needed no ceremony shadowing the redemption of Christ. A

Sabbath, therefore, of a seventh day cannot be simply a ceremony, but an essential part of God's worship, enjoined to man, when there was but one condition of all men. And if it was necessary for our first parents to have a Sabbath-day, to serve God in their perfection; much more need their posterity to keep the Sabbath in the state of {heir corruption. And seeing God himself kept this day holy, how can that man be holy that wilfully profanes it?

3. Because it is one of the commandments which God spake with his mouth, and twice wrote with his own fingers in tables of stone, to signify their authority and perpetuity (Exod. xxxiv. 1, &c.) All that God wrote, were moral and perpetual commandments, and those are reckoned ten in number (Deut. iv. 13.) If this were now but an abrogated ceremony, then there were but nine commandments. The ceremonial that was to be abrogated by Christ, were all written by Moses (Deut. iv. 2.) But this of the Sabbath, with the other nine, written by God himself, were put into the ark; no ceremonial law was put, to shew that they should be the perpetual rules of the church, yet such as none could perfectly fulfil and keep, but only Christ (1 Kings viii. 9; Heb. ix. 4.)

4. Because Christ professes, "that he came not to detroy the moral law," (Matt. v. 17), and that the least of them should not be abrogated in his kingdom of the New Testament. Insomuch, that "whosoever breaketh one of the least of these ten commandments, and teacheth men so, he should be called the least in the kingdom of heaven," (Matt. v. 19;) that is, he should have no place in his church. Now the moral law commands one day of seven to be perpetually kept a holy Sabbath. And Christ himself expressly mentions the keeping of a Sabbath among his Christians, at the destruction of Jerusalem, about forty-two years after his resurrection. By which time, all the Mosaical ceremonies, except eating of blood, and things strangled (Acts xv. 19, 20, 21, 24, 28), were by a public decree of all the apostles quite abolished, and abrogated in Christian churches. And therefore Christ admonished his disciples, "to pray that their flight be not in the winter, nor on the Sabbath-day." (Matt. xxiv. 20.) Not in the winter; for by reason of the foulness of the ways and weather, their flight then should be more painful and troublesome to them: not upon the Sabbath; because it would be more grievous to their hearts, to spend that day in toiling to save their lives, which the Lord had commanded to be spent in holy exercises, to comfort their souls. Now if the sanctifying of the Sabbath on this day had been but ceremonial, it had been no grief to have fled on this day, any more than on any other day of the week; but in that Christ doth tender so much this fear and grief of being driven to fly on the Sabbath-day, and therefore wisheth his followers to pray to God to prevent. such an occasion, he plainly demonstrates that the observation of the Sabbath is no abrogated ceremony, but a moral commandment, confirmed and established by Christ among Christians. If you would know the day whereupon Christ appointed Christians to keep the Sabbath, St. John will

tell you, that it was on the Lord's day (Rev. i. 10.) If you will know on what day of the week that was, St. Paul will tell you, that it was on every first day of the week (1 Cor. xvi. 1.)

As Christ admonished, so Christians prayed, and according to their prayers, God, a little before the wars began, warned by an oracle all the Christians in Jerusalem to depart thence, and to go to Pella, a little town beyond Jordan; and so to escape the wrath of God, that should fall upon that city and nation.[57] If, then, a Christian should not without grief of heart, fly for the safety of his life on the Lord's day; with what joy or comfort can a true Christian neglect the holy exercise of God's worship in the church, to spend the greatest part of the Lord's day in profane and carnal sports, or servile labour? And seeing the destruction of Jerusalem was both a type (Matt. xxiv. 35) and an assurance of the destruction of the world, who seeth not, but that the holy Sabbath must continue till the very end of the world?

5. Because all the ceremonial law was enjoined to the Jews only, and not to the Gentiles; but this commandment of the holy Sabbath, as matrimony, was instituted of God in the state of innocency, when there was but one state of all men, and therefore enjoined to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. So that all magistrates and householders were commanded to constrain all strangers, as well as their own subjects and family, to observe the holy Sabbath (Isa. lvi. 6), as appears by the fourth commandment, and the practice of Nehemiah (Neh. xiii. 19, &c.) All the ceremonies were a partition-wall to separate Jews and Gentiles (Eph. ii. 14;) but seeing the Gentiles are bound to keep this commandment as well as the Jews, it is evident that it is no Jewish ceremony. And seeing the same authority is for the Sabbath that is for marriage, a man may as well say that marriage is but a ceremonial law, as the Sabbath. And remember, that whereas marriage is termed but once the covenant of God (Prov. ii. 17), because instituted by God in the beginning (Matt. xix. 6, 8), the Sabbath is everywhere called "the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," because ordained by God in the same beginning, both of time, state, and perpetuity: therefore not ceremonial.

6. The corruption of our nature found in the manifest opposition of wicked men,[58] and in the secret unwillingness of good men to sanctify sincerely the Sabbath, sufficiently demonstrates that the commandment of the Sabbath is spiritual and moral.

7. Because that as God, by a perpetual decree, made the sun, the moon, and other lights in the firmament of heaven (Gen. i. 18; Job ix. 9; xxxviii. 31; Amos v. 8), not only to divide the day from the night, but also to be for signs[59] and for seasons,[60] and for days[61] and for years;[62] so he ordained in the church on earth, the holy Sabbath to be not only the appointed season for his solemn worship, but also the perpetual rule and measure of time. So that as seven

days make a week, four weeks a month, twelve months a year; so seven years make a Sabbath of years; seven Sabbaths of years make a jubilee; eighty jubilees, or four thousand years, or, after Ezekiel, four thousand cubits, the whole time of the Old Testament, till Christ by his baptism and preaching began the state of the New Testament. Neither can I here pass over without admiration, how the sacrament of circumcision continued in the church thirty-nine jubilees from Abraham, to whom it was first given, until the baptism of Christ in Jordan; which was just so many jubilees (after Bucholcers's account) as the world had continued before from Adam to the birth of Abraham. Moses began his ministry in the eightieth year of his age: Christ enters upon his office in the eightieth jubilee of the world's age. Joseph was thirty years old when he began to rule over Egypt (Gen. iv. 1, 46), and the Levites began to serve in the tabernacle at thirty years old: so Christ likewise, to answer these figures, began his ministry in the thirtieth jubilee of Moses, and when he began to be thirty years of age (Luke iii. 23) in the midst of Daniel's last week; and so (continuing his ministry on earth three years and a half) finished our redemption and Daniel's period, by his innocent death upon the cross. The most of all the great alterations and strange accidents which fell out in the church, came to pass either in a sabbatical year, or in a year of jubilee. For example:—

The seventy weeks of Daniel, beginning the first year of Cyrus, and the 3439th year of the world, contain so many years as the world did weeks of years until that time, and so many weeks of years as the world had lasted jubilees. Daniel's seventy weeks of years contain four hundred and ninety single years; the world before that time four hundred and ninety weeks or Sabbaths of years; Daniel's period seventy weeks, the world's seventy jubilees: so that, to comfort the church for their seventy years' captivity, which they had now, according to Jeremiah's prophecy, endured in Babylon (Jer. xxv. 11, 12), Gabriel tells Daniel, that at the end of seventy weeks or Sabbaths of years, that is, seventy times seven years, or four hundred and ninety years, their eternal redemption from hell should be effected by the death of Christ, as sure as they were now redeemed from the captivity of Babylon. This period of Daniel, containing seventy Sabbaths or ten jubilees of years, began at the first liberty granted the Jews by Cyrus, in the first year of his reign over the Babylonians, mentioned Ezra i. 1, and ends just at the time that Christ died upon the cross. From the death of Christ, or the last end of Daniel's weeks, to the seventy and one year of Christ, the world is measured by seven seals (Rev. v. 1), or seven Sabbaths of years, making one complete jubilee. From the end of those seven seals, the world is measured to its end by seven trumpets (Rev. viii. 2; ix. 7), each containing two hundred and forty years (as some conjecture, about four hundred and forty years hence the truth will appear.) Enoch, the seventh from Adam, having lived so many years as there are days in the year, three hundred

and sixty-five, was translated of God in a sabbatical year. Moses, the seventh from Abraham, as another Enoch, is buried of God, but born in a sabbatical year of the world, two thousand three hundred and seventy-seventh year since the flood (according to Broughton's computation, A.M. 1430. Deut. xxx. 4), is saved, as a new Noah, in a reed-ark, and lived builder of the church so long as Noah was building the ark, one hundred and twenty years. The promise was made to Abraham in a sabbatical year, being the two thousand and twenty-third year of the world. The sixth year of Joshua, being two thousand five hundred years from the creation of the world, wherein the land was possessed, and divided among the children of Israel, was a sabbatical year, and the fiftieth jubilee from the creation of the world. At this year Moses begins his jubilee, by which, as with a chain of thirty links, he tieth the parting of Canaan's possession to the Israelites by Joshua to the opening of the kingdom of heaven to all believers by Jesus. And so carries the church of the Jews, by a joyful stream of jubilees,[63] from the type to the substance, from Canaan to heaven, from Joshua to Jesus: For Christ, at the end of Moses's thirty jubilees, and the beginning of the thirtieth year of his age, at his baptism openeth heaven, and gives the clearest vision of the blessed Trinity that was seen since the world began; and by the silver trumpet of his gospel proclaims, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, eternal redemption to all that repent and believe in him (Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18.)

And the year of our Saviour Christ's birth, being the three thousand nine hundred and forty-eighth of the world, was at the end of a sabbatical year, and the five hundred and sixty-fourth septenary of the world. Moses makes the common age of all men to be ten times seven (Psal. xc), and every seventh year commonly produces some notable change or accident in man's life: and no wonder; for, as Hippocrates affirms, a child in his mother's womb, on the seventh day of his conception, has all his members finished, and from that day grows to the perfection of birth, which is always either the ninth or seventh month. At seven years old, the child casts his teeth, and receives new. And every seventh year after, there is some alteration or change in man's life, especially at nine times seven, the climacteric year, which by experience is found to have been fatal to many of those learned men who have been the chiefest lights of the world;[64] and if they escaped that year, yet most of them have departed this life in a septenary year. Lamech died in the year of his life seven hundred and seventy-seven. Methusalem, the longest liver of the sons of men, died when he began to enter his nine hundred and seventieth year. Abraham died when he had lived twenty-five times seven years; Jacob when he had lived twenty-one times seven years; David, after he had lived ten times seven years. So did Galen, so did Petrarch, who (as Bodin notes) died on the same day of the year that he was born: so did Queen Elizabeth, of blessed memory. Hippocrates died in the fifteenth septenary; Hierom and Isocrates in

their thirteenth; Pliny, Bartolus, and Caesar, in their eighth septenary; and Johannes de temporibus, who lived three hundred and sixty-one years, died in the fifty-third septenary of his life. The like might be observed of innumerable others. And, indeed, the whole life of a man is measured by the Sabbath; for how many years soever a man lives here, yet his life is but a life of seven days multiplied: so that in the number of seven there is a mystical perfection, to which our understanding cannot attain.

All which divine disposition of admirable things, so oft by sevens, calls upon us to a continual meditation of the blessed seventh day Sabbath, in knowing and worshipping God in this life; that so from Sabbath to Sabbath, we may be translated to the eternal glorious Sabbath of rest and bliss in the life which is to come.

By which consideration any man that looks into the holy history may easily perceive, that the whole course of the world is drawn and guided by a certain chain of God's providence, disposing all things in number, measure, and weight. All times are therefore measured by the Sabbath: so that time and the Sabbath can never be separated. And the angel swears that this measure of time shall continue till time shall be no more (Rev. x. 6.) And as the Sabbath had its first institution in the first book of the Scriptures, so has it its confirmation in the last; and as this book authorizes this day, so this day graces the book: in that the matter thereof was revealed upon so holy a day—the Lord's revelation upon the Lord's day (Rev. i. 10.) As well, therefore, may they pull the sun, moon, and stars, out of the heavens, as abolish the holy Sabbath, time's mete-rod, out of the church; seeing the Sabbath is ordained in the church, as well as the sun and moon in the firmament, for the distinction of times.

8. Because that the whole church, by an universal consent, ever since the time of the apostles, have still held the commandment of the Sabbath to be the moral and perpetual law of God, and the keeping of the Sabbath on the first day of the week to be the institution of Christ and his apostles.

The synod called Synodus Coloniensis saith, that the Lord's day hath been famous in the church ever since the apostles' time. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, living in St. John's time, saith, "Let every one that loveth Christ keep holy the Lord's day, renowned by his resurrection, which is the queen of days, in which death is overcome and life is sprung up in Christ." Justin Martyr, who lived not long after him, shews that the Christians kept their Sabbath on the Lord's day, as we do. Origen, who lived about one hundred and eighty years after Christ, shews the reason why the Sabbath is translated to the Lord's day. Augustine saith, "That the Lord's day was declared unto the church by the resurrection of the Lord upon that day: Et ex illo cœpit habere festivitatem suam; and by Christ it was first ordained to be kept holy." And in another place, "That the

apostles appointed the Lord's day to be kept with all religious solemnity, because that upon that day our Redeemer rose from the dead, which also is therefore called the Lord's day."

As, therefore, David said of the city of God (Psal. lxxxvii. 3), so may I say of the Lord's day, "Glorious things are spoken of the day of the Lord;" for it was the birthday of the world—the first day in which all creatures began to have being. In it light was given out of darkness. In it the law was given on Mount Sinai. In it the Lord rose from death to life. In it the saints came out of their graves (Matt. xxvii. 52), assuring that on it Christians should rise to newness of life. In it the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles. And it is very probable that on the seventh day, when the seven trumpets have blown (Rev. x. 7). the cursed Jericho of this world shall fall (Josh. vi. 13), and our true Jesus shall give us the promised possession of the heavenly Canaan.

He that would see the uniform consent of antiquity, and practice of the primitive church in this point, let him read Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History, lib. 4. cap. 23; Tertullian, lib. de Idololatria, cap. 14; Chrys. Serm. 5. de Resurrectione Constitut.; Apol. l. cap. 37; Cyril in Johan. l. 12, c. 58. Of this judgment are all the sound new writers; see Fox on Rev. i. 10; Bucer in Matt. xii. 11; Gualt. in Malach. iii. hom. 23; Fulke on the Rhemish Testament, Apoc. i. 10; Chem. Exam. Cone. Trid. par. 4. de Diebus Festis; Wolph. Chron. lib. 2. cap. 1; and innumerable others. Learned Junius shall speak for all—"Quamobrem cum dies dominicus," &c.—" Wherefore seeing the Lord's day is both by the fact of Christ (viz. his resurrection and often appearing to his disciples upon that day), by the example and institution of the apostles, and by the continual practice of the ancient church, and by the testimony of Scripture, observed and substituted into the place of the Jewish Sabbath, Ineptè faciunt, they do foolishly who say that the observation of the Lord's day is of tradition and not from the Scripture, that by this means they might establish the traditions of men." And again, "The cause of this change is the resurrection of Christ, and the benefit of the restoring of the church by Christ, the remembrance of which benefit did succeed into the place of the memory of the creation. Non humana traditione, sed Christi ipsius observatione et instituto: Not by the tradition of man, but by the observation and appointment of Christ, who both on the day of his resurrection and on every eighth day after, until his ascension into heaven, did appear unto his disciples and came into their assemblies."

9. Because that the Lord himself expounded the end of the Sabbath, to be a sign and document for ever, between him and his people, that he is Jehovah, by whom they are sanctified (Exod. xxxi. 13, 14, &c.; Ezek. xx. 12, 20), and therefore must only of them be worshipped (Ezek. xlvi. 1, 2, 3, &c.;) and upon the pain of death, charges his people for ever to keep this memorial unviolated (Exod. xxxv. 2.) But this end is moral and perpetual; what God hath perpetually

sanctified, let no man ever presume to make common or profane (Acts x. 15.) Upon this ground it is, that the commandment terms this day, the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. And God himself calls it his holy day (Isa. lviii. 13.) And upon the same ground likewise the Old Testament consecrated all their Sabbaths and holy days to the 'worship and honour of God alone. To dedicate, therefore, a Sabbath to the honour of any creature, is gross idolatry. For the first table makes it a part of God's worship to have a Sabbath to his honour; so doth Lev. xxiii. 3, 37, 38, &c.; and Ezek. xx. 20; Neh. ix. 14; the Sabbath is put for the whole worship of God. And our Saviour teaches, that we must worship the Lord God only, Matt. iv. 10; and therefore keep a Sabbath to the only honour of God. The Holy Ghost notes it as one of Jereboam's greatest sins, that he ordained a feast from the device of his own heart, 1 Kings xii. 33. And God threatened to visit Israel for keeping the days of Baalim; that is, of lords, as papists do of saints, Hos. ii. 13; but saith, that such forget him. And so, indeed, none are less careful in keeping the Lord's Sabbath, than they who are most superstitious observers of men's holy days. The Church of Rome therefore commits gross idolatry—First, in taking upon her to ordain Sabbaths, which belongs only unto the Lord of the Sabbath to do; Secondly, in dedicating those holy days to the honour of creatures, which in effect is to make them sanctifying gods; Thirdly, in tying to these days, God's worship, prayers, fasting, and merit; Fourthly, in exacting on these days of men's invention, a greater measure of solemnity and sanctification, than upon the Lord's day, which is God's commandment: which in effect is to prefer antichrist before Christ. Our church hath justly abolished all superstitious and idolatrous feasts; and only retains a few holydays to the honour of God alone, and easing of servants, Deut. v. 14; though long custom forces to use the old names, for civil distinction; as Luke used the profane names of Castor and Pollux, Acts xxviii. 11; and Christians of Fortunatus, 1 Cor. xvi. 17; Mercurius,[65] Rom. xvi. 14; and Jews of Mardocheus' day, 2 Mac. xv. 36.

10. Lastly, the examples of God's judgments on Sabbath-breakers, may sufficiently seal to them whose hearts are not seared, how wrathfully Almighty God is displeased with them who are wilful profaners of the Lord's day.

The Lord, who is otherwise the God of mercy, commanded Moses to stone to death the man who, of a presumptuous mind, would openly go to gather sticks on the Sabbath day (Num. xv. 32.) The fact was small: true, but his sin was the greater, that, for so small an occasion, he would presume to break so great a commandment.

Nicanor, offering to fight against the Jews on the Sabbath day, was slain himself, and 35,000 of his men (2 Mac. viii. 21.)

A husbandman grinding corn upon the Lord's day, had his mill burned to ashes.[66]

Another, carrying corn on this day, had his barn, and all his corn therein, burnt with fire from heaven the next night after.[67]

Also a certain nobleman profaning the Sabbath, usually in hunting, had a child by his wife with a head like a dog, with ears and chaps, and which cried like a hound.[68]

A covetous flax-woman at Kingstat in France, anno 1559, using with her maids to work at her trade on the Lord's day, it seemed to them that fire issued out of the flax, but did no harm: the next Sabbath it took fire indeed, but was quickly quenched; but not taking warning by this, the third Sunday after it took fire again, burnt the house, and so scorched the wretched woman, with two of her children, that they died the next day; but through God's mercy, a child in the cradle was taken out of the fire alive and unhurt.[69]

On the 13th of January, anno dom. 1582, being the Lord's day, the scaffolds fell, in Paris garden, under the people, at a bear-baiting, so that eight were suddenly slain, innumerable hurt and maimed: A warning to such, who take more pleasure on the Lord's day to be in a theatre, beholding carnal sports, than to be in the church serving God with the spiritual works of piety.[70]

Many fearful examples of God's judgments by fire, have in our days been shewed upon divers towns, where the profanation of the Lord's day hath been openly countenanced.

Stratford-upon-Avon was. twice on the same day twelvemonth, being the Lord's day, almost consumed with fire; chiefly for profaning the Lord's Sabbaths, and for contemning his word in the mouth of his faithful ministers.

Teverton, in Devonshire (whose remembrance makes my heart bleed) was oftentimes admonished by her godly preacher that God would bring some heavy judgment on the town for their horrible profanation of the Lord's day, occasioned chiefly by their market on the day following.[71] Not long after his death, on the third of April 1598, God, in less than half an hour, consumed, with a sudden and fearful fire, the whole town, except only the church, the court-house, and the alms-houses, or a few poor people's dwellings; where a man might have seen four hundred dwelling-houses all at once on fire, and above fifty persons consumed with the flames. And now again, since the former edition of this book, on the fifth of August last, 1612 (fourteen years since the former fire), the whole town was again fired, and consumed, except some thirty houses of poor people, with the school-house and alms-houses. They are blind who see not in this the finger of God. God grant them grace, when it is next built, to change their market-day, and to remove all occasions of profaning the Lord's day. Let other towns remember the tower of Siloam (Luke xiii. 4), and take warning by their neighbours' chastisements, fear God's threatening (Jer. xvii. 27), and believe God's prophets, if they will prosper (2 Chron. xx. 20.)

Many other examples of God's judgments might be alleged; but if these are not sufficient to terrify thy heart from the wilful profanation of the Lord's day, proceed in thy profanation; it may be, the Lord will make thee the next example, to teach others to keep his Sabbaths better.

He punishes some in this life, to signify how he will plague all wilful transgressors of his Sabbaths at the last day.

Thus we have proved that the commandment of the Sabbath is moral, and that the change of it from the seventh to the first day of the week was instituted by the authority of Christ and of his apostles. But as, in promulgating the law, divers ceremonies peculiar to the Jews were annexed, the rather to bind that people to the more careful performance thereof: as to the first commandment, their deliverance from Egypt, shadowing their redemption from hell; to the fifth commandment, length of days in Canaan, typifying eternal life in heaven; to the sixth commandment, abstaining from blood and things strangled, figuring the care to abstain from all kind of murder; and to the whole law, the ceremony of parchment lace (Numb. xv. 38), putting them in mind to keep within the limits of the law: So likewise to the fourth commandment were added some ceremonies which peculiarly belonged to the Jews, and to no other people; as, First, the double sacrifices appointed for them on the Sabbath day (Num. xxviii. 9, 10), shadowing how God will be served on the Sabbath with greater obedience than on the week days: Secondly, the rigid and strict ceasing from making of fire (Exod. xxxv. 2, 3), dressing of meat (Exod. xvi. 23), and all bodily labour, both remembering them of their full deliverance by Moses's conduct from the fiery furnaces, and slavery of Egypt, upon that day (Deut. v. 16),[72] as also shadowing to them the eternal redemption of their souls from hell by the death of Christ: Thirdly, the keeping of the Sabbath upon the precise seventh day in order of the creation; shadowing to the Jews that Christ by his death, and resting on their Sabbath in the grave, should bring them rest and ease from the burden and yoke of the legal ceremonies, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear (Acts xv. 10; Col. ii. 16, 17.)

And howsoever in Paradise, before man's fall, the keeping of the Sabbath on the seventh day of the creation was not a ceremony, but an argument of perfection: yet after the fall it became ceremonial, and subject to change, in respect of the restoration by Christ: As man's life, before the fall, being immortal, became afterwards mortal; and nakedness, being an ornament before, became afterwards a shame; and marriage became a type of the mystical union between Christ and his church (Ephes. v.) And to fulfil, the ceremonies added, for the Jews' sake, to the Sabbath, Christ at his death rested in the grave all the Jewish Sabbath day, and by that rest fulfilled all those ceremonial accessories. Now, as the ceasing of the ceremonies annexed to the first, fifth, and sixth commandments, and to marriage, did not abolish

those commandments and marriage, nor cause them to cease from being the perpetual rules of God's worship and man's righteousness, no more did the abrogation of the ceremonies annexed to the Sabbath abolish the morality of the commandment of the Sabbath: so that, though the ceremonies be abolished by the access of the substance, and the shadow overshadowed by the body, which is Christ; yet the holy rest which was commanded and kept before either the Jews were a people, or those ceremonies annexed to the Sabbath, still continues as God's perpetual law, whereby all the posterity of Adam are bound to rest from their ordinary business, that they may wholly spend every seventh day in the solemn worship and only service of God, their Creator and Redeemer; but in the substance of the fourth commandment there is not found one word of any ceremony.

The chief objections against the morality of the Sabbath are three:—

Obj.]. That of Paul to the Galatians: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years," &c. (Gal. iv. 10.) But there the apostle condemns not the moral Sabbath (which we call the Lord's day, and which he himself ordained, according to Christ's commandment, in the same churches of Galatia and Corinth, and kept himself in other churches, 1 Cor. xvi. 2; xiv. 37; Acts xx. 7;) but he speaks of the Jewish days, and times, and years, and the keeping of the Sabbath on the seventh day from the creation, which he terms "shadows of things to come" (Col. ii. 17), abolished now by Christ the body; and in the law are called Sabbaths (Lev. xxiii. 37, 38), but distinguished from the moral Sabbaths.

Obj. 2. That of Paul to the Colossians: "Let no man therefore condemn you in meat or drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days" (Col. ii. 16.) But here the apostle means the Jewish ceremonial Sabbaths, not the Christians' Lord's day, as before.

Obj. 3. That of the same apostle to the Romans: "This man esteemeth one day above another day, and another counteth every day alike," &c. (Rom. xiv. 5.) But St. Paul makes no such account. For the question there is not between Jews and Gentiles, but between the stronger and weaker Christians (Rom. xv. 1.) The stronger esteemed one day above another, as appears, in that there was a day both commanded and received in the church, everywhere known and honoured by the name of the Lord's day. And therefore Paul saith here, that he that observed this day, observed it unto the Lord; the observation whereof, because of the change of the Jewish seventh day, some weak Christians (as many now a-days) thought not so necessary: so that if men, because me Jewish day is abrogated, will not honour and keep holy the Lord's day, but count it like other days, it is an argument, saith the apostle, of their weakness, whose infirmity must be borne till they have time to be further

instructed and persuaded. Other objections are frivolous, and not worth the answering.

[57]Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 1. iii. c. 5—It is probable that this oracle was that voice (migremus hinc) which, with an earthquake, was heard by night in the temple, mentioned by Josephus, de Bello Judaico, lib. vii. c. 12.

[58]Nitimur in vetitum.—Ovid.

[59]To distinguish between spring and harvest, summer and winter, and to foreshew judgments to come.

[60]Moadim sig. Sacred times appointed for God's holy worship, having special significations and promises.

[61]One of the seven days of the week from the other.

[62]Solar, Sabbatarian, and jubilee (Exod. xiii. 11, 12.)

[63]Jubilee some derive of trumpets or rams'-horns, wherewith the jubilee was sounded; others from jubal, a stream, because they carry us to the death of Christ, the author of our eternal rest and joy.

[64]Aristotle, Cicero, Bernard, Bocace, Erasmus, Luther, Melancthon, Sturmius.

[65]Hermes.

[66]Cent. Magdeb. xii. c. 6.

[67]Disp. de Tempore, Ser. 117.

[68]Tho. Cantiprat. lib. ii. de apid. Timpii. admiran vindict. div. Thea. Hist.

[69]Johan. Finc. lib. iii. De Miraculis.

[70]Stow's Abridgment, An. 1582. Disciti jam moniti Dominumn non temnere Christum.

[71]While the preachers cried in the church, Profaneness! profaneness! gain would not suffer them to hear: therefore, when they cried Fire! fire! in the street, God would not suffer any to help.

[72]It was the Sabbath-day on which Moses and the children of Israel sang to God, when Pharaoh and his host were drowned in the sea (Exod. xv.)—See Trem. & Jun. Notes on Deut. v. 15, and on Exod. xii. 15.

THE TRUE MANNER OF KEEPING HOLY THE LORD’S DAY.

Consecration of the Sabbath's Rest

Now the sanctifying of the Sabbath consists in two things—First, In resting from all servile and common business pertaining to our natural life; Secondly, In consecrating that rest wholly to the service of God, and the use of those holy means which belong to our spiritual life.

For the First.

1. The servile and common works from which we are to cease are, generally, all civil works, from the least to the greatest (Exod. xxxi. 12, 13, 15, &c.) More particularly—

First, From all the works of our calling, though it were reaping in time of harvest (Exod. xxxiv. 21.)

Secondly, From carrying burdens, as carriers do (Neh. xiii. 15; Jer. xvii. 21, 22, 27;) or riding abroad for profit or for pleasure. God hath commanded that the beasts should rest on the Sabbath day, because all occasions of travelling or labouring with them should be cut off from man. God gives them that day a rest (Deut. v. 14;) and he that without necessity deprives them of their rest on the Lord's day, the groans of the poor tired beasts shall in the day of the Lord rise up in judgment against him (Rom. viii. 22; Deut. xxv. 4; 1 Cor. ix. 9.) Likewise such as spend the greatest part of this day in trimming, painting, and pampering of themselves, like Jezebels, do the devil's work upon God's day.

Thirdly, From keeping of fairs or markets (Neh. xiii. 15, 16, 19;) which for the most part God punishes with pestilence, fire, and strange floods.

Fourthly, From studying any books of science but the holy Scriptures and divinity: for our study must be to be ravished in spirit upon the Lord's day (Rev. i. 10.) In a word, thou must on that day cease in thy calling- to do thy work, that the Lord by his calling may do his work in thee: for whatsoever is gotten by common working on this day shall never be blessed of the Lord; but it will prove like Achan's gold, which being got contrary to the Lord's commandment, brought the fire of God's curse upon all the rest which he had lawfully gotten. And if Christ scourged them out as thieves who bought and sold in his temple, which was but a ceremony shortly to be abrogated, is it to be thought that he will ever suffer those to escape unpunished who, contrary to his commandment, buy and sell on the Sabbath day, which is his perpetual law? Christ calleth such, sacrilegious thieves; and as well may they steal the communion cup from the Lord's table, as steal from God the chiefest part of the Lord's day to consume it in their own lusts. Such shall one day find the judgments of God heavier than the opinions of men.

Fifthly, From, all recreations and sports, which at some other times are lawful: for if lawful works be forbidden on this day, much more lawful sports;

which do more steal away our affections from the contemplation of heavenly things (Isa. lix. 13, 14), than any bodily work or labour. Neither can there be to a man that delighteth in the Lord (Psal. xxxvii. 4), any greater delight or recreation than the sanctifying of the Lord's day. For can there be any greater joy for a person condemned than to come to his prince's house to have his pardon sealed?—for one that is deadly sick to come to a physician that can cure him?—or for a prodigal child that fed on the husks of swine to be admitted to eat the bread of life at his father's table?—or for him who fears for sin the tidings of death, to come to hear from God the assurance of eternal life? If thou wilt allow thyself or thy servants recreation, allow it in the six days which are thine, not on the Lord's day, which is neither thine nor theirs. No bodily recreation, therefore, is to be used on this day, but so far as it may help the soul to do more cheerfully the service of God.

Sixthly, From gross feeding, liberal drinking of wine or strong drink (Eph. v. 18, 19), which may make us either drowsy or unapt to serve God with our hearts and minds (Rom. xii. 11; Deut. xxviii. 47.)

Seventhly, From all talking about worldly things, which hindereth the sanctifying of the Sabbath more than working: seeing one may work alone, but cannot talk but with others.

He that keeps the Sabbath only by resting from his ordinary work, keeps it but as a beast. But rest on this day is so far commanded to Christians, as it is an help to sanctification; and labour so far forbidden, as it is an impediment to the outward and inward worship of God.

If, then, those recreations which are lawful at other times, are on the Sabbath not allowed; much more those that are altogether at all times unlawful. Who without mourning can endure to see Christians keep the Lord's day, as if they celebrated a feast rather to Bacchus, than to the honour of the Lord Jesus, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world? For, having served God but an hour in outward shew, they spend the rest of the Lord's day in sitting down to eat and drink, and rising up to play; first ballasting their bellies with eating and drinking, and then feeding their lusts with playing and dancing (1 Cor. x. 7; Exod. xxxii. 6, 18, 19.) Against which profanations all holy divines, both old and new, have in their times most bitterly inveighed: insomuch, that Augustine affirms, "that it was better to plough than to dance on the Sabbath day."

Now in the names of Almighty God, who rested, having created heaven and earth, and of his eternal Son Jesus, the Redeemer of his church, who shall shortly come, on the dreadful day of doom, to judge all men according to the obedience which they have shewed to his commandments (Acts xvii. 31; Rom. ii. 12, &c.; 2 Thess. ii. 8, &c), I require thee who readest these words, as thou wilt answer before the face of Christ and all his holy angels at that day, that

thou better weigh and consider whether dancing, stage-playing, masking, carding, dicing, tabling, chess-playing, bowling, shooting, bear-baiting, carousing, tippling, and such other fooleries of Robin Hood, morrice-dances, wakes, and May-games, be exercises that God will bless and allow on the Sabbath day. And seeing that no action ought to be done that day, but such as whereby we either bless God, or look to receive a blessing from God; how darest thou do those things on that blessed day, on which thou darest not to pray to God to bestow a blessing on it to thy use? Hear this and tremble at this, O profane youth of a profane age!

O heart all frozen and void of the feeling of the grace of God! that having every day in six—every hour in every day—every minute in every hour, so tasted the sweet mercy of thy God in Christ, without which thou hadst perished every moment; yet canst not find in thy corrupt and irreligious heart to spend in thy Master's service that one day of the week, which he hath reserved for his own praise and worship. Let men in defence of their profaneness object what they will, and answer what the devil puts in their mouths, yet I could wish them to remember, that seeing it is an ancient tradition in the church that the Lord's second coming shall be upon the Lord's day,[73] how little joy they should have to be overtaken in those carnal sports, to please themselves, when their Master should find them in spiritual exercises serving him: the profanest wretch would then wish rather to be taken kneeling at prayers in the church, than skipping like a goat in a dance. If this cannot move, yet I would wish our impure gallants to remember, that whilst they thus amuse themselves on the Lord's day, contrary to the Lord's commandment, they do but dance about the pit's brink, and they know not which of them shall first fall therein: into which being once fallen without repentance, no greatness can exempt them from the vengeance of that great God, whose commandment, contrary to their knowledge and conscience, they do thus presumptuously transgress. If, then, God's commandment cannot deter thee, nor God's word advise thee, I say no more but what St. John said before me, "He which is filthy let him be filthy still."[74]

For the Second.

2. The consecration of the Sabbath's rest consists in performing three sorts of duties:—First, Before; Secondly, At; Thirdly, After, the public exercises of the church.

The Duties to be performed before the Public Exercises, are—

1. To give over working betimes on the eve, that thy body may be the more refreshed, and thy mind the better fitted to sanctify the Sabbath on the next day. For want of this preparation, thyself and thy servants being tired with labour and watching the night before, are so heavy, that when you should be serving God, and hearing what his Spirit saith unto the church for your souls'

instruction, you cannot hold up your heads for sleeping; to the dishonour of God, the offence of the church, and the shame of yourselves: therefore the Lord commands us not only to keep holy, but also to remember beforehand" the Sabbath day—to keep it holy, by preparing our hearts, and removing all business that might hinder us to consecrate it as a glorious day unto the Lord (Isa. lvi. 2, &c.; lviii. 13, &c.) Therefore whereas the Lord, in the other commandments, does but either bid or forbid, he does both in this commandment, and that with a special memorandum: As if a Master should charge his servant to look well unto ten things of great trust, but to have a more special care to remember one of those ten, for divers weighty reasons; should not a faithful servant, that loves his master, shew a more special care unto that thing above all other businesses?

Thus Moses taught the people over night to remember the Sabbath (Exod. xvi. 23, &c.) And it was a holy custom among our forefathers, when, at the ringing to prayer on the eve before, the husbandman would give over his labour in the field, and the tradesman his work in the shop, and go to evening prayer in the church, to prepare their souls; that their minds might more cheerfully attend God's worship on the Sabbath day.

2. To rise up early in the morning on the Sabbath day. Be careful, therefore, to rise sooner on this day than on other days: by how much the service of God is to be preferred before all earthly business. For there is no master to serve so good as God; and in the end, no work shall be better rewarded than his service.

3. When thou art up, consider with thyself what an impure sinner thou art, and into what an holy place thou goest to appear, before the most holy God, who seeth thy heart, and hateth all impurity and hypocrisy. Examine thyself, therefore, before thou goest to Church, what grievous sins thou hast committed the week past; confess them to God, and earnestly pray for the pardon and forgiveness of them, and so reconcile thyself with God in Christ. Renew thy vows to walk more conscionably, and pray for an increase of those graces which thou hast, and a supply of those which thou wantest. But especially pray that thou mayest have grace to hear the word of God read and preached with profit; and that thou mayest receive the holy sacrament with comfort, if it be communion day; that God by his Holy Spirit would assist the preacher to speak something that may kill thy sin, and comfort thy soul;—which thou mayest do in this or the like sort:—

[73]Lactan. I. 7, c. l.

[74]This was the last and heaviest curse that St. John wished spiritual Babylon.

A Morning Prayer for the Sabbath-day.

A Morning Prayer for the Sabbath-day.

O Lord most high, O God eternal, all whose worka are glorious, and whose thoughts are very deep: there can be no better thing, than to praise thy name, and to declare thy loving-kindness in the morning, on thy holy and blessed Sabbath day! For it is thy will and commandment, that we should sanctify this day in thy service and praise: and in the thankful remembrance, as of the creation of the world by the power of thy word; so of the redemption of mankind by the death of thy Son. Thine, O Lord, I confess, is greatness and power, and glory and victory, and praise; for all that is in heaven and earth is thine: thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou excellest as head over all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and strength; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give grace unto all. Now, therefore, O my God, I praise thy glorious name, that whereas I, a wretched sinner, having so many ways provoked thy majesty to anger and displeasure; thou, notwithstanding, of thy favour and goodness, passing by my profaneness. and infirmities, hast vouchsafed to add this Sabbath again to the number of my days. And vouchsafe, O heavenly Father, for the merits of Jesus Christ thy Son, whose glorious resurrection thy whole church celebrateth this day, to pardon and forgive me all my sins and misdeeds. Especially, O Lord—[Here thou mayest confess whatsoever sin of the last week clogs thy conscience]—cleanse my soul from those filthy sins, with the blood of thy most pure and undefiled Lamb, which taketh away the sins of the world. And let thy Holy Spirit more and more subdue my corruptions, that I may be renewed after thy own image, to serve thee in newness of life, and holiness of conversation. And as of thy mercy thou hast brought me to the beginning of this blessed day; so I beseech thee make it a day of reconciliation between my sinful soul and thy divine majesty. Give me grace to make it a day of repentance unto thee, that thy goodness may seal it to be a day of pardon unto me; and that I may remember that the keeping holy of this day is a commandment which thy own finger hath written; that on this day I might meditate on the glorious works of our creation and redemption, and learn how to know and keep all the rest of thy holy laws and commandments. And when anon, I shall, with the rest of the holy assembly, appear before thy presence in thy house, to offer unto thee our morning sacrifice of praise and prayer, and to hear what thy Spirit, by the preaching of thy word, shall speak unto thy servant, O let not my sins stand as a cloud to stop my prayers from ascending unto thee, or to keep back thy grace from descending by thy word into my heart. I know, O Lord, and tremble to think, that three parts of the good seed falls upon bad ground. O let not my heart be like the highway, which through hardness, and want of true understanding, receives not the seed, till the evil

one cometh and catcheth it away: nor like to the stony ground, which heareth with joy for a time, but falleth away as soon as persecution ariseth for the Gospel's sake: nor like the thorny ground, which by the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choketh the word which it heareth, and makes it altogether unfruitful; but that like unto the good ground, I may hear thy word, with an honest and good heart understand it, and keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience, in that measure that thy wisdom shall think meet for thy glory, and mine everlasting comfort. Open likewise, I beseech thee, O Lord, the door of utterance unto thy faithful servant, whom thou hast sent unto us to open our eyes, that we may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God: that we may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Christ. And give me grace to submit myself unto his ministry, as well when he terrifieth me with judgments, as when he comforteth me with thy mercies; and that I may have him in singular love for his works' sake; because he watcheth for my soul as he that must give an account for the same unto his master. And give me grace to behave myself in the holy congregation with comeliness and reverence, as in thy presence, and in the sight of thy holy angels: keep me from drowsiness and sleeping, and from all wandering thoughts, and worldly imaginations. Sanctify my memory, that it may be apt to receive, and firm to remember, those good and profitable doctrines which shall be taught unto us out of thy word. And that through the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, I may put the same lessons in practice for my direction in prosperity, for my consolation in misery, for the amendment of my life, and the glory of thy name. And that this day which godless and profane persons spend in their own lusts and pleasures, I, as one of thy obedient servants, may make my chief delight to consecrate to thy glory and honour, not doing mine own ways, nor seeking mine own will, nor speaking a vain word; but that, ceasing from the works of sin as well as from the works of my ordinary calling, I may, through thy blessing, feel in my heart the beginning of that eternal Sabbath, which in unspeakable joy and glory I shall celebrate with saints and angels, to thy praise and worship, in thy heavenly kingdom for evermore. All which I humbly crave at thy hands, in the name and mediation of my Lord Jesus, in that form of prayer which he hath taught me:—"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," &c.

Having thus in private prepared thy own soul, if thou hast the charge of a family, call all thy household together, read a chapter, and pray as in the week-days: but remember so to despatch these private preparations and duties, as that thou and thy family may be in the church before the beginning of prayers; else your private exercises are rather a hindrance than a preparation. And as thou and thy household do go in all reverence towards the church, let every one meditate thus with himself:—

Duties in the Holy Assembly.

Things to be meditated on as thou goest to the Church.

1. That thou art going to the court of the Lord, and to speak with the great God by prayer; and to hear his majesty speak unto thee by his word; and to receive his blessing on thy soul, and thy honest labour, in the six days past.

2. Say with thyself by the way—"As the hart brayeth for the rivers of water, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, even for the living God: When shall I come and appear before the presence of God? For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tabernacles of wickedness. Therefore I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercies, and in thy fear will I worship toward thine holy temple."

3. As thou enterest into the church, say—"How fearful is this place! This is none other but the house of God; this is the gate of heaven. Surely the Lord is in this place: God is in this people indeed." And prostrating with thy face downward (1 Cor. xiv. 25), being come to thy place, say—"O Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy honour dwelleth: One thing, therefore, have I desired of thee, that I will require, even that I may dwell in thy house all the. days of my life, to behold thy beauty, and to visit thy temple: Therefore will I offer in thy tabernacle sacrifices of joy, I will sing and praise the Lord. Hearken unto my voice, O Lord, when I cry; have mercy also upon me, and hear me. Doubtless, kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell for ever in the house of the Lord." And this is that preparation, or looking to our feet, to which Solomon advises us before we enter into the house of God (Eccl. v. 1.)

The Second sort of Duties which are to be performed at the time of the holy Assembly.

When prayers begin, lay aside thy own private meditations, and let thy heart join with the minister and the whole church, as being one body of Christ (1 Cor. xii. 12;) and because that God is the God of order, he will have all things to be done in the church with one heart and accord (Acts ii. 46;) and the exercises of the church are common and public (chap. iv. 32.) It is therefore an ignorant pride, for a man to think his own private prayers more effectual than the public prayers of the whole church. Solomon therefore advises a man not to be rash to utter a thing in the church before God. Pray, therefore, when the church prayeth, sing when they sing; and in the action of kneeling, standing, sitting, and such indifferent ceremonies (for the avoiding of scandal, the continuance of charity, and in testimony of thine obedience), conform thyself to the manner of the church wherein thou livest (Ezek. xlvi. 10; Psal. cx. 3.)

Whilst the preacher is expounding and applying the word of the Lord, look upon him; for it is a great help to stir up thine attention, and to keep thee from wandering thoughts: so the eyes of all that were in the synagogue are said to have been fastened on Christ whilst he preached, and that all the people hanged upon him when they heard him. Remember that thou art there as one of Christ's disciples, to learn the knowledge of salvation, by the remission of sins, through the tender mercy of God (Luke i. 77.)

Be not, therefore, in the school of Christ, like an idle boy in a grammar-school, that often hears, but never learns his lesson; and still goes to school, but profiteth nothing. Thou hatest it in a child—Christ detesteth it in thee. To the end, therefore, that thou mayest the better profit by hearing, mark—

1. The coherence and explication of the text.

2. The chief sum or scope of the Holy Ghost in that text.

3. The division or parts of the text.

4. The doctrines; and in every doctrine the proofs, the reasons, and the uses thereof.

A method, of all others, easiest for the people (being accustomed to it), to help them to remember the sermon; and therefore all faithful pastors, who desire to edify their people in the knowledge of God, and in his true religion, much wish it to be put in practice.

If the preacher's method be too curious or confused, then labour to remember—

1. How many things he taught which thou knewest not before; and be thankful.

2. What sins he reproved, whereof thy conscience tells thee that thou art guilty; and therefore must be amended.

3. What virtues he exhorted unto, which are not so perfect in thee; and therefore endeavour to practise them with more zeal and diligence.

But in hearing, apply every speech as spoken to thyself, rather by God than by man (Isa. ii. 3; Acts x. 33; Gal. iv. 14; 1 Thess. ii. 13;) and labour not so much to hear the words of the preacher sounding in thine ear, as to feel the operation of the Spirit working in thy heart. Therefore it is said so often, "Let him that hath an ear hear what the Spirit speaks to the church," (Rev. ii. 7;) and, "Did not our hearts burn within us whilst he opened unto us the Scriptures?" (Luke xxiv. 32.) And thus to hear the word, hath a blessing promised to it (Luke xi. 28.) It is the most acceptable sacrificing of ourselves unto God (Rom. xv. 16.) It is the surest note of Christ's saints (Deut. xxxiii. 3;) the truest mark of Christ's sheep (John x. 4;) the most apparent sign of God's

elect (John viii. 47; xviii. 37;) the very blood, as it were, which unites us to be the spiritual kindred, brethren and sisters of the Son of God (Luke i. 21; Mark iii. 35.) This is the best art of memory for a good hearer.

When the sermon is ended—

1. Beware thou depart not like the nine lepers, till, for thine instruction to saving health, thou hast returned thanks and praise to God by an after prayer, and singing of a psalm. And when the blessing is pronounced, stand up to receive thy part therein, and hear it as if Christ himself (whose minister he is) did pronounce the same unto thee: For in this case it is true, "He that heareth you heareth me," (Luke x. 16;) and the Sabbath day is blessed, because God hath appointed it to be the day wherein by the mouth of his ministers he will bless his people which hear his word and glorify his name (Num. vi. 23, 27.) For though the Sabbath day in itself be no more blessed than the other six days, yet, because the Lord hath appointed it to holy uses above others, it as far excels the other days of the week as the consecrated bread which we receive at the Lord's table does the common bread which we eat at our own table.

2. If it be a communion-day, draw near to the Lord's table in the wedding garment of a faithful and penitent heart, to be partaker of so holy a banquet.

And when baptism[75] is to be administered, stay and behold it with all reverent attention, that so thou mayest—First, Shew thy reverence to God's ordinance; Secondly, That thou mayest the better consider thine own ingrafting into the visible body of Christ's church, and how thou performest the vows of thy new covenant; Thirdly, That thou mayest repay thy debts, in praying for the infant which is to be baptized (as other Christians did in the like case for thee), that God would give him the inward effects of baptism, by his blood and Spirit; Fourthly, That thou mayest assist the church in praising God for grafting another member into his mystical body; Fifthly, That thou mayest prove whether the effects of Christ's death killeth sin in thee, and whether thou be raised to newness of life by the virtue of his resurrection; and so to be humbled for thy wants, and to be thankful for his graces; Sixthly, To shew thyself to be a freeman of Christ's corporation, having a voice or consent in the admission of others into that holy society.

If there be any collection for the poor, freely without grudging bestow thine alms, as God hath blessed thee with ability (1 Cor. xvi. 1; 2 Cor. ix. 5, 6, 7, &c.)

And thus far of the duties to be performed in the holy assembly.

Now of the Third sort of Duties after the holy Assembly.

As thou returnest home, or when thou art entered into thy house, meditate a little while upon those things which thou hast heard. And as the clean beasts which chew the cud (Lev. xi. 3), so must thou bring again to thy remembrance

that which thou hast heard in the church. And then kneeling down, turn all to prayer, beseeching God to give such a blessing to those things which thou hast heard, that they may be a direction to thy life, and a consolation unto thy soul (Psal. cxix. 11.) For till the word be thus made our own, and, as it were, close hidden in our hearts, we are in danger lest Satan steal it away, and we shall receive no profit thereby (Matt. xiii. 19.) And when thou goest to dinner, in that reverent and thankful manner before prescribed, remember, according to thy ability, to have one or more poor Christians, whose hungry bowels may be refreshed with thy meat; imitating holy Job, who protested that he did never eat his morsel alone, without the good company of the poor and fatherless (Job xxxi. 17, 18:) that is the commandment of Christ our Master (Luke xiv. 13.) Or at leastwise, send some part of thy dinner to the poor who lies sick in the back-lane, without any food (Esth. ix. 22;) for this will bring a blessing upon all thy works and labours (Deut. xv. 10, &c.;) and it will one day more rejoice thy soul than it doth now refresh his body, when Christ shall say unto thee, "O blessed child of God! I was an hungered, and thou gavest me meat," &c. And, "forasmuch as thou hast done it for my sake to the least of these my brethren, I take it in as good part as if thou hadst done it to my own self."

When dinner is ended, and the Lord praised, call thy family together;[76] examine what they have learned in the sermon (Acts xvii. 11; Heb. v. 14;) commend them that do well, yet discourage not them whose memories or capacities are weaker, but rather help them, for their wills and minds may be as good. Turn to the proofs which the preacher alleged, and rub those good things over their memories again (Deut. vi. 7.) Then sing a psalm or more (Matt. xxvi. 30; Jam. v. 13.) If time permit, thou mayest teach and examine them in some part of the catechism (Heb. vi. 1), conferring every point with the proofs of the holy Scripture. This will both increase our knowledge and sharpen our memory; seeing by experience we find, that in every trade they who are most exercised are ever most expert (Heb. v. 14.) But in anywise, remember so to dispose all these private exercises, as that thou mayest be with the first in the holy congregation at the evening exercise; where behave thyself in the like devotion and reverence as was prescribed for the holy exercise of the morning.

After evening prayer, and at thy supper, behave thyself in the like religious and holy manner as was formerly prescribed. And either before or after supper, if the season of the year and weather do serve—

1. Walk into the fields and meditate upon the works of God; for in every creature thou mayest read, as in an open book, the wisdom, power, providence, and goodness of Almighty God (Psal. xcii. 5; xix. 1, &c.; viii. 1, 3, &c.; Rom. i. 19, 20;) and that none is able to make all these things in the variety of their forms, virtues, beauties, life, motions, and qualities, but our most glorious God (Isa. xl. 26.)

2. Consider how gracious he is that made all these things to serve us (Psal. viii.)

3. Take occasion hereby to stir up both thyself and others to admire and adore his power, wisdom, and goodness; and to think what ungrateful wretches we are, if we will not, in all obedience, serve and honour him.

4. If any neighbour be sick, or in any heaviness, go to visit him (Jam. v. 14, &c.) If any be fallen at variance, help to reconcile them.

To conclude, three sorts of works may lawfully be done on the Sabbath day.

1. Works of piety, which either directly concern the service of God, though they be performed by bodily labour; as, under the law, the priests laboured in killing and dressing of sacrifices, and burning them on the altar (Matt. xii. 5.) And Christians under the Gospel when they travel far to the places of God's worship, it is but a Sabbath day's journey (Acts i. 12), like to that of the Shunamite, who travelled from home to hear the prophet on the Sabbath day, because she had no teaching near her own dwelling (2 Kings iv. 22.) And the preacher, though he labours in the sweat of his brow to the wearying of his body, yet he doth but a Sabbath day's work. For the holy end sanctifieth the work, as the temple did the gold, or the altar the gift thereon;—or else such bodily labour, whereby the people of God are assembled to his worship, as the sounding of trumpets under the law (Numb. x. 2, 3), or the ringing of bells under the gospel.

2. Works of charity, as to save the life of a man (John v. 9; Mark iii. 4), or of a beast (Matt. xii. 11;) to fodder, water, and dress cattle (Luke xiii. 15;) to make honest provision of meat and drink (Matt. xii. l;) to refresh ourselves, and to relieve the poor, to visit the sick, to make collections for the poor, and such like (1 Cor. xvi. 1.)

3. Works of necessity, not feigned, but present and imminent, and such as could not be prevented before, nor can be deferred to another day—as to resist the invasion of enemies, or the robberies of thieves; to quench the rage of fire, and for physicians to stanch or let blood, or to cure any other desperate disease; and for midwives to help women in labour; mariners may do their labour; soldiers, being assailed, may fight; and such like. On these or the like occasions, a man may lawfully work. Yea, and when they are called, they may, upon any of these occasions, go out of the church, and from the holy exercises of the word and sacraments: provided always, that they be humbled that such occasions fall out upon that day and time; and that they take no money for their pains on that day, but only for their stuff, as in the fear of God, and conscience of his commandment.

When the time of rest approaches, retire thyself to some private place; and knowing that in the state of corruption no man living can sanctify a Sabbath in

that spiritual manner that he should, but that he commits many breaches thereof, in his thoughts, words, and deeds, humbly crave pardon for thy defects, and reconcile thyself to God, with this or the like evening sacrifice:—

[75]I cannot refrain from remarking the careless and indifferent manner in which too often this divine ordinance is administered, as well as witnessed. And it is a fact, evident to the most common observer, that, generally, the minister who lays the greatest stress upon the regenerating efficacy of the mere rite itself, is the most remarkable for the indevout and regardless manner in which he performs the sacred service; so that spectators who knew no better might well suppose that he was hurrying over some unmeaning and distasteful ceremony, destitute of divine sanction, which had been imposed upon him, instead of dispensing a holy ordinance, necessary to salvation, commanded by Christ himself.

[76]If thou be a private man, either perform these holy duties by thyself, or join with some godly family in the performance of them.

A Private Evening Prayer for the Lord’s Day.

A private Evening Prayer for the Lord’s day.

O holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth! Suffer me, who am but dust and ashes, to speak unto thy most glorious majesty. I know that thou art a consuming fire; I acknowledge that I am but withered stubble: my sins are in thy sight, and Satan stands at my right hand to accuse me for them. I come not to excuse but to judge myself worthy of all those judgments which thy justice might most justly inflict upon me, a wretched creature, for my sins and transgressions. The number of them is so great, the nature of them is so grievous, that they make me seem vile in my own eyes; how much more loathsome in thy sight? I confess they make me so far from being worthy to be called thy son, that I am altogether unworthy to have the name of thy meanest servant; and if thou shouldst but recompense me according to my desert, the earth, as weary of such a sinful burden, should open her mouth and swallow me up, like one of Dathan’s family, into the bottomless pit of hell. For if thou didst not spare the natural branches, those angels of glorious excellency, but didst hurl them down from the heavenly habitations into the pains of hellish darkness, to be kept unto damnation, when they sinned but once against thy Majesty, and didst expel our first parents out of paradise when they did but transgress one of thy laws; alas! what vengeance may I expect, who have not offended in one sin only, heaping daily sin upon sin without any true repentance, drinking iniquity as it were water, ever pouring in but never pouring out any filthiness, and have transgressed not one, but all thy holy laws and commandments? Yea, this present day which thou hast straitly commanded me to keep holy to thy praise and worship, I have not so religiously kept and observed, nor prepared my soul in that holiness and purity of heart, as was fit to meet thy blessed Majesty in the holy assembly of the saints. I have not attended to the preaching of thy word, nor to the administration of thy sacraments, with that humility, reverence, and devotion that I should: for though I was present at those holy exercises in my body, yet, Lord, I was overtaken with much drowsiness; and when I was awake my mind was so distracted and carried away with vain and worldly thoughts, that my soul seemed to be absent and out of the church. I have not so duly, as I should, meditated with myself, nor conferred with my family upon those good instructions which we have heard and received out of thy holy word by the public ministry: for default of which, Satan hath stolen the most part of those instructions out of my heart, and I, wretched creature, have forgotten them as though they had never been heard. And my family doth not thrive in knowledge and sanctification under my government, as they should. Though I know where many of my poor brethren live in want and necessity, and some in pain, and comfortless; yet I have not remembered to relieve the one with my alms, nor

the other with consolations; but I have feasted myself and satisfied my own lusts. I have spent the most part of the day in idle talk and vain exercises; yea, Lord, I have, &c.—[Here confess whatsoever fault thou hast done that day by omission or commission, and then fetching from thy heart a deep sigh, say]—and for all these my sins, my conscience cries guilty, thy law condemns me, and I am in thy hand to receive the sentence and the curse due to the wilful breach of so holy a commandment. But what if I am by thy law condemned? yet, Lord, thy gospel assures me that thy mercy is above all thy works; that thy grace transcends thy law; and thy goodness delighteth there to reign where sins do most abound. In the multitude of thy mercies, and for the merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour, I beseech thee, O Lord, who despisest not the sighings of a contrite heart, nor desirest the death of a penitent sinner, to pardon and forgive me all those my sins, and all the errors of this day and of my whole life, and free my soul from that curse and judgment which is due unto me for them. Thou that didst justify the contrite publican for four words of confession, and receive the prodigal child, when he had spent all the stock of thy grace, into favour upon his repentance; pardon my sins likewise, O Lord, and suffer me not to perish for my transgressions. O spare me, and receive me into thy favour again. Wilt thou, O Lord, who hast received all publicans, harlots, and sinners, that upon repentance sued to thee for grace, reject me? shall I alone be excluded from thy mercy? Far be it from me to think so: for thou art the same God of mercy to me that thou wast to them, and thy compassions never fail. Wherefore, O Lord, deal not with me after my merits, but according to thy great mercy; execute not thy severe justice against me a sinner, but exercise thy long-sufferance in forbearing thy own creature. I have nothing to present unto thee for a satisfaction, but only those bloody wounds, bitter death and passion, which thy blessed Son, my only Saviour, hath suffered for me. Him, in whom only thou art well pleased, I offer unto thee for all my sins wherewith thou art displeased: him, my Mediator, the request of whose blood, speaking better things than that of Abel, thy mercy can never gainsay. Illuminate my understanding and sanctify my heart with thy Holy Spirit, that it may bring to my remembrance all those good and profitable lessons which this day and at other times have been taught me out of thy holy word; that I may remember thy commandments to keep them—thy judgments to avoid them—and thy sweet promises to rely upon them, in time of misery and distress. And now, O Lord, I resign myself to thy most holy will: O receive me into thy favour, and so draw me by thy grace unto thyself, that I may as well be thine by love and imitation as by calling and creation. And give me grace so to keep holy thy Sabbaths in this life, that when this life is ended, I may, with all thy saints and angels, celebrate an eternal Sabbath of joy and praise to the honour of thy most glorious name, in thy heavenly kingdom for evermore. Amen.

And then calling thy family together, shut up the Sabbath with the meditations and prayers before prescribed for thy family. And the Lord will give thee that night a more sweet and quiet rest than ordinary, and prosper thee the better in all the labours of the week following.

Thus far of the ordinary practice of piety, both in private and public: Now follows the extraordinary practice of piety, whereby God is glorified in our lives.

The extraordinary practice of piety consists, either in Fasting or Feasting.

OF THE PRACTICE OF PIETY IN FASTING.

There are divers kinds of fasting—First, A constrained fast, as when men either have not food to eat, as in the famine of Samaria (2 Kings vi. 25;) or, having food, cannot eat it for heaviness or sickness, as it befel them who were in the ship with St. Paul (Acts xxvii. 33.) This is rather famine than fasting.

Secondly, A natural fast, which we undertake physically, for the health of our body.

Thirdly, A civil fast, which the magistrate enjoins for the better maintenance of the commonwealth.

Fourthly, A miraculous fast, as the forty days' fast of Moses and Elias, the types, and of Christ, the substance. This is rather to be admired than imitated.

Fifthly, A daily fast, when a man is careful to use the creatures of God with such moderation, that he is not made heavier, but more cheerful to serve God, and to do the duties of his calling (1 Tim. iii. 3; Tit. ii. 3.) This is especially to be observed by ministers and Judges (Prov. xxxi. 4, 5.)

Sixthly, A religious fast (2 Cor. vi. 4, 5), which a man voluntarily undertakes to make his body and soul the fitter to pray more fervently to God upon some extraordinary occasion. And of this fast only we are to treat. The religious fast is of two sorts, either private or public.

I. Of a Private Fast.

That we may rightly perform a private fast, four things are to be observed:—First, The author; Secondly, The time and occasion; Thirdly, The manner; Fourthly, The ends of private fasting.

1. Of the Author.

The first that ordained fasting was God himself in paradise; and it was the first law that God made, in commanding Adam to abstain from eating the forbidden fruit. God would not pronounce nor write his law without fasting (Lev. xxiii), and in his law commands all his people to fast. So does our Saviour Christ likewise teach all his disciples under the New Testament (Matt. vi. 17; ix. 15.) By religious fasting a man comes nearest the life of angels, and to "do God's will on earth, as it is done in heaven." Yea, nature seems to teach man this duty, in giving him a little mouth, and a narrower throat; for nature is content with a little, grace with less. Neither doth nature and grace agree in any one act better than in this exercise of religious fasting; for it strengthens the memory, and clears the mind—illuminates the understanding, and bridles the affections—mortifies the flesh, prevents sickness, and continues health—it delivers from evils, and procures all kind of blessings.

By breaking this fast, the serpent overthrew the first Adam, so that he lost paradise. But by keeping a fast the second Adam vanquished the serpent, and restored us into heaven. Fasting was she who covered Noah safe in the ark, whom intemperance uncovered, and left stark naked in the vineyard. By fasting Lot quenched the flame of Sodom, whom drunkenness scorched with the fire of incest. Religious fasting and talking with God, made Moses's face to shine before men, when idolatrous eating and drinking caused the Israelites to appear abominable in the sight of God. It wrapt up Elias in an angelical coach to heaven, when voluptuous Ahab was sent in a bloody chariot to hell. It made Herod believe that John Baptist should live after death by a blessed resurrection; when, after an intemperate life, he could promise nothing to himself but eternal death and destruction. O divine ordinance of a divine author!

2. Of the Time.

The holy Scripture appoints no time under the New Testament to fast; but leaves it to Christians' own free choice (Rom. xiv. 3; 1 Cor. vii. 5), to fast as occasions shall be offered to them (Matt. ix. 15;) as when a man becomes an humble, an earnest suitor to God for the pardon of some gross sin committed; or for the prevention of some sin to which a man feels himself by Satan solicited; or to obtain some special blessing which he wants; or to avert some judgment which a man fears, or is already fallen upon himself or others; or, lastly, to subdue his flesh to his spirit, that he may more cheerfully pour forth

his soul to God by prayer. Upon these occasions a man may fast a day or longer, as his occasion requires, and the constitution of his body and other needful affairs will permit (Lev. xxiii. 32; Josh. vii. 6; Esth. iv. 16.)

3. Of the Manner of a Private Fast.

The true manner of performing a private fast consists partly in outward, partly in inward actions.

The outward actions are, to abstain, for the time that we fast—First, From all worldly business and labour, making our fasting day, as it were, a Sabbath day (Lev. xxiii. 28, 36; Joel i. 14; ii. 15;) for worldly business will distract our minds from holy devotion.

Secondly, From all manner of food; yea, from bread and water, so far as health will permit (2 Sam. iii. 35; Ezra x. 6; Dan. x. 3; Est. iv. 16; Acts ix. 9.)

1. That so we may acknowlege our own indignity, as being unworthy of life and all the means for its maintenance. 2. That by afflicting the body, the soul, which follows the constitution thereof, may be the more humbled. 3. That so we may take a godly revenge upon ourselves for abusing our liberty in the use of God’s creatures (2 Cor. vii. 11.) 4. That by the hunger of our bodies, through want of these earthly things, our souls may learn to hunger more eagerly after spiritual and heavenly food. 5. To put us in mind that as we abstain from food which is lawful, so we should much more abstain from sin, which is altogether unlawful.

Thirdly, From good and costly apparel (Exod. xxxiii. 5, 6;) that as the abuse of these puffs us up with pride, so the laying aside their lawful use may witness our humility. And to this end in ancient times they used, especially in public fasts, to put on sackcloth, or other coarse apparel (Est. iv. 1, 2; Jonah iii. 5, 6; Joel. i. 13; Matt. xi. 21.) The equity of which still remains, especially in public fasts, at which time to come into the assembly with starched bands, crisped hair, brave apparel, and decked with flowers, or perfumes, argues a soul that is neither humble before God, nor ever knew the true use of so holy an exercise.

Fourthly, From the full measure of ordinary sleep (2 Sam. xii. 16; Joel i. 13; Est. iv. 3.) That thou mayest that way also humble thy body; and that thy soul may watch and pray, to be prepared for the coming of Christ. And if thou wilt break thy sleep early and late for worldly gain, how much more shouldst thou do it for the service of God? And if Ahab, in imitation of the godly, did in his fast lie in sackcloth, to break his sleep by night (1 Kings xxi. 27), what shall we think of those who on a fasting-day will yield themselves to sleep in the open church?

Fifthly and lastly, From all outward pleasures of our senses: so that as it was not the throat only that sinned, so must not the throat only be punished; and

therefore we must endeavour to make our eyes, as at all times, so especially on that day, to fast from beholding vanities, our ears from hearing mirth or music, but such as may move to mourn; our nostrils from pleasant smells, our tongues from lying, dissembling, and slandering; that so nothing may hinder our true humiliation, but that all may be signs that we are unfeignedly humbled. Thus much of the outward manner.

The inward manner of fasting consists in two things:—1. Repentance; 2. Prayer.

Repentance hath two parts:—1. Penitency for sins past; 2. Amendment of life in time to come.

This penitency consists in three things—First, An inward insight of sin, and sense of mercy; Secondly, A bewailing of thy vile state; Thirdly, An humble and particular confession of all thy known sins,

1. Of the inward insight of Sin, and sense of Misery.

This sense and insight will be effected in thee—First, by considering thy sins, especially thy gross sins, according to the circumstance of the time when, place where, manner how, and persons with whom, it was committed. Secondly, the majesty of God against whom it was done; and the rather, because thou didst such things against him since he became a Father unto thee, and bestowed so many sweet blessings in a bountiful manner upon thee. Thirdly, in considering the curses which God has threatened for thy sin; how grievously God has plagued others for the same fault, and that no means in heaven or earth could deliver thee from being eternally damned for them, had not the Son of God so lovingly died for thee. Lastly, that if God loves thee, he must chasten thee, ere it be long, with some grievous afflictious, unless thou dost prevent him by speedy and unfeigned repentance. Let these and the like considerations so prick thy heart with sorrow, that melting for remorse within thee, it may be dissolved into a fountain of tears, trickling down thy mournful cheeks. This mourning is the beginning of true fasting, and therefore oft-times put for fasting, the first and principal part for the whole action (Matt. ix. 15.)[77]

2. Of the Bewailing of thy own State.

Bewailing or lamentation is the pouring out of the inward mourning of the heart, by the outward means of the voice, and tears of the eyes (Jer. xxxi. 18, 19, 20.) With such filial earnestness and importunity in prayer, is our heavenly Father well pleased; nay, when it is the fruit of his Spirit, and the effect of our faith, he cannot be displeased with it: for if he heard the moans which extremity wrung from Ishmael and Hagar, and hears the cry of the young ravens, and roaring of lions, how much rather will he hear the mournful lamentations which his own children make to him in their misery?

3. Of the humble Confession of Sins.

In this action thou must deal plainly with God, and acknowledge all the sins thou knowest, not only in general, but also in particular (1 Sam. vii. 6; Ezek. ix. 4; Dan. ix; Neh. i.) This has been the manner of all God's children in their fasts—First, because that without confession, thou hast no promise of mercy or forgiveness of sins (Prov. xxviii. 13; Psal. xxxii. 5;) secondly, that so thou mayest acknowledge God to be just, and thyself unrighteous (Psal. li. 4) thirdly, that by the numbering of thy sins, thy heart may be the more humbled and pulled down; fourthly, that it may appear that thou art truly penitent; for till God has given thee grace to repent, thou wilt be more ashamed to confess thy fault, than to commit thy sin. The plainer thou dealest in this respect with God, the more graciously will God deal with thee; for if thou dost "acknowledge thy sins, God is faithful and just to forgive thee thy sins; and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son shall cleanse thee from all thy sins."

To help thee the better to perform these three parts of penitency, thou mayest diligently read such chapters and portions of the holy Scriptures, as chiefly concern thy particular sins; that thou mayest see God's curse and judgments on others for the like sins, and be the more humbled thyself.

Thus far of the first part of repentance, which is penitency.

The other part, which is amendment of life, consists, First, In devout prayer; Secondly, In devout actions.

This devout prayer, which we make in time of fasting, is either deprecation of evil, or craving needful good things.

Deprecation of evil is, when thou beseechest God, for Christ the Mediator's sake, to pardon thee thy sins which thou hast confessed, and to turn from thee those judgments which are due to thee for thy sins: And as Ben-hadad, because he heard that the king of Israel was merciful, prostrated himself to him with a rope about his neck (1 Kings xx. 31;) so, because thou knowest that the King of heaven is merciful, cast down thyself in his presence, in all true signs of humiliation (especially seeing he calleth upon thee to come to him in thy troubles), and doubtless thou shalt find him most merciful (Psal. 1. 15.)

The craving of needful good things, is, First, a fervent and faithful begging of God, to seal, by his Spirit in thy heart, the assurance of the forgiveness of all thy sins. Secondly, to renew thy heart by the Holy Ghost, so that sin may daily decay, and righteousness more and more increase in thee (Phil. i. 6.) Lastly, in desiring a supply of faith, patience, charity, and all other graces which thou wantest (1 Tim. i. 5;) and an increase of those which God of his mercy has bestowed upon thee already. Thus far of Prayer and Fasting.

The devout actions in fasting are two—First, Avoiding evil. Secondly, Doing good.

1. Of avoiding Evil.

This abstinence from evil is that which is chiefly signified by thy abstinence from food, &c., and is the chief end of fasting, as the Ninevites very well knew (Jonah iii. 8, 10.) A day of fast, and not fasting from sin, the Lord abhorreth. It is not the vacuity of the stomach, but the purity of the heart, that God respects. If, therefore, thou wouldst have God to turn from thee the evil of affliction, thou must first turn away from thyself the evil of transgression. And without this fasting from evil, thy fast savours more noisome to God than thy breath doth to man. This made God so often to reject the fast of the Jews (Isa. i. 13; lviii. 3, &c.; Zech. vii. 5.) And as thou must endeavour to avoid all sin, so especially that sin wherewith thou hast provoked God, either to shake his rod at thee, or already to lay his chastening hand upon thee. And do this with a resolution, by the assistance of God's grace, never to commit those sins again. For what shall it profit a man by abstinence to humble his body, if his mind swell with pride? or to forbear wine and strong drink, and to be drunk with wrath and malice? or to let no flesh go into the belly, when lies, slanders, and ribaldry, which are worse than meat, come out of the mouth? To abstain from meat, and to do mischief, is the devil's fast, who doeth evil, and is ever hungry.

2. Of doing Good Works.

The good works which as a Christian thou must do every day, but especially on thy fasting day, are either the works of piety to God, or the works of charity towards thy brethren.

First, The works of piety to God, are the practice of all the former duties in the sincerity of a good conscience, and in the sight of God.

Secondly, The works of charity towards our brethren are, forgiving of wrongs, remitting debts to the poor that are not well able to pay; but especially in giving alms to the poor that want relief and sustenance (Isa. lviii. 6, &c.; Zech. vii. 9, 10.) Else we shall, under pretence of godliness, practise miserableness; like those who will pinch their own bellies, to defraud their labouring servants of their due allowance. As, therefore, Christ joined fasting, prayer, and alms together in precept, so must thou join them together, like Cornelius, in practice. And therefore be sure to give at the least so much to the poor, on thy fasting day, as thou wouldst have spent in thine own diet, if thou hadst not fasted that day. And remember, that "he that soweth plenteously shall reap plenteously" (2 Cor. ix. 6), and that this is a special sowing day. Let thy fasting so afflict thee, that it may refresh a poor Christian; and rejoice that thou hast dined and supped in another; or rather, that thou hast feasted hungry Christ, in his poor members.

In giving alms, observe two things: First, The Rules; Secondly, The Rewards.

1. Rules in giving of Alms and doing Good Works.

1. They must be done in obedience to God's commandments: not because we think it good, but because God requires us to do such and such a good deed; for such obedience of the worker God prefers before all sacrifices, and the greatest works (1 Sam. xv. 22.)

2. They must proceed from faith, else they cannot please God (Heb. xi. 6; Rom. xiv. 23:) Nay, without faith, the most specious works are but shining sins and Pharisees' alms.

3. Thou must not think by thy good works and alms to merit heaven; for in vain had the Son of God shed his blood, if heaven could have been purchased either for money or meat. Thou must therefore seek heaven's possession by the purchase of Christ's blood, not by the merits of thine own works; for "eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ." (Rom. vi. 23.) Yet every true Christian that believes to be saved, and hopes to come to heaven, must do good works, as the apostle saith, for necessary uses, which are four:—First, that God may be glorified (1 Cor. x. 31; 2 Cor. viii. 19; Phil. i. 11;) Secondly, that thou mayest shew thyself thankful for thy redemption (Luke i. 74, 75;) Thirdly, that thou mayest make sure thine election unto thyself (2 Pet. i. 10;) Fourthly, that thou mayest win others, by thy holy devotion, to think the better of thy Christian profession (Matt. v. 16; Isa. lxi. 9.) And for these uses we are said to be "God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and that God hath ordained us to walk in them." (Eph. ii. 10.)

4. Thou must not give thine alms to impudent vagabonds, who live in wilful idleness and filthiness, but to the religious and honest poor, who are either sick, or so old that they cannot work; or such who work, but their work cannot competently maintain them: seek out those in the back lanes, and relieve them. But if thou meetest one. that asketh an alms for Jesus' sake, and knowest him not to be unworthy, deny him not; for it is better to give unto ten counterfeits, than to suffer Christ to go, in one poor saint, unrelieved. Look not on the person, but give thy alms as unto Christ in the party.

2. Of the Rewards of Alms-deeds and Good Works.

1. Alms are a special means to move God in mercy to turn away his temporal judgments from us, when we by a true faith, that sheweth itself by such fruits, do return to him (Dan. iv. 27.)

2. Merciful alms-givers shall be the children of the Highest (Luke vi. 35, 36), and be like their Father, who is the Father of mercies (2 Cor. i. 3.) They shall be his stewards, to dispose his goods (Luke xvi. 1;) his hands, to distribute his alms: and if it be so great an honour to be the king's almoner, how much greater is it to be the God of heaven's alms-giver?

3. When all this world shall forsake us, then only good works and good angels shall accompany us, the one to receive their reward (Rev. xiv. 13), the other to deliver their charge (Luke xvi. 22; Psal. xci. 11; Heb. i. 14.)

4. Liberality in alms-deeds is our surest foundation that we shall obtain, in eternal life, a liberal reward through the merits and mercy of Christ (1 Tim. vi. 19.)

Lastly, By alms-deeds we feed and relieve Christ in his members; and Christ at the last day will acknowledge our love, and reward us in his mercy (Matt. xxv.;) and then it shall appear, that what we gave to the poor was not lost, but lent unto the Lord (Prov. xix. 17.) What, greater motives can a Christian wish, to excite him to be a liberal alms-giver?

Thus far of the manner of fasting: Now follow the ends.

3. Of the Ends of Fasting.

The true ends of fasting are not to merit God's favour or eternal life, for that we have only of the gift of God through Christ; nor to place religion in holy abstinence, for fasting in itself is not the worship of God, but an help to further us the better to worship God. But the true ends of fasting are three:—

First, To subdue our flesh to the Spirit; but not so to weaken our bodies, as that we are made unfit to do the necessary duties of our calling (1 Tim. v. 23.) "A good man," saith Solomon, "is merciful to his beast" (Prov. xii. 10), much more to his own body.

Secondly, That we may more devoutly contemplate God's holy will, and fervently pour forth our souls to him by prayer (Joel ii. 17; Luke ii. 37; 1 Cor. vii. 5.) For as there are some kind of devils, so there are also some kind of sins, which cannot be subdued but by fasting, joined to prayer (Matt. xvii. 21.)

Thirdly, That by our serious humiliation, and judging of ourselves, we may escape the judgment of the Lord (Joel ii. 18, 19; 1 Cor. xi.;) not for the merit of our fasting (which is none), but for the mercy of God, who has promised to remove his judgments from us, when we by fasting unfeignedly humble ourselves before him. And indeed no child of God ever conscionably used this holy exercise, but in the end he obtained his request at the hand of God; both in receiving graces which he wanted, as appears in the examples of Hannah, Jehoshaphat, Nehemiah, Daniel, Esther (1 Sam. i. 7; 2 Chron. xx.; Neh. i.; Dan. ix.; Esth. iv.;) as also in turning away judgments threatened, or fallen upon him, as may be seen in the examples of the Israelites, the Ninevites, Rehoboam, Ahab, Hezekiah, Mannasseh (1 Sam. vii. 6; Jonah iii.; 2 Chron. xii. 5, 7, &c.; 1 Kings xxi.; 2 Chron. xxxii.; xxxiii. 18, 19.) He who gave his dear Son from heaven to the death, to ransom us when we were his enemies, thinks nothing too dear on earth to bestow upon us, when we humble ourselves, being made his reconciled friends and children.

Thus far of the private fast.

[77]Can the children mourn? then shall they fast. And Mark and Luke, for mourn, have fast. Examples: Psal. vi., Psalm 22:1, Psalm 38:1, Psalm 79:1lxxix.; Jeremiah's Lamentations; Joel ii. 12, 17.

II. Of the Public Fast.

A public fast is when, by the authority of the magistrate (Jonah iii. 7; 2 Chron. xx. 3; Ezra viii. 21), either the whole church within his dominion, or some special congregation, whom it concerneth, assemble themselves together, to perform the fore-mentioned duties of humiliation; either for the removing of some public calamity threatened or already inflicted upon them, as the sword, invasion, famine, pestilence, or other fearful sickness (1 Sam. vii. 5, 6; Joel ii. 15; 2 Chron. xx.; Jonah iii. 5; Esth. iv. 16;) or else for the obtaining of some public blessing, for the good of the church,—as to crave the assistance of his Holy Spirit, in the election and ordination of fit and able pastors, &c., or for the trial of truth, and execution of justice, in matters of difficulty and great importance, &c. (Exod. xix.; Acts i. 13, 14.)

When any evil is to be removed, the pastors are to lay open to the people, by the evidence of God's word, the sins which were the special causes of that calamity; call upon them to repent, and publish to them the mercies of God in Christ upon their repentance (Joel. i. 14; Neh. viii.) The people must hear the voice of God's messengers with hearty sorrow for their sins; earnestly beg pardon in Christ, and promise unfeigned amendment of their life. When any blessing is to be obtained, the pastors must lay open to the people the necessity of that blessing, and the goodness of God who giveth such graces for the good of men. The people must devoutly pray to God for bestowing of that grace, and that be would bless his own means to his own glory, and the good of his church. And when the holy exercise is done, let every Christian have a special care, according to his ability, to remember the poor (Isa. lviii. 7, 10; 2 Cor. ix. 7; Gal. ii. 10.) And whosoever, when just occasion is offered, useth not this holy exercise of fasting, he may justly suspect that his heart never yet felt the power of true Christianity.

So much of fasting: Now followeth the exercise of holy feasting.

OF THE PRACTICE OF PIETY IN HOLY FEASTING.

Holy feasting is a solemn thanksgiving, appointed by authority, to be rendered to God on some special day, for some extraordinary blessings or deliverances received. Such among the Jews was the feast of the Passover (Exod. xii. 15), to remember to praise God for their deliverance out of Egypt's bondage; or the feast of Purim (Esth. ix. 19, 21), to give thanks for their deliverance from Haman's conspiracy. Such amongst us is the fifth of November, to praise God for the deliverance of the king and the whole state, from the Popish Gunpowder treason. Such feasts are to be celebrated by a public rehearsal of those special benefits, by spiritual psalms and dances, by mutual feasting, and sending presents every man to his neighbour, and by giving gifts to the poor.

But forasmuch as the benefit of our redemption was the greatest that man needs from God, or that God ever bestowed upon man; and that the Lord's Supper is left by our Redeemer as the chiefest memorial of our redemption; every Christian should account this holy supper his chiefest and most joyful feast in this world. And seeing that as it ministereth to worthy partakers the greatest assurance which they have of their salvation, so it pulleth temporal judgments on the bodies, and (without repentance) eternal damnation on the souls of them who receive it unworthily; let us see how a Christian may best fit himself to be a due partaker of so holy a feast, and to be a worthy guest at so sacred a supper.

Meditations concerning the due manner of practising Piety, in receiving the Holy Supper of the Lord.

Though no man living is of himself worthy to be a guest at so holy a banquet, yet it pleases God of his grace to accept him for a worthy receiver, who endeavours to receive that holy mystery with that competent measure of reverence that he has prescribed in his word (2 Thess. i. 11; Col. i. 1, 2; Luke xx. 35; Apoc. iii. 4.)

He that would receive this holy sacrament with due reverence, must conscionably perform three sorts of duties: First, Those which are to be done before he receives; Secondly, Those that are to be done in the receiving; Thirdly, Those that are to be done after that he has received the sacrament. The first is called preparation; the second, meditation; the third, action or practice.

I. Of Preparation.

I. Of Preparation.

That a Christian ought necessarily to prepare himself before he presume to be a partaker of the holy communion, may evidently appear by five reasons:—

First, Because it is God's commandment; for if he commanded, under the pain of death, that none uncircumcised should eat the paschal lamb (Exod. xii. 48), nor any circumcised under four days preparation, how much greater preparation does he require of him that comes to receive the sacrament of his body and blood? which, as it succeeds, so doth it exceed by many degrees the sacrament of the passover.

Secondly, Because the example of Christ teaches us so much; for he washed his disciples' feet before he admitted them to eat of this supper; signifying how thou shouldst lay aside all impureness of heart, and uncleanness of life, and be furnished with humility and charity, before thou presumest to taste of this holy supper (John xiii. 5.)

Thirdly, Because it is the counsel of the Holy Ghost: "Let every man examine himself and so let him eat," &c. (1 Cor. xi. 28.) And if a man, when he is to eat with an earthly prince, must consider diligently what is before him, and put a knife to his throat, rather than commit any rudeness (Prov. xxiii. 1, 2), how much more oughtest thou to prepare thy soul, that thou mayest behave thyself with all fear and reverence when thou art to feast at the holy table of the Prince of princes.

Fourthly, Because it has been ever the practice of all God's saints, to use holy preparation before they would meddle with divine mysteries. David would not go near to God's altar, till he had first washed his hands in innocency (Psal. xxvi. 6;) much less shouldst thou, without due preparation, approach the Lord's table. Abimelech would not give, nor David and his men would not eat the shew-bread, but on condition that they were pure from all defilement (1 Sam. xxi. 4;) how much less shouldst thou presume to eat the Lord's bread, or rather the bread which is the Lord, unless thy heart be first cleansed by repentance? And if the Lord required Joshua, as he had done Moses before, to put off his shoes, in reverence of his holiness (Exod. iii. 5; Josh. v. 14), who was present in that place, where he appeared with a sword in his hand, for the destruction of his enemies; how much rather shouldst thou put off all the affections of thine earthly conversation, when thou comest near that place, where Christ appeareth to the eye of thy faith, with wounds in his hands and side, for the redemption of his friends? And for this cause it is said, that the Lamb's wife hath made herself ready for the marriage (Rev. xix. 7.) Prepare therefore thyself, if thou wilt in this life he betrothed unto Christ by sacramental grace, or in heaven married unto him by eternal glory.

Fifthly, Because God hath ever smitten with fearful judgments those who have presumed to use his holy ordinances without due fear and preparation. God set a flaming sword in a cherubim's hand to smite our first parents, being defiled with sin, if they should attempt to go into paradise to eat the sacrament of the tree of life (Gen. iii. 24.) Fear thou, therefore, to be smitten with the sword of God's vengeance, if thou presumest to go to the church with an impenitent heart, to eat the sacrament of the Lord of life. God smote 50,000 of the Bethshemites for looking irreverently into his ark, and killed Uzza with sudden death, for but rashly touching the ark, and smote Uzziah with a leprosy for meddling with the priest's office, which pertained not to him (1 Sam. vi. 19; 1 Chron. xiii. 9, &c.; 2 Chron. xxvi. 19.) The fear of such a stroke made Hezekiah so earnestly pray to God that he would not smite the people that wanted time to prepare themselves as they should, to eat the passover: and it is said, that the Lord heard Hezekiah, and healed the people; intimating, that had it not been for Hezekiah's prayer, the Lord had smitten the people for their want of due preparation. And the man who came to the marriage-feast without his wedding garment, or examining himself, was examined by another; and thereupon bound hand and foot, and cast into utter darkness (Matt. xxii. 12.) And St. Paul tells the Corinthians, that for want of this preparation in examining and judging themselves, before they did eat the Lord's Supper, God had sent that fearful sickness among them, of which some were then sick, others weak, and many fallen asleep, that is, taken away by temporal death; insomuch that the apostle saith, that every unworthy receiver eats his own judgment,—temporal, if he repents; eternal, if he repents not; and that in so heinous a measure, as if he were guilty of the very body and blood of the Lord, whereof this sacrament is a holy sign and seal (1 Cor. xi. 27, 30.) And princes punish the indignity offered to their great seal, in as deep a measure as that which is done to their own persons, whom it represents. And how heinous the guiltiness of Christ's blood is, may appear by the misery of the Jews ever since they wished his blood to be on them and their children (Matt. xxvii. 25.) But then thou wilt say, it were safer to abstain from coming at all to the holy communion: not so, for God has threatened to punish the wilful neglect of his sacraments with eternal damnation both of body and soul (Numb. ix. 13; Heb. ii. 3; Matt. xxvi. 26; 1 Cor. xi. 24.) And it is the commandment of Christ, "Take, eat; do this in remembrance of me;" and he will have his commandment, under the penalty of this curse, obeyed. And seeing that this sacrament was the greatest token of Christ's love, which he left at his end to his friends whom he loved to the end (John xiii. 1), therefore the neglect and contempt of this sacrament must argue the contempt and neglect of his love and blood shedding (Heb. x. 29;) than which no sin in God's account can seem more heinous. Nothing hinders why thou mayest not come freely to the Lord's table; but because thou hadst rather want the love of God, than leave thy filthy sins.

O come, but come a guest prepared for the Lord's table; seeing they are blessed who are called to the Lamb's supper (Rev. xix. 9.) O come, but come prepared, because the efficacy of the sacrament is received according to the proportion of the faith of the receiver.

This preparation consists in the serious consideration of three things: First, Of the worthiness of the sacrament, which is termed, to discern the Lord's body; Secondly, Of thine own unworthiness, which is, to judge thyself; Thirdly, Of the means whereby thou mayest become a worthy receiver, called communion of the Lord's body.

1. Of the Worthiness of the Sacrament.

The worthiness of this sacrament is considered three ways: First, By the majesty of the author ordaining; Secondly, By the preciousness of the parts of which it consists; Thirdly, By the excellency of the ends for which it was ordained.

(1.) Of the Author of the Sacrament.

The author was not any saint or angel, hut our Lord Jesus, the eternal Son of God. For it pertains to Christ only, under the New Testament, to institute a sacrament; because he only can promise and perform the grace that it signifieth. And we are charged to hear no voice but his in his church (Matt. xvii. 5.) How sacred should we esteem the ordinance that proceeds from so divine an author.

(2.) Of the Parts of the Sacrament.

The parts of this blessed sacrament are three: First, The earthly signs signifying; Secondly, The divine word sanctifying; Thirdly, The heavenly graces signified.

First, The earthly signs are bread and wine, in number two, but one in use (1 Cor. xi. 23, &c.; Prov. ix. 5.)

Secondly, The divine, word is the word of Christ's institution, pronounced with prayers and blessings by a lawful minister (Heb. v. 4; Numb. xvi. 40; 1 Cor. x. 16.) The bread and wine without the word are nothing but as they were before; but when the word comes to those elements, then they are made a sacrament; and God is present with his own ordinance, and ready to perform whatsoever he promises. The divine words of blessing do not change or annihilate the substance of the bread and wine, for if their substance did not remain it could be no sacrament; but it changes them in use and in name. For that which was before but common bread and wine to nourish men's bodies, is, after the blessing, destinated to an holy use, for feeding of the souls of Christians. And where before they were called but bread and wine, they are now called by the name of those holy things which they signify, the body and blood of Christ: the better to draw our minds from those outward elements to

the heavenly graces, which by the sight of our bodies they represent to the spiritual eyes of our faith. Neither did Christ direct these words, “This is my body, this is my blood,” to the bread and wine, but to his disciples, as appears by the words going before, “Take ye, eat ye.” Neither is the bread his body, but in the same sense that the cup is the New Testament, viz. by a sacramental metonymy And St. Mark notes plainly that the words, “This is my blood,” &c., were not pronounced by our Saviour till after that all his disciples had drunk of the cup (Mark xiv, 23, 24.) And afterwards in respect of the natural substance thereof, he calls that the fruit of the vine, which, in respect of the spiritual signification thereof, he had before termed his blood (verse 25), after the manner of terming all sacraments. And Christ bids us not to make him, but to do this in remembrance of him; and he bids us eat not simply his body, but his body as it was then broken, and his blood shed; which St. Paul expounds to be but the communion of Christ’s body, and the communion of his blood (1 Cor. x. 16;) that is, an effectual pledge that we are partakers of Christ and of all the merits of his body and blood. And by the frequent use of this communion, Paul will have us to make a shew of the Lord’s death till he come from heaven (1 Cor. xi. 26; Acts iii. 21; i. 11), and till we, as eagles, shall be caught up into the air to meet him who is the blessed carcase and life of our souls (Matt. xxiv. 27, 28.)

Thirdly, The spiritual graces are likewise two: the body of Christ, as it was with the feeling of God’s anger due to us, crucified; and his blood as it was, in the like sort, shed for the remission of our sins. They are in number two, but in use one, viz. whole Christ, with all his benefits, offered to all, and given indeed to the faithful. These are the three integral parts of this blessed sacrament, the sign, the word, and the grace. The sign without the word, or the word without the sign, can do nothing; and both conjoined are unprofitable without the grace signified; but all three concurring make an effectual sacrament to a worthy receiver. Some receive the outward sign without the spiritual grace, as Judas, who, as Austin saith, received the bread of the Lord, but not the bread which was the Lord. Some receive the spiritual grace without the outward sign, as the saint thief on the cross, and innumerable of the faithful who dying desire it, but cannot receive it through some external impediments; but the worthy receivers to their comfort receive both in the Lord’s Supper.

Christ chose bread and wine, rather than any other elements, to be the outward signs in this blessed sacrament: First, Because they are easiest for all sorts to attain unto; Secondly, To teach us that as man’s temporal life is chiefly nourished by bread[78] and cherished by wine, so are our souls by his body and blood sustained and quickened unto eternal life. Christ appointed wine with the bread to be the outward signs in this sacrament, to teach us—First, That as the perfect nourishment, of man’s body consists both of meat and drink; so Christ is unto our souls not in part, but in perfection, both salvation and

nourishment; Secondly, That by seeing the sacramental wine apart from the bread, we should remember how all his precious blood was spilt out of his blessed body for the remission of sins. The outward signs the pastor gives in the church, and thou dost eat with the mouth of thy body; the spiritual grace Christ reacheth from heaven, and thou must eat it with the mouth of thy faith.

(3.) Of the Ends for which this holy Sacrament was ordained.

The excellent and admirable ends or fruits, for which this blessed sacrament was ordained, are seven.

Of the first End of the Lord's Supper.

1. To keep Christians in a continual remembrance of that propitiatory sacrifice which Christ, once for all, offered by his death upon the cross, to reconcile us to God (Matt. xxvi. 26.) "Do this," saith Christ, "in remembrance of me." (Luke xxii. 19.) And, saith the apostle, "As oft as ye shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. xi. 26;) and he saith that by this sacrament, and the preaching of the word, Jesus Christ was as evidently set forth before the eyes of the Galatians, as if he had been crucified among them (Gal. iii. 1;) for the whole action represents Christ's death, the breaking of the bread blessed, the crucifying of his blessed body, and the pouring forth of the sanctified wine, the shedding of his holy blood. Christ was once in himself really offered (Heb. ix. 26; x. 12x. 12;) but as oft as the sacrament is celebrated, so oft is he spiritually offered by the faithful.

Hence the Lord's Supper is called a propitiatory sacrifice, not properly or really, but figuratively; because it is a memorial of that propitiatory sacrifice which Christ offered upon the cross. And to distinguish it from that real sacrifice, the fathers call it the unbloody sacrifice.[79] It is called the Eucharist, because the "church in this action offers to God the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for her redemption, effected by the true and only expiatory sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. If the sight of Moab's king sacrificing on his walls his own son, to move his gods to rescue him (2 Kings iii. 27), moved the assailing kings to such pity, that they ceased the assault, and raised their siege, how should the spiritual sight of God the Father, sacrificing on the cross his only-begotten Son to save thy soul, move thee to love God thy Redeemer, and to leave sin, that could not in justice be expiated by any meaner ransom?

Of the second End of the Lord's Supper.

2. To confirm our faith; for God by this sacrament doth signify and seal unto us from heaven, that according to the promise and new covenant which he hath made in Christ, he will truly receive into his grace and mercy all penitent believers who duly receive this holy sacrament; and that for the merits of the death and passion of Christ, he will as verily forgive them all their sins as they

are made partakers of this sacrament. In this respect the holy sacrament is called “the seal of the new covenant and remission of sins.” (Rom. iv. 11; Matt. xxvi. 28; 1 Cor. xi. 25.) In our greatest doubts we may, therefore, receiving this sacrament, undoubtedly say with Samson’s mother, “If the Lord would kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would at this time have told us such things as these.” (Judges xiii. 23.)

Of the third End of the Lord’s Supper.

3. To be a pledge and symbol of the most near and effectual communion which Christians have with Christ. “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” (1 Cor. x. 16;) that is, a most effectual sign and pledge of our communion with Christ. This union is called abiding in us, joining to the Lord, dwelling in our hearts (John xiv. 16, 23; 1 Cor. vi. 17, κόλλησις; Eph. iii. 17, κατοίκησις)—and set forth in the holy Scriptures by divers similes:—First, Of the vine and branches (John xv. 5.) Secondly, Of the head and body (Eph. iii. 6, σύσσωμα; Eph. v. 23; Col. i. 18; Rom. xii. 4, 5.) Thirdly, Of the foundation and building (Eph. ii. 19, 20.) Fourthly, Of one loaf confected of many grains (1 Cor. x. 17.) Fifthly, Of the matrimonial union between man and wife, and such like (Eph. v. 31, 32; Rev. xxi. 2.) And it is threefold between Christ and Christians. The first is natural, between our human nature, and Christ’s divine nature in the person of the word; the second is mystical, between our persons absent from the Lord, and the person of Christ, God and man, in one mystical body; the third is celestial, between our persons present with the Lord, and the person of Christ in a body glorified: these three conjunctions depend each upon other; for, had not our nature been first hypostatically united to the nature of God in the second Person, we could never have been united to Christ in a mystical body. And if we be not in this life, though absent, united to Christ by a mystical union, we shall never have communion of glory with him in his heavenly presence. The mystical union, chiefly here meant, is wrought between Christ and us by the Spirit of Christ apprehending us; and by our faith stirred up by the -same Spirit, apprehending Christ again: both which St. Paul doth most lively express—“I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.” (Phil. iii. 12.) How can he fall away that holds, and is so firmly holden? This union he shall best understand in his mind who doth most feel it in his heart. But of all other times this union is best felt, and most confirmed, when we duly receive the Lord’s Supper: for then we shall sensibly feel our hearts knit unto Christ, and the desires of our souls drawn by faith and the Holy Ghost, as by the cords of love, nearer and nearer to his holiness.

From this communion with Christ, there follow to the faithful many unspeakable benefits—

As, first, Christ took by imputation all their sins and guiltiness upon him, to satisfy God's justice for them (Rom. iv. 25;) and he freely gives, by imputation, unto us all his righteousness in this life, and all his right unto eternal life when this is ended (Phil. iii. 9;) and counteth all the good or ill that is done unto us, as done unto his own person (Matt. xxv. 35; Acts ix. 4; Zech. ii. 8.)

Secondly, There floweth from Christ's nature into our nature, united to him, the lively spirit and breath of grace, which reneweth us to a spiritual life (Eph. iv. 23, 24;) and so sanctifieth our minds, wills, and affections, that we daily grow more and more conformable to the image of Christ (Rom. viii. 29; 2 Cor. iii. 18.)

Thirdly, He bestoweth upon them all saving graces necessary to attain eternal life, as the sense of God's love, the assurance of our election, with regeneration, justification, and grace to do good works (John xv. 5; i. 16; 2 Cor. viii. 1, 4, 6, 7, 19), till we come to live with him in his heavenly kingdom. This should teach all true Christians to keep themselves as the undefiled members of Christ's holy body, and to beware of all uncleanness and filthiness, knowing that they live in Christ, or rather, that Christ liveth in them. From this union with Christ (sealed unto us by the Lord's Supper) St. Paul draweth arguments to withdraw the Corinthians from the pollution both of idolatry and adultery (1 Cor. x. 7, 8, 16, 21.)

Lastly, From the former communion between Christ and Christians, there flows another communion between Christians among themselves, which is also lively represented by the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; in that the whole church, being many, do all communicate of one bread in that holy action: "We being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread" (1 Cor. x. 17;) that as the bread which we eat in the sacrament is but one, though it be confected of many grains; so all the faithful, though they be many, yet are they but one mystical body, under one' head, which is Christ. Our Saviour prayed five times, in that prayer which he made after his last supper, that his disciples might be one (John xvii. 11, 21, 22, 23, 26), to teach us at once how much this unity pleases him. This union between the faithful is so ample, that no distance of place can part it; so strong, that death cannot dissolve it; so durable, that time cannot wear it out; so effectual, that it breeds a fervent love between those who never saw one another's face. And this conjunction of souls is termed the communion of saints, which Christ effects by six special means:—first, By governing them all by one and the same Holy Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 13;) Secondly, By enduing them all with one and the same faith (Eph. iv. 5;) Thirdly, By shedding abroad his own love into all their hearts (Rom. v. 5;) Fourthly, By regenerating them all by one and the same baptism (Titus iii. 5; Eph. iv. 5;) Fifthly, By nourishing them all with one and the same spiritual food (1 Cor. x. 3, 17;) Sixthly, By being one quickening head of that one body of his church (Col. i. 18), which he reconciled to God in the body of

his flesh (ver. 22.) Hence it was that the multitude of believers in the primitive church were of one heart and of one soul, in truth, affection, and compassion (Acts iv. 32.) And this should teach Christians to love one another, seeing they are all members of the same holy and mystical body, of which Christ is head. And therefore they should have all a Christian sympathy and fellow-feeling, to rejoice one in another's joy, to condole one in another's grief, to bear with one another's infirmity, and mutually to relieve one another's wants.

Of the fourth End of the Lord's Supper.

4. To feed the souls of the faithful, in the assured hope of life everlasting. For this sacrament is a sign and pledge, to as many as shall receive the same according to Christ's institution, that he will, according to his promise, by the virtue of his crucified body and blood, as verily feed our souls to life eternal, as our bodies are by bread and wine nourished to this temporal life. And to this end, Christ, in the action of the sacrament, really giveth his very body and blood to every faithful receiver.[80] Therefore the sacrament is called the "communion of the body and blood of the Lord." (1 Cor. x. 16.) And communication is not of things absent, but present;[81] neither were it the Lord's Supper, if the Lord's body and blood were not there. Christ is verily present in the sacrament, by a double union: whereof the first is spiritual, between Christ and the worthy receiver; the second is sacramental, between the body and blood of Christ, and the outward signs in the sacrament. The former is wrought by means that the same Holy Spirit, dwelling in Christ and in the faithful, incorporates the faithful, as members to Christ their head, and so makes them one with Christ, and partakers of all the graces, holiness, and eternal glory, which are in him, as sure and as verily as they hear the words of the promise, and are partakers of the outward signs of the holy sacrament. Hence it is that the will of Christ is a true Christian's will, and the Christian's life is Christ, who liveth in him (Gal. ii. 20.) If ye look to the things that are united, this union is essential; if to the truth of this union, it is real; if to the manner how it is wrought, it is spiritual. It is not our faith that makes the body and blood of Christ to be present, but the Spirit of Christ dwelling in him and us. Our faith doth but receive and apply to our souls those heavenly graces which are offered in the sacrament.

The other, being the sacramental union, is not a physical or local, but a spiritual conjunction of the earthly signs, which are bread and wine, with the heavenly graces, which are the body and blood of Christ, in the act of receiving: as if, by a mutual relation, they were but one and the same thing. Hence it is, that in the same instant of time that the worthy receiver eats with his mouth the bread and wine of the Lord, he eateth also with the mouth of his faith the very body and blood of Christ:[82] not that Christ is brought down from heaven to the sacrament, but that the Holy Spirit by the sacrament lifts up his mind unto Christ,[83] not by any local mutation, but by a devout affection; so

that, in the holy contemplation of faith, he is at that present with Christ, and Christ with him[84] And thus believing and meditating how Christ's body was crucified, and his precious blood shed for the remission of his sins, and the reconciliation of his soul unto God, his soul is hereby more effectually fed in the assurance of eternal life, than bread and wine can nourish his body to this temporal life. There must be, therefore, of necessity in the sacrament, both the outward signs, to be visibly seen with the eyes of the body, and the body and blood of Christ, to be spiritually discerned with the eye of faith. But the form, how the Holy Ghost makes the body of Christ, being absent from us in place, to be present with us by our union, St. Paul terms a great mystery (Eph. v. 32), such as our understanding cannot worthily comprehend. The sacramental bread and wine, therefore, are not bare signifying signs, but such as wherewith Christ indeed exhibits and gives to every worthy receiver, not only his divine virtue and efficacy, but also his very body and blood, as verily as he gave to his disciples the Holy Ghost, by the sign of his sacred breath, or health to the diseased, by the word of his mouth, or touch of his hand or garment:[85] and the apprehension by faith is more forcible than the most exquisite comprehension of sense or reason. To conclude this point. This holy sacrament is that blessed bread which, being eaten, opened the eyes of the disciples at Emmaus, that they knew Christ (Luke xxiv. 30, 41.) This is that lordly cup, by which we are all made to drink into one Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 13.) This is that rock, flowing with honey, that reviveth the fainting spirits of every true Jonathan that tastes it with the mouth of faith (1 Sam. xiv. 27.) This is that barley loaf, which, tumbling from above, strikes down the tents of the Midianites of infernal darkness (Judges vii. 13.) Elias's angelical cake and water preserved him forty days in Horeb (1 Kings xix. 6, 7, 8;) and manna, angels' food, fed the Israelites forty years in the wilderness (Psal. lxxviii. 24, 25; Exod. xvi. 35;) but this is that true bread of life, and heavenly manna (John vi. 32, 35, 49, 50), which if we shall duly eat, will nourish our souls for ever unto life eternal (ver. 51, 58.) How should, then, our souls make unto Christ that request from a spiritual desire, which the people of Capernaum did from a carnal motion, "Lord, evermore give us this bread?" (John vi. 34.)

The fifth End of the Lord's Supper.

5. To be an assured pledge unto us of our resurrection. The resurrection of a Christian is twofold: First, The spiritual resurrection of our souls, in this life, from the death of sin (John v. 25; Rom. vi. 4, 5, 11), called the first resurrection; because that by the trumpet-voice of Christ, in the preaching of the gospel, we are raised from the death of sin to the life of grace: "Blessed and holy is he," saith St. John, "who hath part in the first resurrection; for on such the second death hath no power." (Rev. xx. 6.) The Lord's Supper is both a mean and a pledge unto us of this spiritual and first resurrection: "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me." (John vi. 57.) And then we are fit guests

to sit at the table with Christ, when, like Lazarus, we are raised from the death of sin to newness of life (John xii. 2.)

The truth of this first resurrection will appear by the motion wherewith they are internally moved: For if, when thou art moved to the duties of religion and practice of piety, thy heart answers, with Samuel, “Here I am, speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth” (1 Sam. iii. 10;) and with David, “O God, my heart is ready” (Psal. cviii. 1;) and with Paul, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” (Acts ix. 6;) then surely thou art raised from the death of sin, and hast thy part in this first resurrection: But if thou remainest ignorant of the true grounds of religion, and findest in thyself a kind of secret loathing of its exercises, and must be drawn, as it Were, against thy will, to do the works of piety, &c., then surely thou hast but a name that thou livest, but thou art dead, as Christ told the angel of the church of Sardis, and thy soul is but as salt to keep thy body from stinking.

Secondly, The corporeal resurrection of our bodies at the last day, which is called the second resurrection, which frees us from the first death: “He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John vi. 54.) For this sacrament signifies and seals to us, that Christ died and rose again for us, and that his flesh quickeneth and nourisheth us unto eternal life, and that therefore our bodies shall surely be raised to eternal life at the last day. For seeing our Head is risen, all the members of the body shall likewise surely rise again. For how can those bodies, which, being the weapons of righteousness (Rom. vi. 13), temples of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 19), and members of Christ, having been fed and nourished with the body and blood of the Lord of life, but be raised up again at the last day? And this is the cause that the bodies of the saints, being dead, are so reverently buried and laid to sleep in the Lord; and their burial-places are termed the beds and dormitories of the saints (Isa. xxvi. 19, 20.) The reprobates shall arise at the last day, but by the almighty power of Christ, as he is Judge, bringing them, as malefactors out of the jail, to receive their sentence, and deserved execution: but the elect shall arise by virtue of Christ’s resurrection, and of the communion which they have with him, as with their head. And his resurrection is the cause and assurance of ours. The resurrection of Christ is a Christian’s particular faith: the resurrection of the dead is the child of God’s chiefest confidence. Therefore Christians in the primitive church were wont to salute one another in the morning with these phrases: “The Lord is risen;” and the other would answer, “True, the Lord is risen indeed.” Κύριος ἀνέστη, ὀρθῶς ανέστη.

The sixth End of the Lord’s Supper.

6. To seal to us the assurance of everlasting life. Oh what more wished or loved than life! Or what do all men naturally either fear or abhor more than

death? Yet is this first death nothing, if it be compared with the second death: neither is this life anything worth, in comparison of the life to come. If, therefore, thou desirest to be assured of eternal life, prepare thyself to be a worthy receiver of this blessed sacrament. For our Saviour assures us, that "if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." (John vi. 51.) He, therefore, who duly eateth of this holy sacrament, may truly say, not only Credo vitam æternam, I believe life everlasting; but also, Edo vitam ceternam, I eat life everlasting. And indeed, this is the true tree of life, which God hath planted in the midst of the paradise of the church; and to eat of which he hath promised to give to every one that overcometh (Rev. ii. 7.) And this tree of life by infinite degrees excels the tree of life that grew in the paradise of Eden; for that had his root in the earth, this from heaven; that gave but life to the body, this to the soul; that did but preserve the life of the living, this restoreth life to the dead. The leaves of this tree heal the nations of believers; and it yields every month a new manner of fruit, which nourisheth them to life everlasting (Rev. xxii. 2.) Oh, blessed are they who often eat of this sacrament; at least, once every month, taste anew of this renewing fruit, which Christ hath prepared for us at his table, to heal our infirmities, and to confirm our belief of life everlasting!

Of the seventh End of the Lord's Supper.

7. To bind all Christians, as it were, by an oath of fidelity, to serve the one only true God;[86] and to admit no other propitiatory sacrifice for sins, but that one real sacrifice which, by his death, Christ once offered, and by which he finished the sacrifices of the law, and effected eternal redemption and righteousness for all believers; and so to remain for ever a public mark of profession, to distinguish Christians from all sects and false religions. And seeing that in the mass there is a strange Christ adored, not he that was born of the Virgin Mary, but one that is made of a wafer-cake; and that the offering up of this breaden god is thrust upon the church as "a propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and the dead;" all true Christians, upon the danger of wilful perjury before the Lord Chief-Justice of heaven and earth, are to detest the mass as the idol of indignation, which is most derogatory to the all-sufficient, world-saving merits of Christ's death and passion. For by receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, we all swear that all real sacrifices are ended by our Lord's death; and that his body and blood, once crucified and shed, is the perpetual food and nourishment of our souls.

2. How to consider thy own Unworthiness.

A man shall best perceive his own unworthiness, by examining his life according to the ten commandments of almighty God. Search, therefore, what duties thou hast omitted, and what vices thou hast committed, contrary to

every one of the commandments: remembering, that without repentance and God's mercy in Christ, the curse of God (containing all the miseries of this life, and everlasting torments in hell-fire, when this is ended) -is due to the breach of the least of God's commandments (Deut. xxvii. 26; Gal. iii. 10.) And having taken a due survey both of thy sins and miseries, retire to some secret place, and there, putting thyself in the sight of the Judge, as a guilty malefactor standing at the bar to receive his sentence, bowing thy knees to the earth, smiting thy breast with thy fists, and bedewing thy cheeks with thy tears, confess thy sins, and humbly ask him mercy and forgiveness, in these or the like words:—

An humble Confession of Sins, to be made to God before the receiving of the Holy Communion.

O God and heavenly Father, when I consider the goodness which thou hast ever shewed unto me, and the wickedness which I have committed against Heaven and against thee, I am ashamed of myself, and confusion seems to cover my face as a veil; for which of thy commandments have I not transgressed? O Lord, I stand here guilty of the breach of all thy holy laws. For the love of my heart hath not so entirely cleaved unto thy majesty as to vain and earthly things. I have not feared thy judgments, to deter me from sins, nor trusted to thy promises, to keep me from doubting of my temporal, or from despairing of mine eternal state.[87] I have made the rule of thy divine worship to be what my mind thought fit, not what thy word prescribed; finding my heart more prone to remember my blessed Saviour in a painted picture of man's device, rather than to behold him crucified in his word and sacraments after his own ordinance.[88] Where I should never use thy name (whereat all knees do bow) but with religious reverence, nor any part of thy worship without due preparation and zeal, I have blasphemously abused thy holy name by rash and customary oaths; yea, I have used oaths by thy sacred name, as false covers of my filthy sins; and I have been present at thy service oft-times more for ceremony than conscience, and to please men more than to please thee, my gracious God.[89]

Where I should sanctify thy Sabbath-day, by being present at the public exercises of the church, and by meditating privately on the word and works of God, by visiting the sick, and relieving my poor brethren; alas! I have thought those holy exercises a burden, because they hindered my vain sports; yea, I have spent many of thy Sabbaths in my own profane pleasures, without being present at any of thy divine worship.[90]

Where I should have given all due reverence to my natural, ecclesiastical, and politic parents, I have not shewed that measure of duty and affection to my parents which their care and kindness hath deserved. I have not had thy ministers in such singular love for their work's sake, as I ought; but I have

taunted at their zeal, and hated them because they reproved me justly: and I have carried myself contemptuously against thy magistrates and ministers, though I knew that it is thine ordinance that I should be obedient unto them.[91]

Where I should be slow to wrath, and ready to forgive offences, and not suffer the sun to go down upon my wrath, but to do good for evil, loving my very enemies for thy sake, I, alas! for one sorry word, have burst out into open rage; and harbouring thoughts of mischief in my heart, I have preferred to feed on mine own malice, rather than to eat of thy holy supper.[92]

Where I should keep my mind from all filthy lusts, and my body from all uncleanness, O Lord, I have defiled both, and made my heart a cage of all impure thoughts, and my mind a very sty of the unclean spirit.[93]

Where I should have lived in uprightness, giving every man his due, being contented with mine own estate, and living conscionably in my lawful calling; should be ready, according to my ability, to lend and give unto the poor, O Lord, I have, by oppression, extortion, bribes, cavillation, and other indirect dealings, under pretence of my calling and office, robbed and purloined from my fellow-Christians; yea, I have deceived and suffered Christ, where was trusted, many a time, in his poor members, to stand hungry, cold, and naked, at my door, and hungry, cold, and naked, to go away succourless, as he came; and when the leanness of his cheeks pleaded pity, the hardness of my heart would shew no compassion.[94]

Where I should have made conscience to speak the truth in simplicity, without any falsehood, prudently judging aright, and charitably construing all things in the best part, and should have defended the good name and credit of my neighbour; alas! vile wretch that I am! I have belied and slandered my fellow-brother; and as soon as I heard an ill report, I made my tongue the instrument of the devil, to blazon that abroad to others, before I knew the truth of it myself. I was so far from speaking a good word in defence of his good name, that it tickled my heart in secret to hear one that I envied to be taxed with such a blemish, though I knew that otherwise the graces of God shined in him in abundant measure. I made jests of officious, and advantage of pernicious lies; herein shewing myself a right Cretian, rather than an upright Christian.[95]

And lastly, O Lord, where I should have rested fully contented with that portion which thy majesty thought meetest to bestow upon me in this pilgrimage, and rejoiced in another’s good as in mine own; alas! my life hath been nothing else but a greedy lusting after this neighbour’s house, and that neighbour’s land; yea, secretly wishing such a man dead, that I might have his living or office; coveting those things which thou hast bestowed on another, rather than being thankful for that which thou hast given unto myself.[96] Thus I, O Lord, who am a carnal sinner, and sold under sin, have transgressed all

thy holy and spiritual commandments, from the first to the last, from the greatest to the least; and here I stand guilty before thy judgment-seat, of all the breaches of all thy laws, and therefore liable to thy curse, and to all the miseries that justice can pour forth upon so cursed a creature. And whither shall I go for deliverance from this misery? Angels blush at my rebellion, and will not help me: men are guilty of the like transgression, and cannot help themselves. Shall I, then, despair with Cain, or make away myself with Judas? No, Lord; for that were but to end the miseries of this life, and to begin the endless torments of hell. I will rather appeal to thy throne of grace, where mercy reigns to pardon abounding sins; and out of the depth of my miseries, I will cry, with David, for the depth of thy mercies. Though thou shouldst kill me with afflictions, yet will I, like Job, put my trust in thee. Though thou shouldst drown me in the sea of thy displeasure, with Jonas, yet will I catch such hold on thy mercy, that I will be taken up dead, clasping her with both my hands. And though thou shouldst cast me into the bowels of hell, as Jonas into the belly of the whale, yet from thence would I cry unto thee, "O God, the Father of heaven, O Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world, O Holy Ghost, my sanctifier, three persons, and one eternal God, have mercy upon me, a miserable sinner!" And seeing the goodness of thine own nature first moved thee to send thine only-begotten Son to die for my sins, that by his death I might be reconciled to thy majesty, O reject not now my penitent soul, who being displeased with herself for sin, desireth to return, serve, and please thee in newness of life; and reach from heaven thy helping hand to save me, thy poor servant, who am, like Peter, ready to sink in the sea of my sins and misery. Wash away the multitude of my sins with the merits of that blood which I believe that thou hast so abundantly shed for penitent sinners.

And now that I am to receive this day the blessed sacrament of thy precious body and blood, O Lord, I beseech thee, let thy Holy Spirit, by thy sacrament, seal unto my soul, that by the merits of thy death and passion, all my sins are so freely and fully remitted and forgiven, that the curses and judgments which my sins have deserved, may never have power either to confound me in this life, or to condemn me in the world which is to come. For my steadfast faith is, that thou hast died for my sins, and risen again for my justification (Rom. iv. 25.) This I believe; O Lord, help my unbelief. Work in me likewise, I beseech thee, an unfeigned repentance, that I may heartily bewail my former sins, and loath them, and serve thee henceforth in newness of life, and greater measure of holy devotion; and let my soul never forget the infinite love of so sweet a Saviour, that hath laid down his life to redeem so vile a sinner. And grant, Lord, that having received these seals and pledges of my communion with thee, thou mayest henceforth so dwell by thy Spirit in me, and I so live by faith in thee, that I may carefully walk all the days of my life in godliness and piety towards thee, and in Christian love and charity towards all my neighbours:

that living in thy fear, I may die in thy favour, and after death be made partaker of eternal life, through Jesus Christ, my Lord and only Saviour. Amen.

3. Of the Means whereby thou mayest become a worthy Receiver.

These means are duties of two sorts; the former respecting God, the latter, our neighbour. Those which respect God are three—First, Sound knowledge; secondly, True faith; thirdly, Unfeigned repentance. That which respecteth our neighbour is but one, sincere charity.

(1.) Of sound Knowledge, requisite in a worthy Communicant.

Sound knowledge is a sanctified understanding of the first, principles of religion: As first, Of the trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead; secondly, Of the creation of man, and his fall; thirdly, Of the curse and misery due to sin; fourthly, Of the nature and offices of Christ, and redemption by faith in his death, especially of the doctrine of the sacraments, sealing the same unto us (Heb. vi. 1, 2; John xvii. 3; 1 Tim. ii. 4; 2 Cor. xiii. 5.) For as an house cannot be built unless the foundation be first laid, so no more can religion stand, unless it be first grounded upon the certain knowledge of God's word. Secondly, if we know not God's will, we can neither believe nor do the same. For as worldly businesses cannot be done but by them who have skill in them, so without knowledge must men be much more ignorant in divine and spiritual matters. And yet in temporal things a man may do much by the light of nature: but in religious mysteries, the more we rely upon natural reason, the further we are from comprehending spiritual truth (1 Cor. ii. 14; Rom. viii. 7;)—which discovers the fearful state of those who receive without knowledge, and the more fearful state of those pastors who minister to them without catechising.

(2.) Of sincere Faith, required to make a worthy Communicant.

Sincere faith is not a bare knowledge of the Scriptures and first grounds of religion—for that devils and reprobates have in an excellent measure, and do believe it and tremble (James ii. 19)—but a true persuasion, as of all those things whatsoever the Lord hath revealed in his word; so also a particular application to a man's own soul, of all the promises of mercy which God hath made in Christ to all believing sinners (Heb. iv. 2;) and consequently, that Christ and all his merits do belong to him, as well as to any other;—for first, if we have not the righteousness of faith (Rom. iv. 11), the sacrament seals nothing to us, and every man in the Lord's Supper receiveth so much as he believeth; secondly, because that without faith we communicating on earth, cannot apprehend Christ in heaven, for as he dwelleth in us by faith (Eph. iii. 17), so by faith we must likewise eat him; thirdly, because that without faith we cannot be persuaded in our consciences that our receiving is acceptable unto God (Heb. xi. 6; Rom. xiv. 23.)

(3.) Of unfeigned Repentance requisite for a true Communicant.

True repentance is a holy change of the mind, when upon the feeling sight of God's mercy, and of a man's own misery, he turneth from all his known and secret sins, to serve God in holiness and righteousness all the rest of his days (Isa. lv. 7; Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Acts xxvi. 29; iii. 19; Luke i. 74, 75:) for as he that is glutted with meat is not apt to eat bread, so he that is stuffed with sins, is not fit to receive Christ (Heb. ii. 13, 14; Tit. i. 15;) and a conscience defiled with wilful filthiness, makes the use of all holy things unholy to us. Our sacrificed spotless Passover cannot be eaten with the sour leaven of malice and wickedness, saith Paul (1 Cor. v. 8.) Neither can the old bottles of our corrupt and impure consciences, retain the new wine of Christ's precious blood, as our Saviour saith (Mark ii. 22.) We must therefore truly repent, if we will be worthy partakers.

(4.) The Duty to be performed in respect of our neighbour is Charity.

Charity is a hearty forgiving of others who have offended us, and after reconciliation, an outward unfeigned testifying of the inward affections of our hearts by gestures, words, and deeds, as oft as we meet, and occasion is offered;—for first, without love to our neighbour, no sacrifice is acceptable to God (Matt. v. 23, 24;) secondly, because one chief end wherefore the Lord's Supper was ordained, is to confirm the love of Christians one towards another (John xiii. 14, 34, 35;) thirdly, no man can assure himself that his own sins are forgiven of God, if his heart cannot yield to forgive the faults of men that have offended him (Matt. vi. 12, 14, 15; xviii. 35.)

Thus far of the first sort of duties which we are to perform before we come to the Lord's table, called preparation.

II. Of the Second sort of Duties which a worthy Communicant is to perform at the receiving of the Lord's Supper, called Meditation.

This exercise of spiritual meditation consists in divers points.

First, When the sermon is ended and the banquet of the Lord's Supper begins to be celebrated, meditate with thyself how thou art invited by Christ to be a guest at his holy table (Matt. xxii.), and how lovingly he inviteth thee, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters of life, &c. Come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price: eat ye that which is good, let your soul delight itself in fatness." (Isa. lv. 1, 2.) "Take ye, eat ye; this is my body which was broken for you: drink ye all of this; for this is my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins." (Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, 28, &c.) What greater honour can be vouchsafed than to be admitted to sit at the Lord's own table? what better fare can be afforded than to feed on the Lord's own body and blood? If David thought it the greatest favour that he could shew to good Barzillai, for all the kindness that he had shewn to him in his troubles, to offer him that he

should feed with him at his own table in Jerusalem (2 Sam. xix. 33;) how much greater favour ought we to account it when Christ doth indeed feed us in the church at his own table, and that with his own most holy body and blood?

Secondly, As Abraham, when he went up to the mount, to sacrifice Isaac his son, left his servants beneath in the valley (Gen. xxii. 5), so when thou comest to the spiritual sacrifice of the Lord's Supper, lay aside all earthly thoughts and cogitations, that thou mayest wholly contemplate of Christ, and offer up thy soul unto him, who sacrificed both his soul and body for thee.

Thirdly, Meditate with thyself how precious and venerable is the body and blood, of the Son of God, who is the ruler of heaven and earth, the Lord, at whose beck the angels tremble, and by whom both the quick" and dead shall be judged at the last day, and thou among the rest: and that it is he, who having been crucified for thy sins, offereth now to be received by faith into thy soul. On the other side, consider how sinful a creature thou art—how altogether unworthy of so holy a guest—how ill-deserving to taste of such sacred food, having been conceived in sin, and wallowing ever since in the mire of iniquity; bearing the name of a Christian, but doing the works of the devil; adoring Christ with an Ave Rex[97] in thy mouth, but spitting oaths in his face, and crucifying him anew with thy graceless actions.

Fourthly, Ponder then with what face darest thou offer to touch so holy a body with such defiled hands; or to drink such precious blood with so lewd and lying a mouth; or to lodge so blessed a guest in so unclean a stable? for if the Bethshemites were slain for but looking irreverently into the Ark of the Old Testament, what judgments mayst thou justly expect, who with such impure eyes and heart art come to see and receive the Ark of the New Testament, in which dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (Col. ii. 3, 9.)

If Uzza, for but touching, though not without zeal, the Ark of the Covenant, was stricken with sudden death (2 Sam. vi. 7), what stroke of divine judgment mayst thou not fear, that so rudely, with unclean hands, dost presume to handle the Ark of the eternal testament, wherein are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge?

If John Baptist, the holiest man that was born of a woman, thought himself unworthy to bear his shoes (Matt. iii. 11), how unworthy is such a profane wretch as thou art, to eat his holy flesh and to drink his precious blood?

If the blessed Apostle St. Peter, seeing but a glimpse of Christ's almighty power, thought himself unworthy to stand in the same boat with him, how unworthy art thou to sit with Christ at the same table, where thou mayest behold the infiniteness of his grace and mercy displayed?

If the centurion thought that the roof of his house was not worthy to harbour so divine a guest (Matt. viii. 8), what room can there be fit under thy ribs for Christ's holiness to dwell in?

If the blood-issued sick woman feared to touch the hem of his garment, how shouldst thou tremble to eat his flesh, and to drink his all-healing blood?

Yet if thou comest humbly, in faith, repentance, and charity, abhorring thy sins past, and purposing un-feignedly to amend thy life henceforth, let not thy former sins affright thee, for they shall never be laid to thy charge: and this sacrament shall seal unto thy soul, that all thy sins and the judgments due to them, are fully pardoned and clean washed away by the blood of Christ. For this sacrament was not ordained for them who are perfect, but to help penitent sinners unto perfection: Christ came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; and he saith, that the whole need not the physician, but they that are sick (Matt. ix. 12, 13; xi. 28.) Those hath Christ called, and when they came them hath he ever helped. Witness the whole gospel, which testifieth, that not one sinner who came to Christ for mercy, ever went away without his errand. Bathe thou likewise thy sick soul in this fountain of Christ's blood, and doubtless, according to his promise (Zech. xiii. 1), thou shalt be healed of all thy sins and uncleanness. Not sinners, therefore, but they who are unwilling to repent of their sins, are debarred this sacrament.

Fifthly, Meditate that Christ left this sacrament to ns, as the chief token and pledge of his love; not when we would have made him a king (John vi. 15), which might have seemed a requital of kindness, but when Judas and the high-priests were conspiring his death,—therefore wholly of his mere favour. When Nathan would shew David how entirely the poor man loved his sheep that was killed by the rich man, he gave her, saith he, to eat of his own morsels, and of his own cup to drink (2 Sam. xii. 3;) and must not then the love of Christ to his church be unspeakable, when he gives her his own flesh to eat, and his own blood to drink, for her spiritual and eternal nourishment? If, then, there be any love in thy heart, take the cup of salvation into thy hand, and pledge his love with love again (Psal. cxvi. 11.)

Sixthly, When the minister begins the holy consecration of the sacrament, then lay aside all praying, reading, and all other cogitations whatsoever, and settle thy meditations only upon those holy actions and rites, which, according to Christ's institution, are used in and about the holy sacrament: for it hath pleased God, considering our weakness, to appoint those rites, as means the better to lift up our minds to the serious contemplation of his heavenly graces.

When, therefore, thou seest the minister putting apart bread and wine on the Lord's table, and consecrating them by prayer and the rehearsal of Christ's institution to be a holy sacrament of the blessed body and blood of Christ; then meditate how God the Father, of his mere lore to mankind, set apart and

sealed his only-begotten Son, to be the all-sufficient means, and only Mediator, to redeem us from sin, and to reconcile us to his grace, and to bring us to his glory.

When thou seest the minister break the bread, being blessed, thou must meditate that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, was put to death, and his blessed soul and body, with the sense of God's anger, broken asunder for thy sins, as verily as thou now seest the holy sacrament to be broken before thine eyes; and withal call to mind the heinousness of thy sins, and the greatness of God's hatred against the same: seeing God's justice could not be satisfied but by such a sacrifice.

When the minister hath blessed and broken the sacrament, and is addressing himself to distribute it, then meditate, that the King, who is the master of the feast, stands at the table to see his guests (Matt. xxii. 11), and looketh upon thee whether thou hast on thee thy wedding garment;[98] think also that all the holy angels that attend upon the elect in the church (1 Cor. xi. 10), and do desire to behold the celebration of these holy mysteries (1 Pet. i. 12), do observe thy reverence and behaviour. Let thy soul, therefore, whilst the minister bringeth the sacrament unto thee, offer this or the like short soliloquy unto Christ:—

A sweet Soliloquy to be said between the Consecration and receiving of the Sacrament.

Is it true indeed, that God will dwell on earth? Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens are not able to contain thee; how much more unable is the soul of such a sinful caitiff as I am to receive thee?

But seeing it is thy blessed pleasure to come thus to sup with me, and to dwell in me, I cannot fox joy but burst out and say, "What is man, that thou art so mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou so regardest him?" what favour soever thou vouchsafest me in the abundance of thy grace, I will freely confess what I am in the wretchedness of my nature. I am, in a word, a carnal creature whose very soul is sold under sin: a wretched man, compassed about with a body of death. Yet, Lord, seeing thou callest sinners, I have thrust myself in among the rest; and seeing thou callest all with their heaviest loads, I see no reason why I should stay behind. O Lord, I am sick, and whither should I go, but unto thee, the physician of my soul; thou hast cured many, but never didst thou meet with a more miserable patient, for I am more leprous than Gehazi, more unclean than Magdalene, more blind in soul than Bartimeus was in body; for I have lived all this while, and never seen the true light of thy word. My soul overflows with sin. Mephibosheth was not more lame to go, than my soul is to walk after thee in love. Jeroboam's arm was not more withered to strike the prophet, than my hand is maimed to relieve the poor. Cure me, O Lord, and thou shalt do as great a work as in curing them all. And though I

have all their sins and sores, yet, Lord, so abundant is thy grace, so great is thy skill, that if thou wilt, thou canst with a word forgive the one and heal the other; and why should I doubt of thy good will, when to save me will cost thee now but one loving smile; who didst shew thyself so willing to redeem me, though it should cost thee all thy heart-blood; and now offerest so graciously unto me the assured pledge of my redemption by thy blood. Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my merit, that thou hast bought me with so dear a price? (2 Sam. vii. 18.) It is merely thy mercy, and I, O Lord, am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies (Gen. xxxii. 10;) much less to be a partaker of this holy sacrament, the greatest pledge of the greatest mercy, than ever thou didst bestow upon those sons of men whom thou lovest. How might I, in respect of my own unworthiness, cry out for fear at the sight of thy holy sacrament, as the Philistines did, when they saw the ark of God come into the assembly (1 Sam. v. 7.) Woe now unto me, a sinner! but that thy angel doth comfort me, as he did the woman, “Fear thou not, for I know that thou seekest Jesus which was crucified.” (Matt. xxviii. 5.) It is thou indeed that my soul seeketh after; and here thou offerest thyself unto me in thy blessed sacrament. If, therefore, Elizabeth thought herself so much honoured at thy presence in the womb of thy blessed mother, that the “babe sprang in her for joy,” how should my soul leap within me for joy, now that thou comest by thy holy sacrament, to dwell in my heart for ever? O what an honour is this, not that the mother of my Lord, but my Lord himself, should come thus to visit me; indeed, Lord, I confess with the faithful centurion, that I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: and that if thou didst but speak the word only, my soul shall be saved; yet seeing it hath pleased thee, in the riches of thy grace, for the better strengthening of my weakness, to seal thy mercy unto me, by thy visible sign, as well as by thy visible word; in all thankful humility my soul speaks unto thee with the blessed Virgin: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.” Knock thou, Lord, by thy word and sacraments, at the door of my heart; and I will, like the publican, with both my fists knock at my breast, as fast as I can, that thou mayest enter in; and if the door will not open fast enough, break it open, O Lord, by thine almighty power, and then enter in, and dwell there for ever, that I may have cause with Zaccheus to acknowledge that “this day salvation is come into mine house.” And cast out of me whatsoever shall be offensive unto thee; for I resign the whole possession of my heart unto thy sacred Majesty, entreating that I may not live henceforth, but that thou mayest live in me, speak in me, walk in me, and so govern me by thy Spirit, that nothing may be pleasing to me, but that which is acceptable unto thee; that finishing my course in the life of grace, I may afterwards live with thee for ever in the kingdom of glory. Grant this, O Lord Jesus, for the merits of thy death and blood-shedding. Amen.

When the minister bringeth towards thee the bread thus blessed and broken, and offering it to thee, bids thee, take, eat, &c., then meditate, that Christ himself cometh unto thee, and both offereth, and giveth indeed unto thy faith, his very body and blood, with all the merits of his death and passion, to feed thy soul unto eternal life; as surely as the minister offereth and giveth the outward signs, that feed thy body unto this temporal life. The bread of the Lord is given by the minister, but the bread which is the Lord is given by Christ himself.

When thou takest the bread at the minister's hand to eat it,[99] then rouse up thy soul to apprehend Christ by faith, and to apply his merits to heal thy miseries. Embrace him as sweetly with thy faith in the sacrament, as ever Simeon hugged him with his arms in his swaddling clothes.

As thou eatest the bread, imagine that thou seest Christ hanging upon the cross, and by his unspeakable torments, fully satisfying God's justice for thy sins; and strive to be as verily partaker of the spiritual grace, as of the elemental signs; for the truth is not absent from the sign; neither doth Christ deceive, when he saith, "This is my body:" he giveth himself indeed to every soul that spiritually receives him by faith; for as ours is the same supper which Christ administered, so is the same Christ verily present at his own supper, not by any papal transubstantiation, but by a sacramental participation,[100] whereby he doth truly feed the faithful unto eternal life; not by coming down out of heaven unto thee, but by lifting thee up from the earth unto him, according to that old saying, Sursum corda, lift up your hearts. And "where the carcase is, thither will the eagles resort."

When thou seest the wine brought to thee apart from the bread, then remember that the blood of Jesus Christ was as verily separated from his body upon the cross, for the remission of thy sins; and that this is the seal of the new covenant, which God hath made to forgive all the sins of all penitent sinners that believe in the merits of his blood-shedding; for the wine is not a sacrament of Christ's blood contained in his veins; but as it was shed out of his body upon the cross for the remission of the sins of all that believe on him.

As thou drinkest the wine, meditate and believe, that by the merits of that blood which Christ shed upon the cross, all thy sins are as verily forgiven, as thou hast now drunk this sacramental wine, and received it in faith. And in the instant of drinking, settle thy meditation upon Christ, as he hanged upon the cross, as if, like Mary and John, thou didst see him nailed, and his blood running down his blessed side out of that ghastly wound which the spear made in his innocent heart; wishing thy mouth close to his side, that thou mightst receive that precious blood before it fell to the dusty earth. And yet the actual drinking of that real blood with thy mouth, would be nothing so effectual as this sacramental drinking of that blood spiritually by faith (Matt. xxvi. 28.) For

one of the soldiers might have drunk that, and-been still a reprobate; but whosoever drinketh it spiritually by faith in the sacrament, shall surely have the remission of his sins, and life everlasting.[101]

As thou feelest the sacramental wine which thou hast drunk, warming thy cold stomach, so endeavour to feel the Holy Ghost cherishing thy soul in the joyful assurance of the forgiveness of all thy sins, by the merit of the blood of Christ. And to this end God giveth every faithful soul, together with the sacramental blood, the Holy Ghost to drink: "We are all made to drink into one spirit." (1 Cor. xii. 13.) And so lift up thy mind from the contemplation of Christ-, as he was crucified upon the cross, to consider how he now sits in glory at the right hand of his Father, making intercession for thee (Rom. viii. 34; Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24), by presenting to his Father the invaluable merits of his death, which he once suffered for thee, to appease his justice for the sins which thou dost daily commit against him.

After thou hast eaten and drunk both the bread and wine, labour that as those sacramental signs turn to the nourishment of thy body, and by the digestion of heat become one with thy substance, so by the operation of faith and the Holy Ghost thou mayest become one with Christ, and Christ with thee; and so mayest feel thy communion with Christ confirmed and increased daily more and more (1 Cor. x. 17.)[102] That as it is impossible to separate the bread and wine digested into the blood and substance of thy body, so it may be more impossible to part Christ from thy soul, or thy soul from Christ.

Lastly, as the bread of the sacrament, though con-fected of many grains, yet makes but one bread, so must thou remember that though all the faithful are many, yet are they all but one mystical body, whereof Christ is head. And therefore thou must love every Christian as thyself, and a member of thy body.

Thus far of the duties to be done at the receiving of the holy sacrament, called meditation.

[78]David calls bread the strength of man's heart (Psal. civ. 15;) Isaiah, the stay of bread (ch. iii. 1;) Ezekiel, the staff of bread (ch. iv. 16;) Homer, Μύελος ἀνδρῶν.

[79]Incruentum sacrificium. If it be unbloody, because it is void of blood, then it is not Christ's natural body: if because it is offered without shedding of blood, then it is not available for the remission of sins (Heb. ix. 22.)

[80]Audio quid verba sonent, neque enim mortis tantum ac resurrectionis suæ beneficium nobis offert Christus, sed corpus ipsum in quo passus est ac resurrexit. Concludo, realiter, hoc est vere nobis in cœena dari Ckristi corpus, ut sit animis nostris in eibum salutarem.—Calv. in Com. in 1 Cor. xi. 25.

[81]Quod se nobis communicat, id sit arcanâ spiritus sancti virtute, quæ res locorum distantiâ sejunctas, ac procul dissitas non modo aggregare, sed coadunare in unum potest.—Calv. ibid.

[82]Corpus non adest, cum pane, ἅμα, id est, simul loco, sed ὁμοῦ, id est, simul tempore.

[83]Quum cœna cœlestis sit actio, minime absurdum est Christum in cœlo manentem à nobis recipi.—Calv. in 1 Cor. xi. 25.

[84]Fidem mitte in cœlum, et eum in terris tanquam præsentem tenuisti.—Aug. Ep. iii. ad Vol. Fidem quum dico; non intelligo quamlibet opinionem, sed fiduciam qua quum audis panem tesseram esse corporis Christi, non dubitas impleri à Domino, quod verba sonant: corpus quod nequaquam cernis, spirituale esse tibi alimentum, vinque ex Christi carne vivificam in nos per spiritum diffundi.—Calv. ibid.

[85]Ego tunc nos demum participare Christi bonis agnosco postquam Christum ipsum obtinemus. Obtinetur non tantum quum pro nobis factum fuisse victimam credimus: sed dum in nobis habitat, dum ejus sumus membra, ex came ejus, dum in unam denique et vitam et substantiam (ut ita loquar.) cum ipso coalescimus.—Calv. in 1 Cor. xi. 25.

[86] Milites sacramento erant jurati et obstricti ad præstandam soli imperitori fidelitatem et obedientiam.

[87]The first commandment.

[88]The second commandment.

[89]The third commandment.

[90]The fourth commandment.—Here confess thy travelling on the Sabbath, and thy leaving the holy exercise to go to sporting or feasting.

[91]The fifth commandment.—Here confess thy disobedience to thy parents, ministers, magistrates, masters, or tutors.

[92]The sixth commandment.—Here confess thy hastiness and fury, and if thou hast been any way the cause of any man's death unjustly or cruelly.

[93]The seventh commandment—Here confess unto God thy secret pollutions, fornication, or adultery, if Satan hath so far prevailed over thee.

[94]The eighth commandment.—Here confess if thou hast secretly stolen, or openly robbed anything, or hast detained from any fatherless child that which is his by right.

[95]The ninth commandment.—Here confess if thou hast belied or slandered thy neighbour, or not spoken the truth to clear his innocency, when thou wast called thereto.

[96]The tenth commandment.

[97]Hail, King!

[98]This wedding garment is righteousness and true holiness (Rev. xix. 8: Eph. iv. 24.)

[99] Sacramentum requirit sacram mentem.

[100]Christ calls it his body, not the sign of his body, because this sacrament was instituted not only to signify, but also to communicate the spiritual graces that it represents, and by the signs to draw our minds to the graces signified. So Euthymius, in Matt. xxvi.—"Non dixit dominus, Hæc sunt signa corporis mei, sed hoc est corpus meum. Oportet ergo, non ad naturam eorum quæ proposita sunt aspicere, sed ad ipsorum virtutem et gratiam. Non hoc corpus quod videtis manducaturi estis, et bibituri illum sanguinem quem fusuri sunt qui me crucifigent. Sacramentum aliquid vobis commendo; spiritualiter intellectum vivificabit vos."—Aug. in Psal. xcviii., speaking in the person of Christ. The disciples did not eat Christ corporally and substantially in the first institution; no more do we in the reiteration of the same supper.

[101]If remission of sins and eternal life had been appropriated to the drinking of the real blood, doubtless John and Mary would have made means to have drunk it; but John ascribes the virtue to believing that it was shed.

[102] Unus est panis communi notione sacramenti, non autem necessario unus numero.

Duties After Communion.

III. Of the Duties which we are to perform after receiving the holy Communion, called Action or Practice.

The duty which we are to perform after the receiving of the Lord's Supper is called action or practice, without which all the rest will minister to us no comfort.

The action consists of two sorts of duties:-—First, Such as we are to perform in the church, or else after we are gone home.

Those that we are to perform in the church are either several from our own souls, or else jointly with the congregation.

The several duties which thou must perform from thine own soul are three:—First, Thou must be careful that forasmuch as Christ now dwelleth in thee, therefore, to entertain him in a clean heart, and with pure affections (Psal. xviii. 26),[103] for the most Holy will be holy with the holy; for if Joseph of Arimathea, when he had begged of Pilate his dead body to bury it, wrapped it in sweet odours and fine linen, and laid it in a new tomb, how much more shouldst thou lodge Christ in a new heart, and perfume his rooms with the odoriferous incense of prayers, and all pure affections? If God required Moses to provide a pot of pure gold to keep the manna that fell in the wilderness, what a pure heart shouldst thou provide to receive this divine manna that is come down from heaven?

And as thou earnest sorrowing, like Joseph and Mary, to seek Christ in the temple, so now having there found him in the midst 6f his word and sacraments, be careful with joy to carry him home with thee as they did.

And if the man that found but his lost sheep rejoiced so much, how canst thou, having found the Saviour of the world, but rejoice much more?

Secondly, Thou must offer the sacrifice of a private thanksgiving to God for this inestimable grace and mercy; for as this action is common to the whole church, so is it applied particularly to every one of the faithful in the church; and for this particular mercy every soul must joyfully offer up a particular sacrifice of thanksgiving. For if the wise men rejoiced so much when they saw the star which conducted them to Christ, and worshipped him so devoutly when he lay a babe in the manger, and offered unto him their gold, myrrh, and frankincense, how much more shouldst thou rejoice, now that thou hast both seen and received this sacrament which guideth thy soul unto him where he sitteth at the right hand of his Father in glory? And thither, lifting up thy heart, adore him, and offer up unto him the gold of a pure faith, the myrrh of a mortified heart, and this or the like sweet incense of prayer and thanksgiving:—

A Prayer to be said after the receiving of the Communion.

What shall I render unto thee, O blessed Saviour, for all these blessings which thou hast so graciously bestowed upon my soul? How can I sufficiently thank thee when I can scarce express them? Where thou mightest have made me a beast, thou madest me a man after thine own image. When by sin I had lost both thine image and myself, thou didst renew in me thine image by thy Spirit, and didst redeem my soul again by thy blood; and now thou hast given unto me the seal and pledge of my redemption, nay, thou hast given thyself unto me, O blessed Redeemer. O what an inestimable treasure of riches, and overflowing fountain of grace hath he got who hath gained thee! No man ever touched thee by faith but thou didst heal him by grace; for thou art the author of salvation, the remedy of all evils, the medicine of the sick, the life of the quick, and the resurrection of the dead. Seemed it a small matter unto thee to appoint thy holy angels to attend upon so vile a creature as I am; but that thou shouldest enter thyself into my soul, there to preserve, nourish, and cherish me unto life everlasting?

If the carcase of the dead prophet could revive a dead man that touched it, how much more shall the living body of the Lord of all prophets quicken the faithful, in whose heart he dwelleth? And if thou wilt raise my body at the last day out of the dust, how much more wilt thou now revive my soul which thou hast sanctified with thy Spirit, and purified with thy blood? O Lord, what could I more desire, or what couldst thou more bestow upon me than to give me thy body for meat, thy blood for drink, and to lay down thy soul for the price of my redemption? Thou, Lord, enduredst the pain, and I do reap the profit; I received pardon, and thou didst bear the punishment. Thy tears were my bath, thy wounds my weal, and the injustice done to thee, satisfied for the judgment which was due to me. Thus by thy birth thou art become my brother, by thy death my ransom, by thy mercy my reward, and by thy sacrament my nourishment. O divine food, by which the sons of men are transformed into the sons of God; so that man’s nature dieth, and God’s nature liveth and ruleth in us! Indeed all creatures wondered that the Creator would be enclosed nine months in the virgin’s womb. But that thou shouldst thus humble thyself to dwell for ever in my heart, which thou foundest more unclean than a dung-hill, it is able to make all the creatures in Heaven and earth to stand amazed. But seeing it is thy free grace and mere pleasure thus to enter and to dwell in my heart, I would to God that I had so pure a heart as my heart could wish to entertain thee. And who is fit to entertain Christ? Or who, though invited, would not choose with Mary rather to kneel at thy feet, than presume to sit with thee at thy table? Though I want a pure heart for thee to dwell in, yet weeping eyes shall never be wanting to wash thy blessed feet, and to lament my filthy sins. And, albeit, I cannot weep so many tears as may suffice to wash thy holy feet; yet, Lord, it is sufficient that thou hast shed blood enough to

cleanse my sinful soul. And I am fully, O Lord, assured, that all the dainty fare wherewith the disdainful Pharisee entertained thee at his table, did not so much please thee as those tears which penitent Mary poured under the table. I would therefore wish with Jeremiah, that "my head were a fountain of tears;" that seeing I can by no means yield sufficient thanks for thy love to me, yet I might by continual tears testify my love unto thee. And though no man is worthy of so infinite a grace, yet this is my comfort, that he is worthy whom thou in favour accountest worthy. And seeing that now of thy mere grace thou hast counted me among others, thy chosen, worthy of this unspeakable favour, and sealed by thy sacrament, the assurance of thy love and the forgiveness of my sins, O Lord, confirm thy favour unto thy servant, and say of me as Isaac did of Jacob, "I have blessed him, therefore he shall be blessed." And that I may say unto thee with David, "Thou, O Lord, hast blessed my soul, and made it thy house, and it shall be blessed for ever." And seeing it pleased thee to bless the house of Obed-edom and all his household, whilst the ark of the Lord remained in his house, I doubt not but thou wilt much more bless my soul and body, and all that do belong unto me, now that it hath pleased thy majesty of thine own good will to enter under my roof, and to dwell for ever in my poor cottage. Bless me, O Lord, so that my sins may wholly be remitted by thy blood, my conscience sanctified by thy Spirit, my mind enlightened by thy truth, my heart guided by thy Spirit, and my will, in all things, subdued to thy blessed will and pleasure. Bless me with all graces which I want, and increase in me those good gifts which thou hast already bestowed upon me. And seeing that I hold thee not by the arms, as Jacob wrestling, without me, but inwardly dwelling by faith within me, surely, Lord, I will never let thee go except thou bless me, and give me a new name, a new heart, a new spirit, and strength by the power of God to prevail over sin and Satan. And I beseech thee, O Lord, desire not to depart from me, as thou didst from Jacob, because the day breaketh, and thy grace beginneth to dawn and appear; but I, from my soul, humbly, with the disciples at Emmaus, entreat thee, O sweet Jesus, to abide with me because it draweth toward night; for the night of temptation, the night of tribulation, yea, my last long night of death approacheth. O blessed Saviour, stay with me therefore now and ever. And if thy presence go not home with me, carry me not from hence. Go with me and live with me; and let neither death nor life separate me from thee. Drive me from myself; draw me unto thee. Let me be sick, but sound in thee; and in my weakness let thy strength appear. Let me seem as dead, that thou alone mayest be seen to live in me, so that all my members may be but instruments to act thy motions. Set me as a seal upon thine heart (Cant. viii. 6;) and let thy zeal be settled upon mine, that I may be out of all love with all, that I may be only in love with thee. And grant, O Lord, that as thou now vouchsafest me this favour to sit at thy table, to receive this sacrament in thy house of grace, so I may hereafter, through thy

mercy, be received to eat and drink at thy table in thy kingdom of glory. And for thy mercy I do here, with the four beasts and twenty-four elders, cast myself down before thy throne of grace, acknowledging that it is thou that hast redeemed me with thy blood, and that salvation cometh only from thee. And therefore unto thee I do yield all praise, and glory, and wisdom, and thanks, and honour, and power, and might, and majesty, O my Lord and my God, for evermore. Amen.

Thirdly, Seeing Christ hath sacrificed himself for thee, and all that thou canst give is too little, therefore thou must offer thyself to be a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice unto God, by serving him in righteousness and holiness all thy days. Thus Tertullian witnesseth that in his time a Christian was known from another man, only by the holiness and uprightness of his life.

2. Of the Duties which we are to do after the Communion, jointly with the congregation.

The duties to be performed jointly with the church are three: First, Public thanksgiving, both by prayers, and singing of psalms (Matt. xxvi. 30:)[104] thus Christ himself and his apostles did. Secondly, Joining with the church, in giving (every man according to his ability) towards the relief of the poor (1 Cor. xvi. 1; Rom. xv. 25:) this was the manner of the primitive churches, to make collections and love-feasts after the Lord’s Supper, for the relief of the poor Christians. Thirdly, When thanks and praise is ended, then with all reverence to stand up, and to receive the blessing of God, by the mouth of his minister; and to receive it, as if thou didst hear God himself pronouncing it unto thee from heaven; for by their blessing God doth bless his people (Numb. vi. 23, 27.)

Thus far of the duties to be practised in the Church.

The duties which thou art to practise after that thou art departed home, are three: First, To observe diligently whether thou hast truly received Christ in the sacrament; which thou mayest thus easily perceive: for seeing his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed, and that he is so full of grace, that no man ever touched him by faith, but he received virtue from him, it cannot possibly be, that if thou hast eaten his flesh, or drunk his blood, but thou shalt receive grace and power to be cleansed from thy sins and filthiness; for if the woman that did but touch his garment was forthwith cured of her disease that had continued so long, how much more will the plague of thy sin be healed, if thou then hast truly eaten and drunk the very flesh and blood of Christ? But if thy issue still runneth, thou mayest justly suspect thou hast never yet truly touched Christ.

Secondly, Seeing thou hast now reconciled thyself to God, and renewed thy covenant, and vowed newness and amendment of life, thou must therefore have a special care, that thou dost not yield to commit thy former sins any more; knowing that the unclean spirit, if ever he can get into thy soul again,

after that it is swept and garnished, will enter forcible possession with seven other devils worse than himself; so that the end of that man shall be worse than his beginning. Be ye not therefore like the dog, that returns to his vomit, or the washed sow that walloweth in the mire again. And return not to thy malice, like the adder, who laying aside her poison while she drinks, and takes it up again when she hath done. But when either the devil or thy flesh shall offer to tempt and move thee to relapse into thy former sins, answer them as the spouse doth in the Canticles, “I have put off my coat” (of my former corruptions), “how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them again?” (Cant. v. 3.)

Lastly, If ever thou hast found either joy or comfort in receiving the holy sacrament, let it appear by thy eager desire of receiving it often again. For the body of Christ, as it was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, so doth it yield a sweeter savour than all the ointments of the world; the fragrant smell of which allureth all souls who have once tasted its sweetness ever after to desire oftener to taste of it again. “Because of the savour of thy good ointments, therefore do the virgins love thee.” (Cant. i. 3.) “O taste, therefore, often, and see how good the Lord is,” saith David. This is the commandment of Christ himself, “Do this in remembrance of me;” and in doing this, thou shalt shew thyself best mindful and thankful for his death: “For as oft as ye shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye shall shew the Lord’s death until he come.” And let this be the chief end to which both thy receiving and living tends,—that thou mayest be a holy Christian, zealous of good works, purged from sin, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; that thou mayest be acceptable to God, profitable to thy brethren, and comfortable unto thine own soul.

Thus far of the manner of glorifying God in thy life.

[103] Sancta non nisi sancte et sanctis.

[104] Which is probable to have been the 113th Psalm.

THE PRACTICE OF PIETY IN GLORIFYING GOD IN THE TIME OF SICKNESS, AND WHEN THOU ART CALLED TO DIE IN THE LORD.

As soon as thou perceivest thyself to be visited with any sickness, meditate with thyself:

1. That “misery cometh not forth of the dust; neither doth affliction spring out of the earth.” Sickness comes not by hap or chance (as the Philistines supposed that their mice and emrods came, 1 Sam. vi. 9), but from man’s wickedness, which, as sparkles, breaketh out. “Man suffereth,” saith Jeremiah, “for his sins.” “Fools,” saith David, “by reason of their transgressions, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.” As, therefore, Solomon advises a man to carry himself towards an earthly prince, “if the spirit of him that ruleth rise up against thee leave not thy place, for gentleness pacifieth great sins;” so counsel I thee to deal with the Prince of princes; if the Spirit of Him that ruleth heaven and earth rise up against thee, let not thy heart despair; for repentance pacifieth great sins. And “whosoever returneth in his affliction to the Lord God of Israel, and seeks him, he will be found of him.” (2 Chron. xv. 4.)

2. Shut to thy chamber door (Matt. vi. 6;) examine thy own heart upon thy bed (Psal. iv. 4;) search and try thy ways (Lam. iii. 40;) search as diligently for thy capital sin as Joshua did for Achan, till thou findest it (Josh. vii. 16, &c.) For albeit God, when he beginneth to chasten his children, hath respect to all their sins, yet when his anger is incensed, he chiefly taketh occasion to chasten, and enter with them into judgment for some one grievous sin, in which they have lived without repentance.

3. When thou hast thus considered all thy sins, put thyself before the judgment-seat of God, as a felon or murderer standing at the bar of an earthly judge; and with grief and sorrow of heart confess to God all thy known sins, especially thy capital offences, wherewith God is chiefly displeased. Lay them open, with all the circumstances of the time, place, and manner how they were committed, as may most serve to aggravate the heinousness of thy sins, and to shew the contrition of thy heart for the same. Lift up thy hand, and acknowledge thyself before the righteous Judge of heaven and earth, guilty of eternal death and damnation for those thy heinous sins and transgressions. And having thus accused and judged thyself, cast down thyself before the footstool of his throne of grace (Heb. iv. 16), assuring thyself, that whatsoever the kings of Israel be, yet the God of Israel is a merciful God (1 Kings xx. 31;) and cry unto him, from a penitent and faithful heart, for mercy and forgiveness, as eagerly and earnestly as ever thou knewest a malefactor, being to receive his sentence, cry unto the judge for favour and pardon; vowing amendment of life, and, by the assistance of his grace, never to commit the like sin any more. All which thou mayest do in these or the like words:—

A Prayer When One Begins to Be Sick.

A Prayer when one begins to be sick.

O most righteous Judge, yet in Jesus Christ my gracious Father! I, wretched sinner, do here return unto thee, though driven with pain and sickness, like the prodigal child with want and hunger. I acknowledge that this sickness and pain comes not by blind chance or fortune, but by thy divine providence and special appointment. It is the stroke of thy heavy hand, which my sins have justly deserved; and the things that I feared are now fallen upon me (Job iii. 25.) Yet do I well perceive that in wrath thou rememberest mercy (Hab. iii. 2), when I consider how many and how heinous are my sins, and how few and easy are thy corrections. Thou, mightest have stricken me with some fearful and sudden death, whereby I should not have had either time or space to have called upon thee for grace and mercy; and so should have perished in my sins, and have been for ever condemned in hell.

But thou, O Lord, visitest me with such a fatherly chastisement, as thou usest to visit thy dearest children whom thou best lovedst; giving me, by this sickness, both warning and time to repent, and to sue unto thee for grace and pardon. I take not, therefore, O Lord, this thy visitation as any sign of thy wrath or hatred, but as an assured pledge and token of thy favour and loving-kindness, whereby thou dost with thy temporal judgments draw me to judge myself, and to repent of my wicked life, that I should not be condemned with the godless and unrepentant world. For thy holy word assures me, that “whom thou lovest, thou thus chastenest; and that thou scourgest every son that thou receivest.” That if I endure thy chastening, thou offerest thyself unto me as unto a son; and that all that continue in sin, and yet escape without correction, whereof all thy children are partakers, are bastards and not sons; and that thou chastenest me for my profit, that I may be a partaker of thy holiness. O Lord, how full of goodness is thy nature, that hast dealt with me so graciously in the time of my health and prosperity; and now, being provoked by my sins and unthankfulness, hast such fatherly and profitable ends in inflicting upon me this sickness and correction!

I confess, Lord, that thou dost justly afflict my body with sickness, for my soul was sick before of a long prosperity, and surfeited with ease, peace, plenty, and fulness of bread. And now, O Lord, I lament and mourn for my sins; “I acknowledge my wickedness, and my iniquities are always in my sight.” Oh what a wretched sinner am I, void of all goodness by nature, and full of evil by sinful custom! Oh what a world of sin have I committed against thee, whilst thy long-sufferance expected ray conversion, and thy blessings wooed me to repentance! Yet, O my God, seeing it is thy property more to respect the goodness of thy own nature than the deserts of sinners, I beseech thee, O Father, for thy Son Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the merits of that all-saving

death which he hath voluntarily suffered for all who believe in him, have mercy upon me, according to the multitude of thy mercies; turn thy face away from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities: cast me not out of thy presence, neither reward me according to my deserts: for if thou dost reject me, who will receive me? Or who will succour me, if thou dost forsake me? But thou, O Lord, art the helper of the helpless, and in thee the fatherless findeth mercy (Hos. xiv. 3:) for though my sins be exceeding great, yet thy mercy, O Lord, far exceedeth them all; neither can I commit so many as thy grace can remit and pardon. Wash, therefore, O Christ, my sins with the virtue of thy precious blood, especially those sins which from a penitent heart I have confessed unto thee; but chiefly, O Lord, forgive me.[105] And seeing that of thy love thou didst lay down thy life for my ransom, when I was thine enemy, O save now the price of thine own blood, when it shall cost thee but a smile upon me, or a gracious appearance in thy Father's sight in my behalf. Reconcile me once again, O merciful Mediator, unto thy Father; for though there be nothing in me that can please him, yet I know that in thee, and for thy sake, he is well pleased with all whom thou acceptest and lovest. And if it be thy blessed will, remove this sickness from me, and restore to me my former health again, that I may live longer to set forth thy glory, and to be a comfort to my friends who depend upon me, and to procure to myself a more settled assurance of that heavenly inheritance which thou hast prepared for me. And then, Lord, thou shalt see how religiously and wisely I shall redeem the time, which heretofore I have so lewdly and profanely spent. And to the end that I may the sooner and the easier be delivered from this pain and sickness, direct me, O Lord, I beseech thee, by thy divine providence, to such a physician and helper, as that, by thy blessing upon the means, I may recover my former health and welfare again. And, good Lord, vouchsafe, that as thou hast sent this sickness, to me, so thou wouldst likewise be pleased to send thy Holy Spirit into my heart, whereby this present sickness may be sanctified unto me; that I may use it as thy school, wherein I may learn to know the greatness of my misery and the riches of thy mercy; that I may be so humbled at the one, that I despair not of the other; and that I may so renounce all confidence of help in myself, or in any other creature, that I may only put the whole rest of my salvation in thy all-sufficient merits. And forasmuch as thou knowest, Lord, how weak a vessel I am, full of frailty and imperfections, and that by nature I am angry and froward under every cross and affliction, O Lord, who art the giver of all good gifts, arm me with patience to endure thy blessed will and pleasure, and of thy mercy lay no more upon me than I shall be able to endure and suffer. Give me grace to behave myself in all patience, love, and meekness, unto those that shall come and visit me; that I may thankfully receive, and willingly embrace all good counsels and consolations from them; and that they may likewise see in me such a good example of patience, and hear from me such godly lessons of

comfort as may be arguments of my Christian faith and profession, and instructions unto them how to behave themselves when it shall please thee to visit them with the like, affliction of sickness. I know, O Lord, I have deserved to die; and I desire not longer to live, than to amend my wicked life, and in some better measure to set forth thy glory. Therefore, O Father, if it be thy blessed will, restore me to health again, and grant me a longer life. But if thou hast, according to thy eternal decree, appointed by this sickness to call for me out of this transitory life, I resign myself into thy hands, and holy pleasure; thy blessed will be done, whether it be by life or by death. Only I beseech thee of thy mercy forgive me all my sins, and prepare my poor soul, that by a true faith and unfeigned repentance, she may be ready against the time that thou shalt call for her out of my sick and sinful body. O heavenly Father, who art the hearer of prayer, hear thou in heaven this my prayer, and in this extremity grant me these requests, not for any worthiness that is in me, but for the merits of thy beloved Son Jesus, my only Saviour and Mediator, for whose sake thou hast promised to hear us, and to grant whatsoever we shall ask of thee in his name. In his name, therefore, and in his words, I conclude this my imperfect supplication:—

“Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,” &c.

Having thus reconciled thyself to God in Christ,

1. Let thy next care be to set thy house in order, as Isaiah advised King Hezekiah, making thy last will and testament, if it be not already made. If it be made, then peruse it, confirm it, and for avoiding all doubts and contention, publish it before witnesses, that, if God call for thee out of this life, it may stand in force and unalterable, as thy last will and testament; and so deliver it locked or sealed up in some box, to the keeping of a faithful friend, in the presence of honest witnesses.

2. But in making thy testament, take a religious friend’s advice how to bestow thy benevolence, and some honest lawyer’s counsel to continue it according to law.

Dispatch this before thy sickness doth increase and thy memory decay; lest otherwise thy testament prove a doatment, and so another man’s fancy rather than thy will.

3. To prevent many inconveniencies, let me recommend to thy discretion two things:

(1.) If God have blessed thee with any competent state of wealth, make thy will in thy health time. It will neither put thee farther from thy goods, nor hasten thee sooner to thy death; but it will be a greater ease to thy mind, in freeing thee from a great trouble when thou shalt have most need of quiet: for

when thy house is set in order thou shalt be better enabled to set thy soul in order, and to dispose of thy journey towards God.

(2.) If thou hast children, give to every one of them a portion, according to thy ability, in thy lifetime, that thy life may seem an ease, and not a yoke to them; yet so give, as that thy children may be still beholden unto thee, and not thou unto them. But if thou keep all in thy hands whilst thou livest, they may thank death and not thee, for the portion that thou leavest them. If thou hast no children, and the Lord hath blest thee with a great portion of the goods of this world, and if thou meanest to bestow them upon any charitable or pious uses, put not over that good work to the trust of others, seeing thou seest how most of other men's executors prove almost executioners. And if friends be so unfaithful in a man's life, how much greater cause hast thou to distrust their fidelity after thy death? Lamentable experience shews how many dead men's wills have of late either been quite concealed, utterly overthrown, or by cavils and quirks of law frustrated or altered; whereas, by the law of God, the will of the dead should not be violated (Gal. iii. 15; Heb. ix. 17), but all his godly intentions conscientiously performed and fulfilled, as in the sight of God, who, in the day of the resurrection, will be a just judge both of the quick and dead (2 Cor. v. 10; Eccl. xii. 14; Rom. ii. 15; 1 Cor. iv. 5.) And if anything should hap in his will to be ambiguous or doubtful, it should be construed as it might come nearest to the honour of God and the honest intention of the testator: but let the vengeance due to such unchristian deeds light on the actors that do them, not on the kingdom wherein they are suffered to be done. And let other rich men be warned by such wretched examples, not so to marry their minds to their, money, as that they will do no good with their goods till death divorces them. Considering, therefore, the shortness of thine own life, and the uncertainty of the just dealing of others after thy death, in these unjust days, let me advise thee, whom God hath blessed with ability, and an intent to do good, to become in thy lifetime thine own administrator; make thine own hands thy executors, and thine own eyes thy overseers; cause thy lantern to give her light before thee, and not behind thee; give God the glory, and thou shalt receive of him in due time the reward which of his grace and mercy he hath promised to thy good works (Gal. vi. 9; Matt. x. 42; xxv. 34, &c.; Mark. ix. 41; Luke xiv. 14; xviii. 22; 1 Cor. xv. 58; Rev. xiv. 13.)

4. Having thus set thy house and soul in order—if the determined number of thy days be not expired (Job xiv. 5)—God will either have mercy upon thee, and say, Spare him, O killing malady, that he go not down into the pit, for I have received a reconciliation (Job xxxiii. 24;) or else his fatherly providence will direct thee to such a physician and to such means as, that by his blessing upon their endeavours, thou shalt recover and be restored to thy former health again (2 Kings xx. 7; v. 7, 8, 10; John ix. 7;) but in anywise take heed that thou, nor none for thee, send to sorcerers, wizards, charmers, or enchanters for

help: for this were to leave the God of Israel, and to go to Beelzebub, the god of Ekron, for help; as did wicked Ahaziah (2 Kings i. 2, 3), and to brake thy vow which thou hast made with the blessed Trinity in thy baptism; and be sure that God will never give a blessing by those means which he hath accursed (Lev. xx. 6; Deut. xviii. 10, &c.;) but if he permit Satan to cure thy body, fear lest it tend to the damnation of thy soul: thou art tried, beware! (Deut. xiii. 3.)

When thou hast sent for the physician, take heed that thou put not thy trust rather in the physician than in the Lord, as Asa. did; of whom it is said, that he sought not to the Lord in his disease, but to the physician (2 Chron. xvi. 12;) which is a kind of idolatry that will increase the Lord's anger, and make the physic received ineffectual. Use, therefore, the physician as God's instrument, and physic as God's means. And seeing it is not lawful without prayer to use ordinary food (1 Tim. iv. 4), much less extraordinary physic, whose good effect depends upon the blessing of God, before thou takest thy physic pray, therefore, heartily unto God to bless it to thy use (Jer. viii. 22), in these or the like words:—

[105]Here name that sin which most troubleth thy conscience.

A Prayer Before Taking of Medicine.

A Prayer before taking of Medicine.

O Merciful Father, who art the Lord of health and of sickness, of life and of death; who killest and makest alive; who bringest down to the grave and raisest up again; I come unto thee, as to the only physician, who canst cure my soul from sin, and my body from sickness. I desire neither life nor death, but refer myself to thy most holy will; for, though we must needs die, and being dead, our lives are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again, yet hath thy gracious providence (whilst life remaineth) appointed means which thou wilt have thy children to use; and (by the lawful use thereof) to expect thy blessing upon thy own means, to the curing of their sickness, and restitution of their health. And now, O Lord, in this my necessity, I have, according to thy ordinance, sent for thy servant the physician, who hath prepared for me this medicine, which I receive as means sent from thy fatherly hand; I beseech thee, therefore, that as by thy blessing on a lump of dry figs, thou didst heal Hezekiah's sore, that he recovered; and by seven times washing in the river of Jordan, didst cleanse Naaman the Syrian of his leprosy; and didst restore tire man that was blind from his birth, by anointing his eyes with clay and spittle, and sending him to wash in the pool of Siloam; and by touching the hand of Peter's wife's mother, didst cure her of her fever; and didst restore the woman that touched the hem of thy garment: so it would please thee of thy infinite goodness and mercy, to sanctify this medicine to my use, and to give such a blessing unto it, that it may (if it be thy will and pleasure) remove this my sickness and pain, and restore me to health and strength again. But if the number of those days which thou hast appointed for me to live in this vale of misery be at an end, and that thou hast sent this sickness as thy messenger to call me out of this mortal life, then, Lord, let thy blessed will be done; for I submit my will to thy most holy pleasure. Only, I beseech thee, increase my faith and patience, and let thy grace and mercy be never wanting unto me; but in the midst of all extremities, assist me with thy Holy Spirit, that I may willingly and cheerfully resign up my soul, the price of thy own blood, into thy most gracious hands and custody. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake; to whom, with thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, both now and evermore. Amen.

MEDITATIONS FOR THE SICK.

Whilst thy sickness remains, use often, for thy comfort, these few meditations, taken from the ends wherefore God sendeth afflictions to his children. Those are ten.

1. That by afflictions God may not only correct our sins past, but also work in us a deeper loathing of our natural corruptions, and so prevent us from falling into many other sins, which otherwise we would commit; like a good father, who suffers his tender babe to scorch his finger in a candle, that he may the rather learn to beware of falling into a greater fire: so that the child of God may say with David, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn thy statutes; for before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep thy word.” And indeed, saith St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 32), “We are chastened of the Lord, because we should not be condemned with the world.” With one cross God maketh two cures—the chastisement of sins past, and the prevention of sin to come. For though the eternal punishment of sin, as it proceeds from justice, is fully pardoned in the sacrifice of Christ, yet we are not, without serious judging ourselves, exempted from the temporal chastisement of sin; for this proceeds only from the love of God, for our good. And this is the reason, that when Nathan told David, from the Lord, that his sins were forgiven, yet that the sword of chastisement should not depart from his house, and that his child should surely die. For God, like a skilful physician, seeing the soul to be poisoned with the settling of sin, and knowing that the reigning of the flesh will prove the ruin of the Spirit, ministereth the bitter pill of affliction, whereby the relics of sin are purged, and the soul more soundly cured; the flesh is subdued, and the spirit is sanctified. O the odiousness of sin, which causeth God to chasten so severely his children, whom otherwise he loveth so dearly!

2. God sendeth affliction to seal unto us our adoption, for “every child whom God loveth, he correcteth; and he is a bastard that is not corrected.” (Heb. xii. 6, 7, 8.) Yea, it is a sure note, that where God seeth sin and smites not, there he detests and loves not; therefore it is said, that he suffered the wicked sons of Eli to continue in their sins, without correction, “because the Lord would slay them.” On the other side, there is no surer token of God’s fatherly love and care, than to be corrected with some cross, as oft as we commit any sinful crime. Affliction, therefore, is a seal of adoption, no sign of reprobation; for the purest corn is cleanest fanned, the finest gold is oftest tried, the sweetest grape is hardest pressed, and the truest Christian heaviest crossed.

3. God sends affliction to wean our hearts from too much loving this world and worldly vanities; and to cause us the more earnestly to desire and long for eternal life. As the children of Israel, had they not been ill-entreated in Egypt, would never have been so willing to go towards Canaan; so, were it not for the crosses and afflictions of this life, God’s children would not so heartily long for

and willingly desire the kingdom of heaven. For we see many epicures that would be content to forego heaven, on condition that they might still enjoy their earthly pleasures; and, having never tasted the joys of a better, how loath are they to depart this life? whereas the Apostle that saw heaven's glory tells us, that there is no more comparison between the joys of eternal life, and the pleasures of this world, than there is between the filthiest dung and the pleasantest meat; or between the most noisome dung-hill and the fairest bed-chamber (2 Cor. xii. 4; Phil. iii. 8.) As therefore a loving nurse puts wormwood or mustard on the breast, to make the child the rather to forsake it; so God mixes sometimes affliction with the pleasures and prosperity of this life, lest, like the children of this generation, they should forget God, and fall into too much love of this present evil world; and so by riches grow proud; by fame, insolent; by liberty, wanton; and spurn with their heel against the Lord, when they wax fat (Deut. xxxii. 15.) For if God's children love the world so well, when, like a curst step-mother, she misuses and strikes us, how should we love this harlot, if she smiled upon us, and stroked us, as she does her own worldly brats? Thus doth God, like a wise and a loving father, embitter with crosses the pleasures of this life to his children, that, finding in this earthly state no true and permanent joys, they might sigh and long for eternal life, where firm and everlasting joys are only to be found.

4. By affliction and sickness God exercises his children, and the graces which he bestows upon them. He refines and tries their faith, as the goldsmith doth his gold in the furnace, to make it shine more glistering and bright (1 Pet. i. 7;) he stirreth us up to pray more diligently, and zealously, and proveth what patience we have learned all this while in his school.[106] The like experience he makes of our hope, love, and all the rest of our Christian virtues; which, without this trial, would rust, like iron unexercised, or corrupt like standing waters, that either have no current, or else are not poured from vessel to vessel; whose taste remaineth, and whose scent is not changed (Jer. xlviii. 11.) And rather than a man should keep still the scent of his corrupt nature to damnation, who would not wish to be changed from state to state, by crosses and sickness, to salvation? For as the camomile which is trodden groweth best, and smelleth most fragrant; and as the fish is sweetest that lives in the saltest waters: so those souls are most precious to Christ who are most exercised and afflicted with crosses.

5. God sends afflictions, to demonstrate to the world the trueness of his children's love and service. Every hypocrite will serve God whilst he prospereth and blesseth him, as the devil falsely accused Job to have done: but who (save his loving child) will love and serve him in adversity, when God seemeth to be angry and displeased with him? yea, and cleave unto him most inseparably, when he seemeth with the greatest frown and disgrace to reject a man, and to cast him out of his favour; yea, when he seemeth to wound and kill

as an enemy: yet, then to say with Job, “Though thou, Lord, kill me, yet will I put my trust in thee.” The loving and the serving of God, and trusting in his mercy in the time of our correction and misery, is the truest note of an unfeigned child and servant of the Lord.

6. Sanctified affliction is a singular help to further our true conversion, and to drive us home by repentance to our heavenly Father. “In their affliction,” saith the Lord, “they will seek me diligently.” (Hos. v. 15.) Egypt’s burdens made Israel cry unto God (Exod. iii. 7.) David’s troubles made him pray (Psal. lxxxvi. 7.) Hezekiah’s sickness made him weep (Isa. xxxviii. 2, 3;) and misery drove the prodigal child to return and sue for his father’s grace and mercy. Yea, we read of many in the gospel, that by sicknesses and afflictions were driven to come unto Christ, who, if they had had health and prosperity as others, would have like others neglected or contemned their Saviour, and never have sought unto him for his saving health and grace. For as the ark of Noah, the higher it was tossed with the flood, the nearer it mounted towards heaven, so the sanctified soul, the more it is exercised with affliction, the nearer it is lifted towards God. O blessed is that cross that draweth a sinner to come upon the knees of his heart unto Christ, to confess his own misery, and to implore his endless mercy! O blessed, ever blessed be that Christ, that never refuseth the sinner that cometh unto him, though weather-driven by affliction and misery!

7. Affliction worketh in us pity and compassion toward our fellow-brethren that be in distress and misery; whereby we learn to have a fellow-feeling of their calamities, and to condole their estate, as if we suffered with them (Heb. xiii. 3.) And for this cause Christ himself would suffer, and be tempted in all things like unto us (sin only excepted) that he might be a merciful High Priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb. iv. 15; ii. 18; v. 8, 9.) For none can so heartily bemoan the misery of another, as he who first himself suffered the same affliction. Hereupon a sinner in misery may boldly say to Christ.

Non ignare mali, miseris succurrito Christe.

Our frailty sith, O Christ, thou didst perceive,

Condole our state, who still in frailty cleave.

8. God uses our sicknesses and afflictions as means and examples both to manifest to others the faith and virtues which he hath bestowed upon us, as also to strengthen those who have not received so great a measure of faith as we; for there can be no greater encouragement to a weak Christian, than to behold a true professor in the extremest sickness of his body, supported with greater patience and consolation in his soul. And the comfortable and blessed departure of such a man will arm him against the fear of death, and assure him that the hope of the godly is a far more precious thing than that flesh and blood can understand, or mortal eyes behold, in this vale of misery. And were

it not that we did see many of those whom we know to be the undoubted children of God, to have endured such afflictions and calamities before us, the greatness of the miseries and crosses which oft-times we endure, would make us doubt whether we be the children of God or no. And to this purpose St. James saith, “God made Job and the prophets an example of suffering adversity, and of long patience.”

9. By afflictions God makes us conformable to the image of Christ his Son (Rom. viii. 18; 1 Pet. iv. 14), who being the captain of our salvation, was made perfect through sufferings (Heb. ii. 10.) And therefore he first bare the cross in shame, before he was crowned with glory (Heb. ii. 7;) did first take gall (Matt. xxvii. 34), before he did eat the honey-comb (Luke xxiv. 42;) and was derided King of the Jews, by the soldiers in the High Priest’s hall, before he was saluted King of glory, by the angels in his Father’s court (Psal. xxiv. 7.) And the more lively our heavenly Father shall perceive the image of his natural Son to appear in us, the better he will love us; and when we have for a time borne his likeness in his sufferings, and fought (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8) and overcome (Rev. iii. 21), we shall be crowned by Christ; and with Christ, sit on his throne; and of Christ receive the precious white stone and morning-star (Rev. ii. 17), that shall make us shine like Christ for ever in his glory (Phil. iii. 21.)

10. Lastly, that the godly may be humbled in respect of their own state and misery, and God glorified by delivering them out of their troubles and afflictions, when they call upon him for his help and succour. For though there be no man so pure, but if the Lord will straitly mark iniquities he shall find in him just cause to punish him for his sin; yet the Lord in mercy doth not always, in the affliction of his children, respect their sins, but sometimes lays afflictions and crosses upon them for his glory’s sake. Thus our Saviour Christ told his disciples, that the man was not born blind for his own or his parents’ sin, but that the work of God should be shewed on him. So he told them likewise that Lazarus’s sickness was not unto the death, but for the glory of God. O the unspeakable goodness of God, which turneth those afflictions, which are the shame and punishment due to our sins, to be the subject of his honour and glory!

These are the blessed and profitable ends[107] for which God sends sickness and affliction upon his children; whereby it may plainly appear that afflictions are not signs either of God’s hatred or our reprobation; but rather tokens and pledges of his fatherly love unto children whom he loveth, and therefore chasteneth them in this life, where, upon repentance, there remains hope of pardon; rather than to refer the punishment to that life where there is no hope of pardon, nor end of punishment. For this cause, the Christians in the primitive church[108] were wont to give God great thanks for afflicting them in this life. So the apostles rejoiced, that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ’s name (Acts v. 41.) And the Christian Hebrews suffered with joy the

spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had in heaven a better, and an enduring substance (Heb. x. 34.) And in respect of those holy ends, the apostle saith, “that though no affliction for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; yet afterwards it bringeth the quiet fruit of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby.” (Heb. xii. 11.) Pray, therefore, heartily, that as God hath sent thee this sickness, so it would please him to come himself unto thee with thy sickness, by teaching thee to make those sanctified uses of it, for which he hath inflicted the same upon thee.

Meditations for one that is recovered from Sickness.

If God has of his mercy heard thy prayers, and restored thee to thy health again, consider with thyself:—

1. That thou hast now received from God, as it were, another life. Spend it therefore to the honour of God, in newness of life. Let thy sin die with thy sickness; but live thou by grace to holiness.

2. Be not the more secure, that thou art restored to health, neither exult in thyself, that thou escaped death; but think rather, that God seeing how unprepared thou wast, .hath of his mercy heard-thy prayer, spared thee, and given thee some little longer time of respite; that thou mayest both amend thy life, and put thyself in a better readiness against the time that he shall call for thee, without further delay, out of this world. For though thou hast escaped this, it may be, thou shalt not escape the next sickness.

3. Consider how fearful a reckoning thou hadst made before the judgment-seat of Christ, by this time, if thou hadst died of this sickness: spend, therefore, the time that remains, so as that thou mayest be able to make a more cheerful account of thyself, when it must be expired indeed.

4. Put not far off the day of death; thou knowest not, for all this, how near it is at hand; and being so fairly warned, be wiser. For if thou be taken unprovided the next time, thy excuse will be less, and thy judgment greater.

5. Remember that thou hast vowed amendment and newness of life. Thou hast “vowed a vow unto God, defer not to pay it, for he delighteth not in fools; pay, therefore, that thou hast vowed.” (Eccles. v. 4.) The unclean spirit is cast out; O let him not re-enter with seven worse than himself! Thou hast sighed out the groans of contrition; thou hast wept the tears of repentance; thou art washed in the pool of Bethesda, streaming with five bloody wounds, not of a troubling angel (John v. 4), but of the angel of God’s presence (Isa. lxiii. 9), troubled with the wrath due to thy sins; who descended into hell, to restore thee to saving health, and heaven. Return not now, with the dog, to thine own vomit, nor, like the washed sow, to wallow again in the mire of thy former sins and uncleanness; lest being entangled and overcome again with the filthiness of sin, which now thou hast escaped, thy latter end prove worse than the first

beginning. Twice, therefore, doth our Saviour Christ give the same cautionary warning to healed sinners. First, to the man cured of his thirty-eight years' disease—"Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing fall upon thee." Secondly, to the woman taken in adultery—"Neither do I condemn thee; go thy way and sin no more." Teaching us, how dangerous a thing it is to relapse and fall again into the former excess of riot (1 Pet. iv. 4.) Take heed, therefore, unto thy ways, and pray for grace, that thou mayest apply thy heart unto wisdom, during that small number of days which yet remain behind; and for thy present mercy and health received, imitate the thankful leper, and return to God this or the like thanksgiving:—

A Thanksgiving to be said of one that is recovered from Sickness.

O gracious and merciful father, who art the Lord of health and sickness, of life and of death; who killest and makest alive; who bringest down to the grave and raiseth up again; who art the only preserver of all those that trust in thee, I, thy poor and unworthy servant, having now, by experience of my painful sickness, felt the grievousness of misery due unto sin, and the greatness of thy mercy in forgiving sinners, and perceiving with what a fatherly compassion thou hast heard my prayers and restored me to my health and strength again, do here, upon the bended knees of my heart, return, with the thankful leper, to acknowledge thee alone to be the God of my health and salvation; and to give thee praise and glory for my strength and deliverance out of that grievous disease and malady; and for thus turning my mourning into mirth, my sickness into health, and my death into life. My sins deserved punishment, and thou hast corrected me, but hast not given me over unto death. I looked from the day to the night when thou wouldst make an end of me. I did chatter like a crane or a swallow; I mourned as a dove when the bitterness of sickness oppressed me; I lifted up mine eyes unto thee,

O Lord, and thou didst comfort me, for thou didst cast all my sins behind thy back, and didst deliver my soul from the pit of corruption; and when I found no help in myself nor in any other creature, saying, I am deprived of the residue of my years, I shall see man no more among the inhabitants of the world, then didst thou restore me to health again, and gavest life unto me; I found thee, O Lord, ready to save me.

And now, Lord, I confess that I can never yield unto thee such a measure of thanks as thou hast for this benefit deserved at my hands. And seeing that I can never be able to repay thy goodness with acceptable works, O that I could with Mary Magdalene testify the love and thankfulness of my heart with abounding tears! O what shall I be able to render unto thee, O Lord, for all these benefits which thou hast bestowed upon my soul! Surely, as in my sickness, when I had nothing else to give thee, I offered Christ and his merits unto thee as a ransom for my sins; so being now restored by thy grace to my

health and strength, and having no better thing to give, behold, O Lord, I do here offer up myself unto thee (Rom. xii. 1), beseeching thee so to assist me with thy Holy Spirit, that the remainder of my life may be wholly spent in setting forth thy praise and glory.

O Lord, forgive me my former follies and unthankfulness, that I was no more careful to love thee according to thy goodness, nor to serve thee according to thy will, nor to obey thee according to thy benefits. And seeing thou knowest that of myself I am not sufficient so much as to think a good thought, much less to do that which is good and acceptable in thy sight, assist me with thy grace and Holy Spirit, that I may, in my prosperity as devoutly spend my health in thy service, as I was earnest in my sickness to beg it at thy hands. And suffer me never to forget either this thy mercy in restoring me to my health, or those vows and promises which I have made unto thee in- my sickness. With my new health renew in me, O Lord, a right spirit, which may free me from the slavery of sin, and establish my heart in the service of grace. Work in me a great detestation of all sins which were the causes of thy anger and my sickness; and increase my faith in Jesus Christ, who is the author of my health and salvation. Let thy good Spirit lead me in the way that I should walk; and teach me to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this world, that others, by my example, may think better of thy truth. And sith this time which I have yet to live is but a little respite and small remnant of days which cannot long continue, teach me, O my God, so to number my days that I may apply my heart to that spiritual wisdom which directeth to salvation. And to this end make me more zealous than I have been in religion, more devout in prayer, more fervent in spirit, more careful to hear and profit by the preaching of thy gospel, more helpful to my poor brethren, more watchful over my ways, more faithful in my calling, and every way more abundant in all good works. Let me, in the joyful time of prosperity, fear the evil day of affliction; in the time of health, think on sickness; in the time of sickness, make myself ready for death; and when death approacheth, prepare myself for judgment. Let my whole life be an expression of thankfulness unto thee for thy grace and mercy. And therefore, O Lord, I do here from the very bottom of my heart, together with the thousand thousands of angels, the four beasts, and twenty-four elders, and all the creatures in heaven and on the earth, acknowledge to be due unto thee, O Father, which sittest upon the throne, and to the Lamb, thy Son, who sitteth at thy right hand, and to the Holy Spirit which proceedeth from both, the holy Trinity of persons in Unity of substance, all praise, honour, glory, and power, from this time forth and for evermore. Amen.

[106]Schola crucis, schola lucis. Gubernator in tempestate dignoscitur, in acie miles probatur; delicata jactatio est, cum periculum non est: conflictatio in adversis, probatio est veritatis.—Cypr. Serm. iv. de Im.

[107]Malum pati malum non est; malum facere malum est.—Chrys. de prod. Jul.

[108]Cum vexamur ac premimur, turn maximas gratias agimus indulgentissimo patri, quod corruptelam nostram non patitur longius procedere, sed plagis ac verberibus emendat. —Lact. lib. v. cap. 23.

MEDITATIONS FOR ONE THAT IS LIKE TO DIE.

If thy sickness be like to increase unto death, then meditate on three things:—First, How graciously God dealeth with thee. Secondly, From what evils death will free thee. Thirdly, What good death will bring unto thee.

The first sort of Meditations are, to consider God's favourable dealing with thee.

1. Meditate that God uses this chastisement of thy body but as a medicine to cure thy soul, by drawing thee, who art sick in sin, to come by repentance unto Christ, thy physician, to have thy soul healed (Matt. ix. 12.)

2. That the sorest sickness or most painful disease which thou canst endure, is nothing, if it be compared to those dolours and pains which Jesus Christ thy Saviour hath suffered for thee, when in a bloody sweat fie endured the wrath of God (Psal. lxxxviii. 7; Isa. liii. 6), the pains of hell (Psal. xviii. 5), and a cursed death which was due to thy sins (Heb. v. 7; Gal. iii. 13; Lam. i. 12.) Justly, therefore, may he use those words of Jeremiah, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce wrath."[109] Hath the Son of God endured so much for thy redemption, and wilt not thou, a sinful man, endure a little sickness for his pleasure, especially when it is for thy good?

3. That when thy sickness and disease is at the extremest, yet it is less and easier than thy sins have deserved. Let thine own conscience judge whether thou hast not deserved worse than all that thou dost suffer. Murmur not, therefore, but considering thy manifold and grievous sins, thank God that thou are not plagued with far more grievous punishments. Think how willingly the damned in hell would endure the extremest pains a thousand years on condition that they had but the hope to be saved, and, after so many years, to be eased of their eternal torments. And seeing that it is his mercy that thou art not rather consumed than corrected (Lam. iii. 22), how canst thou but bear patiently his temporal correction, seeing the end is to save thee from eternal condemnation? (1 Cor. xi. 32.)

4. That nothing cometh to pass in this case unto thee but such as ordinarily befel others thy brethren; who, being the beloved and undoubted servants of God when they lived on earth (Heb. xi), are now most blessed and glorious saints with Christ in heaven, as Job, David, Lazarus, &c. (1 Pet. v. 9.) They groaned for a time, as thou dost, under the like burden; but they are now delivered from all their miseries, troubles, and calamities. And so likewise ere long, if thou wilt patiently tarry the Lord's leisure, thou shalt also be delivered from thy sickness and pain; either by restitution to thy former health with Job; or, which is far better, by being received to heavenly rest with Lazarus.

5. Lastly, That God hath not given thee over into the hand of thine enemy to be punished and disgraced; but, being thy loving Father, he corrects thee with his own merciful hand. When David had bis wish to choose his own chastisement, he chose rather to be corrected by the hand of God than by any other means: “Let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man.” (2 Sam. xxiv. 14.) Who will not take any affliction in good part when it cometh from the hand of God, from whom, though no affliction seemeth joyous for the present, we know nothing cometh but what is good? (Heb. xii. 11.) The consideration of which made David endure Shimei’s cursed railing with greater patience; and to correct himself another time for his impatience (2 Sam. xvi. 9;) “I should not have opened my mouth because thou didst it.” (Psal. xxxix. 9;) and Job, to reprove the unadvised speech of his wife,” Thou speakest like a foolish woman. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not receive evil?” (Job ii. 10.) And though the cup of God’s wrath due to our sins, was such a horror to our Saviour’s human nature that he earnestly prayed that it might pass from him, yet, when he considered that it was reached unto him by the hand and will of his Father, he willingly submitted himself to drink it to the very dregs (Matt. xxvi. 39, 42.) Nothing will more arm thee with patience in thy sickness than to see that it comes from the hand of thy heavenly Father, who would never send it but that he sees it to be to thee both needful and profitable.

The second sort of Meditations are, to consider from what evils Death will free thee.

1. It frees thee from a corruptible body, which was conceived in the weakness of flesh, and the stain of sin—a living prison of thy soul, a lively instrument of sin. Insomuch, that whereas trees and plants bring forth leaves, flowers, fruits, and sweet smells, man’s body naturally brings forth nothing but corruption. His affections are altogether corrupted (Psal. xiv. 1;) and the imaginations of his heart are only evil continually (Gen. vi. 5.) Hence it is that the ungodly is not satisfied with profaneness, nor the voluptuous with pleasures, nor the ambitious with preferments, nor the curious with preciseness, nor the malicious with revenge, nor the lewd with uncleanness, nor the covetous with gain, nor the drunkard with drinking. New passions and fashions grow daily; new fears and afflictions still arise: here wrath lies in wait, there vain-glory vexeth; here pride lifts up, there disgrace casts down; and every one waiteth who shall arise on the ruin of another. Now a man is privily stung with back-biters, like fiery serpents; anon he is in danger to be openly devoured of his enemies, like Daniel’s lions. And a godly man, wherever he liveth, shall ever be vexed, like Lot, with Sodom’s uncleanness.

2. Death brings to the godly an end of sinning (Rom. vi. 7), and of all the miseries which are due to sin; so that after death, “there shall be no more sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for God shall wipe

away all tears from their eyes." (Rev. xxi. 4.) Yea, by death we are separated from the company of wicked men; and God "taketh away merciful and righteous men from the evil to come." (Isa. lvii. 1.) So he dealt with Josiah: "I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be put into thy grave in peace; and thy eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring unto this place." (2 Kings xxii. 20.) And God "hides them for a while in the grave, until the indignation pass over." (Isa. xxvi. 20.) So that as paradise is the haven of the soul's joy, so the grave may be termed the haven of the body's rest.

3. Whereas this wicked body lives in a world of wickedness, so that the poor soul cannot look out at the eye, and not be infected; nor hear by the ear, and not be distracted; nor smell at the nostrils, and not be tainted; nor taste with the tongue, and not be allured; nor touch by the hand, and not be defiled; and every sense, upon, every temptation, is ready to betray the soul: By death the soul shall be delivered from this thraldom; and this "corruptible body shall put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality." (1 Cor. xv. 53.) O blessed, thrice blessed be that death in the Lord, which delivers us out of so evil a world, and frees us from such a body of bondage and corruption!

The third sort of Meditations are, to consider what good Death will bring unto thee.

1. Death brings the godly man's soul to enjoy an immediate communion with the blessed Trinity, in everlasting bliss and glory.

2. It translates the soul from the miseries of this world, the contagion of sin, and society of sinners, to the "city of the living God, the celestial Jerusalem, and the company of innumerable angels, and to the assembly and congregation of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the souls of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant." (Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24.)

3. Death puts the soul into the actual and full possession of all the inheritance and happiness which Christ hath either promised to thee in his word, or purchased for thee by his blood.

This is the good and happiness to which a blessed death will bring thee. And what truly religious Christian that is young, would not wish himself old, that his appointed time might the sooner approach, to enter into this celestial paradise? where thou mayest exchange thy brass for gold, thy vanity for felicity, thy vileness for honour, thy bondage for freedom, thy lease for an inheritance, and thy mortal state for an immortal life. He that doth not daily desire this blessedness above all things, of all others he is less worthy to enjoy it.

If Cato Uticensis, and Cleombrotus, two heathen men, reading Plato's book of the immortality of the soul, did voluntarily, the one break his neck, the other

run upon his sword, that they might the sooner, as they thought, have enjoyed those joys,[110] what a shame it is for Christians, knowing those things in a more excellent measure and manner out of God's own book, not to be willing to enter into these heavenly joys, especially when their Master calls for them thither? (Matt. xxv. 21.) If, therefore, there be in thee any love of God, or desire of thine own happiness or salvation, when the time of thy departing draweth near—that time, I say, and manner of death, which God in his unchangeable counsel hath appointed and determined before thou wast born—yield and surrender up willingly and cheerfully thy soul into the merciful hands of Jesus Christ thy Saviour. And to this end, when the time is come, as the angel, in the sight of Manoah and his wife, ascended from the altar up to heaven in the flame of the sacrifice (Judges xiii. 19, 20}, so endeavour thou that thy spirit, in the sight of thy friends, may from the altar of a contrite heart ascend up to heaven, in the sweet perfume of this, or the like spiritual sacrifice of prayers:—

[109]Dum legimus vel audimus quot et quanta ille sine culpa sustinuit, intelligimus nos peccatores omnia debere libenter sustinere.—Theod. ad 5 cap. in Rom.

[110]Plut. in vit. Cat. Cic. Tusc. quæst. 1. 1.—Vel de præcipiti venias iu Tartara saxo, Ut qui Socraticum de nece legit opus.—Ovid.

A Prayer to Be Said of One That Is Like to Die.

A Prayer for a sick Man, when he is told that he is not a man for this world, but must prepare himself to go unto God.

O heavenly Father, who art the Lord God of the spirits of all flesh, and hast made us these souls, and hast appointed us the time, as to come into this world, so having finished our course, to go out of the same, the number of my days, which thou hast determined are now expired, and I am come to the outmost bounds which thou hast appointed, beyond which I cannot pass. I know, O Lord, that if thou enterest into judgment, no flesh can be justified in thy sight; and I, O Lord, of all others should appear most impure and unjust; for I have not fought that good fight for the defence of thy faith and religion, with that zeal and constancy that I should; but for fear of displeasing the world, I have given way unto sins and errors; and for desire to please my flesh, I have broken all thy commandments, in thought, word, and deed; so that my sins have taken such hold on me, that I am not able to look up, and they are more in number than the hairs on my head. If thou wilt straitly mark my iniquities, O Lord, where shall I stand? If thou weighest me in the balance, I shall be found too light. For I am void of all righteousness that might merit thy mercy, and loaden with all iniquities that most justly deserve thy heaviest wrath. But, O my Lord, and my God, for Jesus Christ thy Son's sake, in whom only thou art well pleased with all penitent and believing sinners, take pity and compassion upon me, who am the chief of sinners. Blot out all my sins out of thy remembrance, and wash away all my transgressions out of thy sight, with the precious blood of thy Son, which I believe that he, as an undefined Lamb, hath shed for the cleansing of my sins. In this faith I lived; in this faith I die; believing that Jesus Christ died for my sins, and rose again for my justification. And seeing that he hath endured that death, and borne the burden of that judgment which was due unto my sins; O Father, for his death and passion's sake, now that I am coming to appear before thy judgment seat, acquit and deliver me from that fearful judgment which my sins have justly deserved. And perform unto me that gracious and comfortable promise which thou hast made in thy gospel, that whosoever believeth in thee hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but shall pass from death unto life. Strengthen, O Christ, my faith; that I may put the whole confidence of my salvation in the merits of thy obedience and blood. Increase, O Holy Spirit, my patience; lay no more upon, me than I am able to bear; and enable me to bear so much as shall stand with thy blessed will and pleasure. O blessed Trinity in unity, my Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, vouchsafe, that as my outward man decays, so my inward man may more and more, by thy grace and consolation, increase and gather strength. O Saviour, put my soul in a readiness, that like a wise virgin, having the wedding-garment of thy righteousness and holiness, she may

be ready to meet thee at thy coming with oil in her lamp. Marry her unto thyself, that she may be one with thee in everlasting love and fellowship. O Lord, reprove Satan, and chase him away; deliver my soul from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth. I thank thee, O Lord, for all thy blessings, both spiritual and temporal, bestowed upon me; especially for my redemption by the death of my Saviour Christ. I thank thee that thou hast protected me with thy holy angels from my youth up until now. O Lord, I beseech thee, give them a charge to attend upon me, till thou callest for my soul; and then to carry her, as they did the soul of Lazarus, into thy heavenly kingdom. And as the time of my departure shall approach nearer unto me, so grant, O Lord, that my soul may draw nearer unto thee, and that I may joyfully commend my soul into thy hands, as into the hands of a loving Father, and a merciful Redeemer; and at that instant, O Lord, graciously receive my spirit. All which that I may do, assist me, I beseech thee, with thy grace; and let thy Holy Spirit continue with me unto the end, and in the end, for Jesus Christ's sake, thy Son, my Lord and holy Saviour, in whose name I give thee the glory, and beg these things at thy hand, in that prayer which Christ himself hath taught me:—Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, &c.

Meditations against Despair, or doubting of God's Mercy.

Meditations against Despair, or doubting of God's Mercy.

It is found by continual experience, that near the time of death, when the children of God are weakest, then Satan makes the greatest nourish of his strength, and assails them with his strongest temptations. For he knows that either he must now or never prevail; for if their souls once go to heaven, he shall never vex nor trouble them any more. And therefore he will now bestir himself as much as he can, and labour to set before their eyes all the gross sins which ever they committed, and the judgments of God which are due unto them; thereby to drive them, if he can, into despair, which is a more grievous sin than all the sins that they committed, or he can accuse them of.

If Satan therefore trouble thy conscience more towards thy death, than in thy life—[111]

1. Confess thy sins to God, not only in general, but also in particular.[112]

2. Make satisfaction to those men whom thou hast wronged, if thou be able. And if thou dost injuriously or fraudulently detain or keep in thy possession any lands or goods, that of right belong to any widow or fatherless child, presume not, as thou tenderest thy soul's health, to look the righteous Judge in the face, unless thou dost first make restitution thereof to the right owners; for the law of God, under the penalty of his curse, requires thee to "restore whatsoever was given thee to keep, or which was committed to thy trust, or whatsoever by robbery or violent oppression thou tookest from thy neighbour, with a fifth part for amends added to the principal." (Lev. vi. 2, 3, 4, &c.; Numb. v. 6, 7, 8.)[113] And unless that, like Zaccheus, thou dost make restitution of such goods and lands, according to God's law (Luke xix. 8, 9; Micah vi. 10, 11), thou canst never truly repent; and without true repentance thou canst never be saved. But though by the temptation of the devil, thou hast done wrong and injury, yet if thou dost truly repent and make restitution according to thy power (Ezek. xviii. 7; Acts ii. 38; viii. 22), the Lord has promised to be merciful unto thee, to hear the prayers of his faithful ministers for thee, to forgive thee thy trespass and sin, and to receive thy soul in the merits of Christ's blood, as a Lamb without blemish (Gen. xx. 7; James v. 14, 15, 16; Lev. vi. 6, 7.)

4. Ask of God, for Christ's sake, pardon and forgiveness. And then these troubles of mind are no discouragements, but rather comforts; exercises, not punishments. They are assurances to thee, that thou art in the right way: for the way to heaven is by the gates of hell; that is, by suffering pains in the body, and such doubtings in the mind, that thy state in this life being every way made bitter, the joys of eternal life may relish to thee better and more sweet.

If Satan tell thee that thou hast no faith because thou hast no feeling,[114] meditate—

1. That the truest faith hath oftentimes the least feeling and greatest doubts; but so long as thou hatest such doubtings they shall not be laid to thy charge, for they belong to the flesh, from which thou art divorced (Mark ix. 24; Matt. xiv. 31.) When thy flesh shall perish, thy weak inward man, which hates them, and loves the Lord Jesus, shall be saved.

2. That it is a better faith to believe without feeling than with feeling (Job xiii. 15;) the least faith, so much as a grain of mustard-seed (Matt. xvii. 20), so much as is in an infant baptized, is enough to save the soul which loveth Christ and believeth in him.

3. That the child of God which desireth to feel the assurance of God's favour, shall have his desire when God shall see it to be for his good; for God has promised to give them the water of life who thirst for it (Rev. xxi. 6; Isa. lv. 1.) We have an example in Master Glover, the holy martyr, who could have no comfortable feeling till he came to the sight of the stake; and then cried out, and clapped his hands for joy to his friends, saying, "O Austin, he is come, he is come!" meaning the feeling joy of faith and the Holy Ghost.[115] Tarry, therefore, the Lord's leisure; be strong, and he shall comfort thine heart (Psal. xxvii. 14.)

If Satan shall aggravate to thee the greatness, the multitude, and heinousness of thy sins,[116] meditate—

1. That upon true repentance it is as easy with God to forgive the greatest sin as the least, and he is as willing to forgive many, as to pardon one (1 Tim. i. 15;) and his mercy shineth more in pardoning great sinners, than small offenders; as appears in the examples of Manasses, Magdalene, Peter, Paul, &c.; and where sin most abounded, there doth his grace rejoice to abound much more (Rom. v. 20.)

2. That God did never forsake any man, till a man did first forsake God; as appears in the examples of Cain, Saul, Achitophel, Ahaziah, Judas, &c.

3. That God calleth all, even those sinners who are heavy laden with sin (Matt. xi. 28;) and that he did never deny his mercy to any sinner that asked his mercy with a penitent heart. This the history of the gospel witnesses: there came unto Christ all sorts of sick sinners; the blind, lame, halt, lepers, such as were sick of palsies, dropsies, bloody-fluxes, such as were lunatic, and possessed with unclean spirits and devils; yet of all these not one that came and asked his mercy and help, went away without his errand;—if mercy he asked, mercy he found, were his sin never so great, were his disease never so grievous; nay, he offered and gave his mercy to many that never asked it, being moved only with the bowels of his own compassion, and the sight of their

misery; as to the woman of Samaria, the widow of Nain, and to the sick man that lay at the pool of Bethesda, who had been thirty-eight years sick. If he thus willingly gave his mercy to them that did not ask it, and was found of them, as the prophet saith, that sought him not (Isa. lxv. 1; Rom. x. 20;) will he deny mercy unto thee, who dost so earnestly pray for it with tears; and dost, like the poor publican, so heartily knock for it with penitent fists upon a bruised and broken heart; especially when thou prayest to thy Father, in the name and mediation of Christ, for whose sake he hath promised to grant whatsoever we shall ask of him (John xiv. 14;) as sure as God is true, he will not. Though Nineveh's sins had provoked the Lord to send out his sentence against them, yet upon their repentance, he recalled it again, and spared the city; how much more, if thou likewise repentest, will he spare thee, seeing his sentence is not yet gone forth against thee?[117] If he deferred the judgments all Ahab's days for the external shew only which he made of humiliation, how much more will he clean turn away his vengeance, if thou wilt unfeignedly repent of thy sin, and return unto him for grace and mercy?

He offered his mercy unto Cain, who murdered his innocent brother: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" as if he should have said, If thou wilt leave thy envy and malice, and offer unto me from a faithful and contrite heart, both thou and thine oblation also shall be acceptable unto me. And to Judas, that so treacherously betrayed him, in calling him friend (Matt. xxvi. 50), a sweet appellation of love; and when Judas offered, he willingly consented with that mouth wherein never was found guile (1 Pet. ii. 22), to kiss those dissembling lips, under which lurked the poison of asps (Psal. cxl. 3.) Had Judas apprehended this word friend out of the mouth of Christ, as Benhadad did the word brother from the mouth of Ahab, doubtless Judas should have found the God of Israel more merciful than Benhadad found the King of Israel (1 Kings xx. 32, 33, 34.) But God was more displeased with Cain for despairing of his mercy, than for murdering his brother;[118] and with Judas for hanging himself, than for betraying his master:[119] in that they would make the sins of mortal men greater than the infinite mercy of the eternal God; or as if they could be more sinful, than God was merciful: whereas the least drop of Christ's blood is of more merit to procure God's mercy for thy salvation, than all the sins that thou hast committed can be of force to provoke his wrath to thy damnation.

If Satan shall suggest, that all this is true of God's mercy, but that it doth not belong to thee, because thy sins are greater than other men's, as being sins of knowledge and of many years continuance, and such as whereby others have been undone, and all, for the most part, committed wilfully and presumptuously against God and thy conscience; and, therefore, though he will be merciful unto others, yet he will not be merciful unto thee,[120] meditate—

1. That many, who are now in heaven most blessed and glorious saints, committed in the same kind, when they lived on earth, as great and greater sins than ever thou hast committed, and continued, before they repented, in those sins as long as ever thou hast done. As, therefore, all their sins and the continuance in them could not hinder God's mercy, upon their repentance, from forgiving their sins, and receiving them into favour,; no more shall thy sins, and thy continuance in them, hinder him from being merciful unto thee, if thou dost repent as they did: yea, upon thy repentance, every one of their examples is a pledge that he will do the same unto thee that he did unto them (1 Tim. i. 16:) for as the least sin, in God's justice, without repentance is damnable; so the greatest sin, upon repentance, is in his mercy pardonable. Thy greatest and most inveterate sins are but the sins of a man; but the least of his mercies is the mercy of God. Because thou knowest thine own sins, thou doubtest whether they shall be pardoned; mark how this doubtful case is resolved by God himself: Many in Isaiah's days thought as thou dost, that they had continued so long in sin, that it, was too late for them now to seek to return unto God for grace and mercy; but God answereth them, "Seek ye the Lord whilst he may be found; call ye upon him whilst he is near" (Isa. lv. 6, 7, 8, 9.) As if he had said, whilst life lasteth, and my word is preached, I am near to be found of all that seek me and pray unto me. The people reply, But we, O Lord, are grievous sinners, and therefore dare not presume to call upon thy name, or to come near thine holiness; to this the Lord answereth, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the man of iniquity his thoughts, and let him return unto me and I will have mercy upon him, and to his God, and I will pardon him abundantly." But we would think, say the people, that if our sins were but ordinary sins, this promise of mercy might belong to us; but because our sins are so great, and of such long continuance, therefore we fear lest when we appear before God he will reject us. To this God answereth again, "My thoughts (of mercy) are not your thoughts, neither are your ways (of pardoning) my ways: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." If, therefore, every sinner in the world were a world of such sinners as thou art, do thou but yet what God bids thee, repent and believe, and the blood of Jesus Christ, being the blood of God, will cleanse both thee and them from all your sins (Acts xx. 28; 1 John i. 7.)

2. That as God did foresee all the sins which the world should commit, and yet all those could not hinder him from loving the world, so that he gave his only-begotten Son to death, to save as many of the world as would believe and repent (John iii. 16;) much less shall thy sins, being the sins of the least member of the world, be able to hinder God from loving thy soul, and forgiving thy sins, if thou dost repent and believe.

3. That if he loved thee so dearly when thou wast his enemy (Rom. v. 8, 9), that he paid for thee so dear a price as the spilling of his heart blood; how can he now but be gracious unto thee, when to save thee will cost him but the casting of a gracious look upon thee? Look not thou therefore to the greatness of thy sins, but to the infiniteness of his mercy, which is so surpassing great, that if thou puttest all thy own grievous sins together, and addest unto those the sins of Cain and Judas, and puttest unto them all the sins of the reprobates in the world, doubtless it would be a huge heap; yet compare this huge heap with the infinite mercy of God, and there will be no more comparison between them, than between the least mole-hill and the greatest mountain in a country. The cry of the most grievous sins that ever we read of, could never reach up higher than unto heaven, as the cry of the sins of Sodom; but the mercy of God, saith David, reacheth up higher than the heavens, and so overtoppeth all our sins. And if his mercy be greater than all his works (Psal. cxlv. 9), it must needs be greater than all thy sins. And so long as his mercy is greater than the sins of the whole world, do thou but repent, there is no doubt of pardon.

If Satan shall object that thou hast many times vowed to repent, and hast made a show of repentance for the time, and yet didst fall into the same sins again and again; and that all thy repentance was but feigned, and a mocking of God; and that seeing thou hast so often broken thy vow, therefore God hath withdrawn his mercy, and hath changed his love, &c.,[121] meditate—

1. That though this were true, which indeed is heinous, yet it is no sufficient cause why thou shouldst despair; seeing that this is the common case of all the children of God in this life, who vow so oft to forbear some sin, till perceiving their weakness not able to perform it, they vow that they will vow no more.[122] Their vows show the desires of their spiritual man; their breaking, the weakness of their corrupt flesh. And our oft slips into the same sins Christ foresaw, when he taught us to pray daily, O Father, forgive us our trespasses. And why doth Christ enjoin thee, who art but sinful man, to forgive thy brother seven times in a day, if he shall return seven times in a day, and say, it repenteth me (Luke xvii. 3, 4), but to assure thee, that he, being the God of mercy and goodness itself, will forgive to thee thy seventy times seven fold sins a day (Matt. xviii. 21, 22), which thou hast committed against him, if than return unto him by true repentance? The Israelites were cured by looking, though with weak eyes, on the brazen serpent, as oft as they were stung by the fiery serpent in the wilderness; to assure thee that upon thy tears of repentance, thou shalt be recovered by faith in Christ, as often as thou art wounded to death by sin.[123] (Num. xxi. 9.)

2. That thy salvation is grounded, not upon the constancy of thine obedience, but upon the firmness of God’s covenant. Though thou variest with God, and the covenant be broken on thy behalf, yet it is firm on God’s part, and therefore all is safe enough if thou wilt return; for there is no variableness with

him, neither shadow of change; he hath locked up thy salvation, and made it sure in his own unchangeable purpose (James i. 17; Rom. viii. 28; ix. 11;) and hath delivered to thy keeping the keys,[124] which are faith and repentance; and whilst thou hast them, thou mayest persuade thyself that thy salvation is sure and safe; for whom God loveth, he loveth to the end, and never repenteth of bestowing his love on them who repent and believe.

Lastly, If Satan shall persuade thee that thou hast been doubting a long time, and that it is best for thee now to despair, seeing thy sins increase, and thy judgment draweth near,[125] meditate—

1. That no sin, though never so great, should be a cause to move any Christian to despair, so long as God's mercy by so many millions of degrees is greater; and that every penitent and believing sinner hath the pardon of all his sins confirmed by the word and oath of God, "two immutable things, wherein it is impossible that God should lie" (Heb. vi. 18.) His word is, that at what time soever a sinner, whosoever, doth repent of his sins, whatsoever (for both time, and sins, and sinners are indefinite) from the bottom of his heart, God will blot forth all his sins out of his remembrance, that they shall be mentioned unto him no more. If we will not take his word (which God forbid we should doubt of) he hath given us his oath.[126] As I live, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) As if he had said, Will ye not believe my word? I swear by my life, that I delight not to damn any sinner for his sins, but rather to save him upon his conversion and repentance. The meditation of which moved Tertullian to exclaim, "O how happy are we, when God sweareth that he wills not our damnation! O what miserable wretches are we, if we will not believe God when he sweareth this truth unto us!" Listen, O drooping spirit, whose soul is assailed with waves of faithless despair, how happy were it to see many like thee and Hezekiah! who mourn like doves for the sense of sin, and chatter like cranes and swallows for the fear of God's anger (Isa. xxxviii. 14), rather than to behold many who die like beasts without any feeling of their own state, or any fear of God's wrath, or tribunal-seat, before which they are to appear! Comfort thyself, O languishing soul, for if this earth hath any for whom Christ spilt his blood on the cross, thou assuredly art one. Cheer up therefore thyself in the all-sufficient atonement of the blood of the Lamb, which speaketh better things than that of Abel (Heb. xii 24;) and pray for those who never yet obtained the grace to have such a sense and detestation of sin. Thou art one, indeed, for whom Christ died; and from whom a wounded spirit, judging rather according to his feeling than his faith, hath wrung that doleful voice of Christ, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And doubt not, but ere long thou shalt as truly reign with him, as now thou dost suffer with him; for Yea and Amen hath spoken it (2 Tim. ii. 11; 2 Cor. i. 20; Rev. iii. 14.) No sin bars a man from salvation, but only incredulity and impenitency (Heb. vi. 6); nothing makes the

sin against the Holy Ghost unpardonable, but want of repentance. Thy unfeigned desire to repent is as acceptable to God, as the most perfect repentance that thou couldst wish to perform unto him.

Meditate upon these evangelical comforts, and thou shalt see that in the very agony of death, God will so assist thee with his Spirit, that when Satan looks for the greatest victory, he shall receive the foulest foil; yea, when thy eye-strings are broken, that thou canst not see the light, Jesus Christ will appear to thee to comfort thy soul, and his holy angels will carry thee into his heavenly kingdom (Luke xvi. 22.) Then shall thy friends behold thee, like Manoah's angel, doing wonders indeed (Judges xiii. 19;) when they shall see a frail man in his greatest weakness, by the mere assistance of God's Spirit, overcoming the strength of sin, the bitterness of death, and all the power of Satan; and in the fire of faith, and perfume of prayer, ascend up with angels victoriously into heaven.

[111]Satan's first stratagem, in time of death.

[112]The defeature.

[113] Non remittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum.

[114]Satan's second assault.

[115]Fox's Acts and Monuments.

[116]Satan's third assault.

[117]Novit Dominus mutare sententiam, si tu noveris emendare vitam.—Aug. in Psal. 50.

[118]Judam non tam scelus quam desperatio facit penitus interire.—Aug. lib. de Util. Pœnit.

[119]Sceleratior omnibus, O Juda, extitisti, quem non pœnitentia duxit ad Dominum, sed desperatio traxit ad laqueum.—Leo.

[120]Satan's fourth assault.

[121]Satan's fifth assault.

[122]I remember, saith Luther, that Staupitius was wont to tell me, "Ego plus quam millies Deo vovi," &c. "I have more than a thousand times vowed unto God that I would mend my life, but I could never perform my vow. Henceforth I will make no such vow, because I verily know that I cannot keep it. Unless, therefore, God will be merciful unto me for Christ's sake, and grant me a blessed departure out of this wretched life, all my vows and good works will stand me in no stead." This is the state of the dearest children of God in this life. Read Luther on the Galatians, c. i. p. 5.

[123] Post lachrymas, gemitusque graves, clementia Christi confestim est oculos ante locanda tuos.

[124]By these keys Peter opened heaven to himself, and afterwards, with the rest of the apostles, unto others (Luke xxii. 62; xxiv. 47; John xx. 21; xiii. 1; Rom. xi. 29; viii. 30.)

[125]Satan's sixth assault.

[126]Dr. King of London—Lectures on Jonah.

An Admonition to them who come to visit the Sick.

An Admonition to them who come to visit the Sick.

They who come to visit ihe sick, must have a special care not to stand dumb and staring in the sick person's face to disquiet him, nor yet to speak idly and ask unprofitable questions, as most do.

If they see, therefore, that the sick party is like to die, let them not dissemble, but lovingly and discreetly admonish him of his weakness, and to prepare for eternal life. One hour well spent, when a man's life is almost out-spent, may gain a man the assurance of eternal life. Soothe him not with the vain hope of this life, lest thou betray his soul to eternal death. Admonish him plainly of his state, and ask him briefly these, or the like questions:—

Questions to be asked of a sick Man that is like to die.

Dost thou believe that Almighty God, the Trinity of Persons in unity of essence, hath by his power made heaven and earth, and all things therein? and that he doth still by his divine providence govern the same, so that nothing comes to pass in the world, nor to thyself, but what his divine hand and counsel had determined before to be done?

2. Dost thou confess that thou hast transgressed and broken the holy commandments of the Almighty God in thought, word, and deed? and hast deserved for breaking his holy laws, the curse of God, which containeth all the miseries of this life, and everlasting torments in hell fire, when this life is ended, if so be that God should deal with thee according to thy deserts?

3. Art thou not sorry in thy heart, that thou hast so broken his laws, and neglected his service and worship, and so much followed the world, and thy own vain pleasures? and wouldst thou not lead a holier life, if thou wert to begin again?

4. Dost thou not from thy heart desire to be reconciled unto God in Jesus Christ his blessed Son, thy Mediator, who is at the right hand of God in heaven, now appearing for thee in the sight of God, and making request unto him for thy soul? (Rom. viii. 34; Heb. ix. 24.)

5. Dost thou renounce all confidence in all other mediators or intercessors, saints or angels (Heb. ix. 11), believing that Jesus Christ, the only Mediator of the New Testament, is able perfectly to save them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them? (1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. vii. 25) and wilt thou with David say unto Christ, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee?" (Psal. lxxiii. 25.)

6. Dost thou confidently believe and hope to be saved by the only merits of that bloody death and passion, which thy Saviour Jesus Christ hath suffered for thee; not putting any hope of salvation in thy own merits, nor in any other

means or creatures; being assuredly persuaded, that there is no salvation in any other, and that there is none other name under heaven whereby thou must be saved? (Acts iv. 12; x. 43.)

7. Dost thou heartily forgive all wrongs and offences done or offered unto thee by any manner of person whatsoever? and dost thou as willingly from thy heart ask forgiveness of them whom thou hast grievously wronged in word or deed? and dosfr thou cast out of thy heart all malice and hatred, which thou hast borne to anybody, that thou mayest appear before the face of Christ, the Prince of peace, in perfect love and charity? (Isa. ix. 6; Heb. xii. 14.)

8. Doth thy conscience tell thee of anything which thou hast wrongfully taken, and dost still withhold from any widow or fatherless children, or from any other person whatsoever? Be assured that unless thou shalt restore, like Zaccheus, those goods and lands, if thou be able, thou canst not truly repent; and without true repentance thou canst not be saved, nor look Christ in the face when thou shalt appear before his judgment-seat.

9. Dost thou firmly believe, that thy body shall be raised up out of the grave, at the sound of the last trumpet? and that thy body and soul shall be united together again in the resurrection day, to appear before the Lord Jesus Christ; and thence to go with him into his kingdom of heaven, to live in everlasting bliss and glory?

If the sick party shall answer to all these questions like a faithful Christian, then let all who are present join together and pray for him, in these or the like words:—

A Prayer to Be Said for the Sick by Them Who Visit Him.

A Prayer to be said for the Sick by them who visit him.

O merciful Father, who art the Lord and giver of life, and to whom belong the issues of death, we, thy children here assembled, do acknowledge, that in respect of our manifold sins, we are not worthy to ask any blessing for ourselves at thy hands, much less to become suitors to thy Majesty in the behalf of others; yet because thou hast commanded us to pray one for another, especially for the sick, and hast promised that the prayers of the righteous shall avail much with thee, in obedience, therefore, to thy commandment, and confidence of thy gracious promise, we are bold to become humble suitors unto thy divine Majesty, in the behalf of this our dear brother (or sister) whom thou hast visited with the chastisement of thine own fatherly hand. We could gladly wish the restitution of his health, and a longer continuance of his life, and Christian fellowship amongst us; but forasmuch as it appeareth, as far as we can discern, that thou hast appointed by this visitation to call for him out of this mortal life, we submit our wills to thy blessed will, and humbly entreat for Jesus Christ's sake, and the merits of his bitter death and passion, which he hath suffered for him, that thou wouldst pardon and forgive unto him all his sins, as well that wherein he was conceived and born, as also all the offences and transgressions which ever since, to this day and hour, he hath committed in thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty. Cast them behind thy back; remove them as far from thy presence, as the east is from the west; blot them out of thy remembrance; lay them not to his charge; wash them away with the blood of Christ, that they may no more be seen; and deliver him from all the judgments which are due unto him for his sins, that they may never trouble his conscience, nor rise in judgment against his soul; and impute unto him the righteousness of Jesus Christ, whereby he may appear righteous in thy sight. And in his extremity at this time, we beseech thee, look down from heaven upon him with those eyes of grace and compassion, wherewith thou art wont to look upon thy children in their affliction and misery. Pity thy wounded servant, like the good Samaritan; for here is a sick soul that needeth the help of such a heavenly physician. O Lord increase his faith, that he may believe that Christ died for him, and that his blood cleanseth him from all his sins; and either assuage his pain, or else increase his patience, to endure thy blessed will and pleasure. And, good Lord, lay no more upon him than thou shalt enable him to bear. Heave him up unto thyself, with those sighs and groans which cannot be expressed. Make him now to feel what is the hope of his calling, and what is the exceeding greatness of thy mercy and power towards them that believe in thee; and in his weakness, O Lord, shew thou thy strength. Defend him against the suggestions and temptations of Satan, who (as he hath all his life time) will now in his weakness especially seek to assail him and to

devour him. O save his soul, and reprove Satan, and command thy holy angels to be about him to aid him, and to chase away all evil and malignant spirits far from him. Make him more and more to loath this world, and to desire to be loosed, and to be with Christ. And when that good hour and time shall come in which thou hast determined to call for him out of this present life; give him grace peaceably and joyfully to yield up his soul into thy merciful hands, and do thou receive her into thy mercy, and let thy blessed angels carry her into thy kingdom. Make his last hour his best hour, his last words his best words, and his last thoughts his best thoughts. And when the sight of his eyes is gone, and his tongue shall fail to do its office, grant, O Lord, that his soul may, with Stephen, behold Jesus Christ in heaven ready to receive him, and that thy Spirit within him may make request for him with sighs which cannot be uttered. Teach us in him to read and see our own end and mortality, and therefore to be careful to prepare ourselves for our last end, and put ourselves in a readiness against the time that thou shalt call for us in the like manner. Thus, Lord, we recommend this our dear brother (or sister), thy sick servant, unto thy eternal grace and mercy, in that prayer, which Christ our Saviour hath taught us:—Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, &c.

Thy grace, O Lord Jesus Christ; thy love, O heavenly Father; thy comfort and consolation, O holy Spirit, be with us all, and especially with this thy sick servant, to the end and in the end. Amen.

Let them read often to the sick some special chapters of the holy Scripture; as—the three first chapters of the book of Job; the 14th and 19th chapters of Job; the 34th chapter of Deuteronomy; the two last chapters of Joshua; the 17th chapter of the first of Kings; the 2d, 4th, and 13th chapters of the second of Kings; the 38th, 40th, and 64th chapters of Isaiah; the history of the passion of Christ; the 8th chapter to the Romans; the 15th chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians; the 4th of the first epistle to the Thessalonians; the 5th chapter of the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians; the first and last chapters of St. James; the 11th and 12th to the Hebrews; the first epistle of Peter; the three first and the three last chapters of the Revelations, or some of these.

And so exhorting the sick party to wait upon God by faith and patience till he send for him, and praying the Lord to send them a joyful meeting in the kingdom of heaven, and a blessed resurrection at the last day, they may depart at their pleasure in the peace of God.

CONSOLATIONS AGAINST IMPATIENCE IN SICKNESS.

If in thy sickness by extremity of pain thou be driven to impatience, meditate—

1. That thy sins have deserved the pains of hell; therefore thou mayest with greater patience endure these fatherly corrections.

2. That these are the scourges of thy heavenly Father, and the rod is in his hand. If thou didst suffer with reverence, being a child, the corrections of thy earthly parents, how much rather shouldst thou now subject thyself, being the child of God, to the chastisement of thy heavenly Father, seeing it is for thy eternal good?

3. That Christ suffered in his soul and body far more grievous pains for thee, therefore thou must more willingly suffer his blessed pleasure for thy own good (Isa. liii. 3.) Therefore, saith Peter, “Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that ye should follow his steps” (1 Pet. ii. 21.) And “Let us,” saith St. Paul, “run with joy the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross,” &c. (Heb. xii. 1, 2.)

4. That these afflictions which now you suffer are none other but such as “are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world,” as witnesseth Peter (1 Peter v. 9;) yea, Job’s afflictions were far more grievous. There is not one of the saints which now are at rest in heavenly joys, but endured as much as you do before they went thither; yea, many of them willingly suffered all the torments that tyrants could inflict upon them, that they might come unto those heavenly joys to which you are now called. And you have a promise, that “the God of all grace, after that you have suffered a while, will make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you” (1 Pet. v. 10.) And that “God of his fidelity will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Cor. x. 13.)

5. That God hath determined the time when thy affliction shall end, as well as the time when it began. Thirty-eight years were appointed the sick man at the pool of Bethesda (John v. 5.) Twelve years to the woman with the bloody issue (Matt. ix. 20.) Three months to Moses (Exod. ii. 2.) Ten days’ tribulation to the angel of the Church at Smyrna (Rev. ii. 10.) Three days plague to David (2 Sam. xxiv. 13.) Yea, the number of the godly man’s tears are registered in God’s book, and the quantity kept in his bottle (Psal. lvi. 8.)

The time of our trouble, saith Christ, is but a modicum (John xvi. 16.) God’s anger lasts but a moment, saith David (Psal. xxx.) A little season, saith the Lord (Rev. vi. 11;) and therefore calls all the time of our pain but the hour of sorrow (John xvi. 21.) David, for the swiftness of it, compares our present trouble to a

brook (Psal. cx. 7), and Athanasius to a shower.[127] Compare the longest misery that man endures in this life to the eternity of heavenly joys, and they will appear to be nothing. And as the sight of a son safely born makes the mother forget all her former deadly pain (John xvi. 21), so the sight of Christ in heaven, who was born for thee, will make all these pangs of death to be quite forgotten, as if they had never been. Like Stephen, who, as soon as he saw Christ, forgat his own wounds, with the horror of the grave, and terror of the stones, and sweetly yielded his soul into the hands of his Saviour (Acts vii.) Forget thy own pain, think of Christ's wounds. Be faithful unto the death, and he will give thee the crown of eternal life (Rev. ii. 10.)

6. That you are now called to repetitions in Christ's school, to see how much faith, patience, and godliness, you have learned all this while; and whether you can, like Job, receive at the hand of God some evil, as well as you have hitherto received a great deal of good (Job ii. 10.) As therefore you have always prayed, "Thy will be done," so be not now offended at this which is done by his holy will.

7. That "all things shall work together for the best to them that love God;" insomuch that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, &c., shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."[128] (Rom. viii. 28, 38, 39.) Assure yourself that every pang is a prevention of the pains of hell, every respite an earnest of heaven's rest; and how many stripes do you esteem heaven worth? As your life hath been a comfort to others, so give your friends a Christian example to die, and deceive the devil as Job did. It is but the cross of Christ sent before to crucify the love of the world in thee, that thou mayest go eternally to live with Christ who was crucified for thee. As thou art therefore a true Christian, take up, like Simeon of Cyrene, with both thy arms, his holy cross, carry it after him unto him; thy pains will shortly pass, thy joys shall never pass away.

[127] Nubecula est, cito transibit.

[128] Morbus non malis adnumerandus, quia multis utiliter accidit.—Basil in Hexam. Morbus est utilis quædam institutio, quæ docet, caduca spernere, et cœlestia spirare.—Nazian. ad Philagrium.

CONSOLATIONS AGAINST THE FEAR OF DEATH.

If in the time of thy sickness thou findest thyself fearful to die, meditate—

1. That it argueth a dastardly mind to fear that which is not; for in the church of Christ there is no death (Isa. xxv. 7, 8), and whosoever liveth and believeth in Christ, shall never die (John xi. 26). Let them fear death who live without Christ. Christians die not; but when they please God, they are like Enoch translated unto God (Gen. v. 24;) their pains are but Elijah's fiery chariot to carry them up to heaven (2 Kings ii. 11, 12;) or like the sores of Lazarus sending them to Abraham's bosom (Luke xvi. 23.) In a word, if thou be one of them that, like Lazarus, lovest Jesus, thy sickness is not unto the death, but for the glory of God (John xi. 4), who of his love changeth thy living death to an everlasting life. And if many heathen men, as Socrates, Curtius, Seneca, &c., died willingly, when they might have lived, in hope of the immortality of the soul, wilt thou, being trained so long in Christ's school, and now called to the marriage-supper of the blessed Lamb (Rev. xix. 7), be one of those guests that refuse to go to that joyful banquet? God forbid.

2. Remember that thy abode here is but the second degree of thy life; for after thou hadst first lived nine months in thy mother's womb, thou wast of necessity driven thence to live here in a second degree of life. And when that number of months which God hath determined for this life is expired (Job xiv. 5), thou must likewise leave this and pass to a third degree in the other world, which never ends; which, to them that live and die in the Lord, surpasseth as far this kind of life as this doth that which one lives in his mother's womb. To this last and most excellent degree of life, through this door passed Christ himself, and all his saints that were before thee; and so shall all the rest after them and thee. Why shouldst thou fear that which is common to all God's elect? why should that be uncouth to thee which was so welcome to all them? Fear not death, for as it is the exodus of a bad, so it is the genesis of a better world—the end of a temporal, but the beginning of an eternal life.

3. Consider that there are but three things that can make death so fearful to thee:—First, The loss thou hast thereby; Secondly, The pain that Is therein; Thirdly, The terrible effects which follow after. All these are but false fires and causeless fears.

For the first, If thou leavest here uncertain goods which thieves may rob, thou shalt find in heaven a true treasure, that can never be taken away (Matt. vi. 19, 20:) these were but lent thee as a steward upon accounts, those shall be given thee as thy reward for ever. If thou leavest a loving wife, thou shalt be married to Christ, which is more lovely. If thou leavest children and friends, thou shalt there find all thy religious ancestors and children departed—yea, Christ, and all his blessed saints and angels; and as many of thy children as are

God's children, shall thither follow after thee. Thou leavest an earthly possession and a house of clay (2 Cor. v. 1), and thou shalt enjoy an heavenly inheritance and mansion of glory, which is purchased, prepared, and reserved for thee (John xiv. 2.) What hast thou lost? nay, is not death unto thee gain? Go home, go home, and we will follow after thee.

Secondly, For the pain in death. The fear of death more pains many than the very pangs of death; for many a Christian dies without any great pangs or pains.[129] Pitch the anchor of thy hope on the firm ground of the word of God, who hath promised in thy weakness to perfect his strength (2 Cor. xii. 9), and not to suffer thee to be tempted above that thou art able to bear (1 Cor. x. 13;) and Christ will shortly turn all thy temporal pains to his eternal joys.

Lastly, As for the terrible effects which follow after death, they belong not unto thee, being a member of Christ; for Christ by his death hath taken away the sting of death to the faithful, so that now there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus (Rom. viii. 1.) And Christ hath protested, that he that believeth in him hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death unto life (John v. 24.) Upon which the Holy Spirit from heaven saith, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; and that from henceforth they rest from their labours and their works do follow them." In respect, therefore, of the faithful, death is swallowed up in victory, and his sting, which is sin and the punishment of it, is taken away by Christ (1 Cor. xv. 54.) Hence death is called, in respect of our bodies, a sleep and rest (1 Thess. iv. 13; Isa. xxvi.; Rev. xiv.;) in respect of our souls, a going to our heavenly Father, a departing in peace,[130] a removing from this body to go to the Lord, a dissolution of soul and body to be with Christ,[131] What shall I say? "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." These pains are but thy throes and travail to bring forth eternal life. And who would not pass through hell to go to paradise? much more through death. There is nothing after death that thou needest fear; not thy sins, because Christ hath paid thy ransom; not the Judge, for he is thy loving brother; not the grave, for it is the Lord's bed; not hell, for thy Redeemer keeps the keys; not the devil, for God's holy angels pitch their tents about thee, and will not leave thee till they bring thee to heaven. Thou wast never nearer eternal life; glorify, therefore, Christ by a blessed death: say cheerfully, Come, Lord Jesus, for thy servant cometh unto thee. I am willing, Lord help my weakness.

[129] Timor mortis ipsa morte pejor.

[130] Ἀπόλυσις ἐν εἰρήῃ (Luke ii. 29.)

[131] (2 Cor. v.; Phil. i. 23.) Ἀνάλυσις. More porta gloriæ.—Greg. Janua vitæ.—Bernard.

SEVEN SANCTIFIED THOUGHTS AND MOURNFUL SIGHS OF A SICK MAN READY TO DIE.

Now, forasmuch as God of his infinite mercy doth so temper our pain and sickness, that we are not always oppressed with extremity, but gives us in the midst of our extremities some respite, to ease and refresh ourselves, thou must have an especial care, considering how short a time thou hast either for ever to lose or to obtain heaven, to make use of every breathing time which God affords thee; and during that little time of ease to gather strength against the fits of greater anguish. Therefore, in these times of relaxation and ease use some of these short thoughts and sighs:—

The first Thought.

Seeing every man enters into this life in tears, passeth it in sweat, and ends it in sorrow, ah! what is there in it, that a man should desire to live any longer in it! O what a folly is it, that when the mariner rows with all his force to arrive at the wished port, and that the traveller never resteth till he come to his journey's end, we fear to descry our port, and therefore would put back our bark to be longer tossed in this continual tempest; we weep to see our journey's end, and, therefore, desire our journey to be lengthened, that we might be more tired with a foul and cumbersome way.

The spiritual Sigh thereupon.

O Lord, this life is but a troublesome pilgrimage, few in days, but full in evils (Gen. xlvii. 9), and I am weary of it, by reason of my sins. Let me, therefore, O Lord, entreat thy majesty, in this my bed of sickness, as Elias did under the juniper tree in his affliction,—It is now enough, O Lord, that I have lived so long in this vale of misery, take my soul into thy merciful hands, for I am no better than my fathers (1 Kings xix. 4.)

The second Thought.

Think with what a body of sin thou art laden (Rom. vii. 24), what great civil wars are contained in a little world (Jam. iv. 1;) the flesh fighting against the spirit (Gal. v. 17), passion against reason, earth against heaven, and the world within thee banding itself for the world without thee; and that but one only means remains to end this conflict—death, which, in God's appointed time, will separate thy spirit from thy flesh, the pure and regenerate part of thy soul, from that part which is impure and unregenerated.

The spiritual Sigh upon the second Thought.

"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24.) O my sweet Saviour Jesus Christ, "thou hast redeemed me with thy precious blood!" (Rev. v. 9.) And "because thou hast delivered my soul from sin, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling" (Psal. cxvi. 8), I

do here, from the very bottom of my heart, ascribe the whole praise and glory of my salvation to thy only grace and mercy (Psal. cxlv.), saying with the holy apostle, “Thanks be unto God, which hath given me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. xv. 57.)

The third Thought.

Think how it behoves thee to be assured that thy soul is Christ’s, for death hath taken sufficient gages to assure himself of thy body, in that all thy senses are ready to die, save only the sense of pain; but since the beginning of thy being began with pain, marvel the less if thy end conclude with dolours. But if these temporal dolours, which only afflict the body, be so painful, O Lord, “who can endure the devouring fire? who can abide the everlasting burning?” (Isa. xxxiii. 14.)

The spiritual Sigh upon the third Thought.

O Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who art the only physician that canst ease my body from pain, and restore my soul to life eternal, put thy passion, cross, and death, between my soul and thy judgments, and let the merits of thy obedience stand between thy Father’s justice and my disobedience, and from these bodily pains receive my soul into thy everlasting peace: for I cry unto thee with Stephen, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” (Acts vii. 59.)

The fourth Thought.

Think that the worst that death can do, is but to send thy soul sooner than thy flesh would be willing to Christ and his heavenly joys; remember that that worst is thy best hope. The worst, therefore, of death, is rather a help than a harm.

The spiritual Sigh upon the fourth Thought.

O Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all them that put their trust in thee, forsake not him that in misery flieth unto thy grace for succour and mercy. O sound that sweet voice in the ears of my soul, which thou spakest unto the penitent thief on the cross, “This day thou shalt be with me in paradise” (Luke xxiii. 43.) For I, O Lord, do, with the apostle, from my soul speak unto thee, “I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ” (Phil. i. 23.)

The fifth Thought.

Think, if thou fearest to die, that in mount Sion there is no death; for he that believeth in Christ shall never die (Isa. xxv. 7, 8; John xi. 25.) And if thou desirest to live, without doubt the life eternal, to which this death is a passage, surpasseth all. There do all the faithful departed, having ended their miseries, live with Christ in joys. And thither shall all the godly which survive be gathered out of their troubles to enjoy with him eternal rest.

The spiritual Sigh on the fifth Thought.

O Lord, thou seest the malice of Satan, who not contenting himself, like a roaring lion, all the days and nights of our life, to seek our destruction (1 Pet. v. 8), shews himself busiest when thy children are weakest and nearest to their end; O Lord, reprove him, and preserve my soul. He seeks to terrify me with death, which my sins have deserved; but let thy Holy Spirit comfort my soul with the assurance of eternal life, which thy blood hath purchased. Assuage my pain, increase my patience, if it be thy blessed will, end my troubles, for my soul beseecheth thee with old Simeon, “Lord, now let me thy servant depart in peace according to thy word” (Luke ii. 29.)

The sixth Thought.

Think with thyself what a blessing God hath bestowed upon thee above many millions in the world; that whereas they are either Pagans, who worship not the true God, or idolaters, who worship the true God falsely, thou hast lived in a true Christian church, and hast grace to die in the true Christian faith, and to be buried in the sepulchre of God’s servants; who all wait for the hope of Israel (Acts xxvi. 6, 7), the raising of their bodies in the resurrection of the just (Luke xiv. 14.)

The spiritual Sigh upon the sixth Thought.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who art the resurrection and the life, in whom whosoever believeth shall live, though he were dead, I believe that whosoever liveth and believeth in thee, shall never die. I know that I shall rise again in the resurrection of the last day; for I am sure, that thou, my Redeemer, livest: and though that after my death, worms destroy this body; yet I shall see thee, my Lord and my God, in this flesh (John xi. 24, 25, 26; Job xix. 25, 26.) Grant, therefore, O Christ, for thy bitter death and passion’s sake, that at that day I may be one of them to whom thou wilt pronounce that joyful sentence, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world” (Matt. xxv. 34.)

The seventh Thought.

Think with thyself how Christ endured for thee a cursed death, and the wrath of God (Gal. iii. 13), which was due unto thy sins; and what terrible pains and cruel torments the apostles and martyrs have voluntarily suffered for the defence of Christ’s faith, when they might have lived by dissembling or denying him: how much more willing shouldst thou be to depart in the faith of Christ, having less pains to torment thee, and more means to comfort thee?

The spiritual Sigh upon the seventh Thought.

O Lord, my sins have deserved the pains of hell and eternal death, much more these fatherly corrections wherewith thou dost afflict me. But, O blessed Lamb of God, which takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me,

and wash away all my filthy sins with thy most precious blood, and receive my soul into thy heavenly kingdom, for into thy hands, O Father, I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth (John i. 29; Rev. i. 5; Luke xxiii. 42; Psal. xxxi. 5.)

Of the Comfortable Assurance of God's Forgiveness of Sins.

The sick Person ought now to send for some godly and religious Pastor.

In any wise remember, if conveniently it may be, to send for some godly and religious pastor, not only to pray for thee at thy death—for God in such a case hath promised to hear the prayers of the righteous prophets, and elders of the church (Gen. xx. 7; Jer. xviii. 20; xv. 1; 1 Sam. xii. 19, 23; James v. 14, 15, 16)—but also upon thy unfeigned repentance to declare to thee the absolution of thy sins. For as Christ hath given him a calling to baptize thee unto repentance for the remission of thy sins (Mark i. 4; Acts xix. 4), so hath he likewise given him a calling, and power, and authority, upon repentance, to absolve thee from thy sins (1 Cor. v. 4; 2 Cor. x. 8.) "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 19.) And again, "Verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye bind in earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye loose in earth, shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xviii. 18.) And again, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John xx. 22, 23.) This doctrine was as ancient in the church of God as Job; for Elihu tells him, That when God strikes a man with malady on his bed, so that his soul draweth near the grave, and his life to the buriers, if there be any messenger with him, or an interpreter, one of a thousand, to declare unto man his righteousness, then will he have mercy upon him, &c. (Job xxxiii. 19, 22, 23, 24.) And answerable hereunto, saith St. James, If the sick have committed sins, upon his repentance, and the prayers of the elders, they shall be forgiven him. (Jam. v. 15.) These have power to shut heaven (Rev. xi. 6), and to deliver the scandalous impenitent sinner to Satan (1 Cor. v. 5;) for the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to cast down, &c., and to have vengeance in readiness against all disobedience. They have the key of loosing, therefore the power of absolving.[132] (2 Cor. x. 4, &c.)

The bishops and pastors of the church do not declare the forgiveness of sin by any absolute power of their own (1 Cor. v. 4), for so only Christ their master forgiveth sins, but ministerially, as the servants of Christ, and stewards (1 Cor. iv. 1, 2; Acts xiii. 38), to whose fidelity their Lord and Master hath committed his keys, and that is when they do declare and pronounce, either publicly or privately, by the word of God, what bindeth, what looseth, and the mercies of God to penitent sinners, or his judgments to impenitent and obstinate persons; and so do apply the general promises or threatenings to the penitent or impenitent. For Christ from heaven doth by them, as by his ministers on earth,[133] declare whom he remitteth and bindeth, and to whom he will open the gates of heaven, and against whom he will shut them. And therefore it is

not said, whose sins ye signify to he remitted; but, whose sins ye remit. They than do remit sins, because Christ by their ministry remitteth sins, as Christ by his disciples loosed Lazarus (John xi. 44.) And as no water could wash away Naaman's leprosy but the waters of Jordan, though other rivers were as clear, because the promise was annexed unto the water of Jordan, and not to other rivers; so though another man may pronounce the same words, yet have they not the like efficacy and power to work on the conscience, as when they are pronounced from the mouth of Christ's ministers, because the promise is annexed to the word of God in their mouths, for them hath he chosen, separated, and set apart for this work, and to them he hath committed the ministry and word of reconciliation; by their holy calling and ordination they have received the Holy Ghost, and the ministerial power of binding and loosing. They are sent forth of the Holy Ghost for this work, whereunto he hath called them (John xx. 22, 23; Acts i. 24; xiii. 2, 4; Rom. i. 1; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19; 1 Cor. i. 1; Heb. v. 4; Tit. i. 5.)

And Christ gives his ministers power to pronounce the forgiveness of sins to the penitent in the same words that he teacheth us in the Lord's prayer to desire God to forgive us our sins;[134] to assure all penitent sinners, that God by his minister's absolution doth fully, through the merits of Christ's blood, forgive them all their sins, so that what Christ decreeth in heaven, in foro judicii, the same he declares on earth by his reconciling ministers, in foro pœnitentiæ; so that as God hath reconciled the world to himself by Jesus Christ, so hath he, saith the apostle, given unto us the ministry of this reconciliation (2 Cor. v. 18.)

He that sent them to baptize, saying, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c., sent them also to remit sins, saying, "As my Father sent me, so send I you; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them," &c. (John xx. 21, 23.) As therefore none can baptize, though he use the same, water and words, but only the lawful minister which Christ hath called and authorized to this divine and ministerial function, so though others may comfort with good words, yet none can absolve from sin but only those to whom Christ hath committed the holy ministry and word of reconciliation (2 Cor. ii. 7, 10; Heb. v. 1, 4; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19;) and of their absolution Christ speaketh, "He that heareth you, heareth me" (Luke x. 16.) In a doubtful title thou wilt ask the counsel of a skilful lawyer; in peril of sickness thou wilt know the advice of the learned physician; and is there no danger in dread of damnation for a sinner to be his own judge?

Judicious Calvin teaches this point of doctrine most plainly, "Et si omnes mutuo nos debeamus consolari,"&c.[135] "Although," saith he, "we ought to comfort and confirm one another in the confidence of God's mercy, yet we see that the ministers are appointed as witnesses and sureties to ascertain our consciences of the remission of sins; insomuch as they are said to remit sins,

and to loose souls. Let every faithful man, therefore, remember, that it is his duty, if inwardly he be vexed and afflicted with the sense of his sins, not to neglect' that remedy which is offered unto him by the Lord; to wit, that, for the easing of his conscience, he may make private confession of his sins unto his pastor; and that he desire his private endeavour for the application of some comfort unto his soul, whose office it is, both publicly and privately, to administer evangelical consolation to God's people."

Beza highly commendeth this practice; and Luther saith, That he had rather lose a thousand worlds, than suffer private confession to be thrust out of the church. Our church hath ever most soundly maintained the truth of this doctrine; but most justly abolished the tyrannous and antichristian abuse of popish auricular confessions, which they thrust upon the souls of Christians as an expiatory sacrifice, and a meritorious satisfaction for sin; racking their consciences to confess, when they feel no distress, and to enumerate all their sins, which is impossible: that by this means they might dive into the secrets of all men, which oft-times hath proved pernicious, not only to private persons, but also to public estates. But the truth of God's word is, that no person having received orders in the Church of Rome, can truly absolve a sinner; for the keys of absolution are two; the one is the key of authority, and that only Christ hath (Rev. iii. 7; Mark ii. 7; Luke v. 21;) the other is the key of ministry, and this he gives to his ministers (Matt. xvi. 19), who are therefore called the ministers of Christ, the stewards of God's mysteries (1 Cor. iv. 1), the ambassadors of reconciliation, bishops, pastors, elders, &c. (2 Cor. v. 20.)[136] But Christ never ordained, in the New Testament, any order of sacrificing priests; neither is the name of ἱερεὺς, which properly signifieth sacerdos, or sacrificing priest, given to any officer of Christ, in all the New Testament; neither do we Tead in all the New Testament of any who confessed himself to a priest, but Judas (Matt. xxvii. 4;) neither is there any real priest in the New Testament, but only Christ (Heb. vii. 24, 27, 28;) neither is there any part of his priesthood to be now accomplished on earth, but that which he fulfilleth in heaven by making intercession for us (Heb. viii. 4; vii. 15.) Seeing, therefore, Christ never ordained any order of sacrificing priests; and that popish priests scorn the name of minister of the gospel, to whom only Christ committed his keys, it necessarily followeth, that no popish priests can truly either excommunicate or absolve any sinner, or have any lawful right to meddle with Christ's keys. But the antichristian abuse of this divine ordinance should not abolish the lawful use thereof between Christians and their pastors in cases of distress of conscience, for which it was chiefly ordained.

And, verily, there is not any means more excellent to humble a proud heart, nor to raise up an humble spirit, than this spiritual conference between the pastors and the people committed to their charge. If any sin, therefore, troubleth thy conscience, confess it to God's minister; ask his counsel, and if

thou dost truly repent, receive his absolution. And then doubt not in foro conscientiæ but thy sins be as verily forgiven on earth, as if thou didst hear Christ himself in foro judicii pronouncing them to be forgiven in heaven, "Qui vos audit, me audit;" he that heareth you, heareth me (Luke x. 16.) Try this, and tell me whether thou shalt not find more ease in thy conscience, than can be expressed in words. Did profane men consider the dignity of this divine calling, they would the more honour the calling and reverence the persons.

The sick man having thus eased his conscience, and received a full assurance of forgiveness, may do well, having a convenient number of faithful Christians joined with him, to receive the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper, to encourage him in his faith, and to discourage the devil in his assaults. In this respect the council of Nice termed this sacrament viaticum, the soul's provision for her journey. And albeit the Lord's Supper be an ecclesiastical action, yet forasmuch as our Lord, the first institutor, celebrated it in a private house (Matt. xxvi. 18; Luke xxii. 12), and that St. Paul terms the houses of Christians, the churches of Christ (Rom. xvi. 5; Philem. i. 2;) and that Christ himself hath promised to be in the midst of the faithful, where but two or three are gathered together in his name (Matt. xviii. 20;) I see no reason, but if Christians desire it, when they are not, through sickness, able to come to the church but that they should receive, and pastors ought to administer, the sacrament unto them at home. He sheweth more simplicity than knowledge, who thinks that this savours of a private mass; for a mass is called private, not because it is said in a private house, but because, as Bishop Jewel[137] teacheth out of Aquinas, the priest receiveth the sacrament himself alone, without distribution made unto others; and then it is private, although the whole parish be present and look upon him. There is as much difference between such a communion, and the antichristian idol of a private mass, as there is between heaven and hell. For at a communion in a private family, upon such an extraordinary occasion, Christ's institution is observed. Many faithful brethren meet together, and tarry one for another; Christ's death is remembered and shewed, and the minister, together with the faithful and the sick party, do communicate. Master Calvin saith, "That he doth very willingly admit administering of the communion to them that are sick, when the case and opportunity so requireth." And in another place he saith, "That he hath many weighty reasons to compel him not to deny the Lord's Supper unto the sick." Yet I would wish all Christians to use, to receive often, in their health especially, once every month with the whole church; for then they shall not need so much to assemble their friends upon such an occasion, nor so much to be troubled themselves for want of the sacrament. For, as Mr. Perkins saith very well,[138] "The fruit and efficacy of the sacrament is not to be restrained to the time of receiving, but it extends itself to the whole time of man's life

afterwards;" the efficacy whereof, did men thoroughly understand, they should not need to be so often exhorted to receive it.

"Pastores omnes hic exoratos vellem, ut in hujus controversiæ statum penitius introspiciant; nec fideles ex hac vita migrantes, et panem vitæ petentes, viatico suo fraudari sinant, ne lugubris ista in iis ad impleatur lamentatio. Parvuli panem petunt, et non sit qui frangat eis." (Lam. iv. 4.)[139]

As, therefore, when a wicked liver dieth, he may say to death as Ahab said to Elijah, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" (1 Kings xxi. 20;) so, on the other side, when it is told a penitent sinner that death knocks at the door, and begins to look him in the face, he may say of death, as David said of Ahimaaz, "Let him come and welcome, for he is a good man, and cometh with good tidings" (2 Sam. xviii. 27:)[140] he is the messenger of Christ, and bringeth unto me the joyful news of eternal life. And as the Red Sea was a gulf to drown the Egyptians to destruction, but a passage to the Israelites to convey them to Canaan's possession, so death to the wicked is a sink to hell and condemnation, but to the godly the gate to everlasting life and salvation. And one day of a blessed death will make an amends for all the sorrows of a bitter life. "Summum hominis bonum, bonus ex hac vita exitus."

When, therefore, thou perceivest thy soul departing from thy body, pray with thy tongue if thou canst, else pray in thy heart and mind these words, fixing the eyes of thy soul upon Jesus Christ thy Saviour:—

A Prayer at the yielding up of the Ghost.

O Lamb of God, which by thy blood hast taken away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me a sinner. Lord Jesus receive my spirit. Amen.

When the sick party is departing, let the faithful that are present kneel down and commend his soul to God in these or the like words:—

O Gracious God and merciful Father, who art our refuge and strength, and a very present help in trouble, lift up the light of thy favourable countenance at this instant upon thy servant that now cometh to appear in thy presence; wash away, good Lord, all his sins by the merits of Christ Jesus' blood, that they may never be laid to his charge. Increase his faith, preserve and keep safe his soul from the danger of the devil and his wicked angels. Comfort him with thy Holy Spirit; cause him now to feel that thou art his loving Father, and that he is thy child by adoption and grace. Save, O Christ, the price of thy own blood, and suffer him not to be lost whom thou hast bought so dearly. Receive his soul, as thou didst the penitent thief, into thy heavenly paradise; let thy blessed angels conduct him thither as they carried the soul of Lazarus; and grant unto him a joyful resurrection at the last day. O Father, hear us for him, and hear thy own Son, our only mediator, that sits at thy right hand, for him and us all, even for the merits of that bitter death and passion which he hath suffered for us: in

confidence whereof, we now recommend his soul into thy fatherly hands, in that blessed prayer which our Saviour hath taught us in all times of our troubles to say unto thee:—"Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name," &c.

Thus far of the practice of piety in dying in the Lord.

[132] Ministri peccata remittunt non αὐτιξουσίος, sed ὀργανικὸς

[133] To this end saith Basil, in Asc. c. 13—"Christus omnibus pastoribus et doctoribus ecclesiæ, Ἰσην παρέχει ἐξουσίαν, æqualem tribuit potestatem, cujus signum est quod omnes ex æquo ligant et solvunt, ut Petrus." Papists dare not deny this. "Quilibet sacerdos (quantum est ex virtute clavium) habet potestatem indifferenter in omnes." In Supplement, Thomæ. iv. ver. 6.

[134] Ἂν τινῶν ὑφῆτς τὰς ὑμαρτίας (John xx. 23.) Καὶ ἀφὶς ἡμίν τάς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν.

[135] Lib. iii. Instit. cap. iv. sect. 12.

[136] Ministerii claves duplex est, una scientia discernendi (1 Cor. xii. 10; 1 John iv. l.) Alia est potestas ligandi et absolvendi (John xx. 23.)

[137] Jewel against Hardinge, Art. I. fol. 4.

[138] Perkins his right way of dying well.

[139] Admonitio ad Pastores.

[140] Ut moriare pius, vivere disce pie.

Meditations of Martyrdom.

Now follows the Practice of Piety in dying for the Lord.

The practice of piety in dying for the Lord is termed Martyrdom.

Martyrdom is the testimony which a Christian bears to the doctrine of the Gospel by enduring any kind of death; to invite many, and to confirm all, to embrace the truth thereof. To this kind of death Christ hath promised a crown: “Be thou faithful unto the death, and I will give thee the crown of life.” Which promise the Church so firmly believed, that they termed martyrdom itself a crown. And God, to animate Christians to this excellent prize, would, by a prediction, that Stephen, the first Christian martyr, should have his name of a crown (Στεφανος)

Of Martyrdom there are three kinds.

1. Sola voluntate, in will only; as John the evangelist, who, being boiled in a cauldron of oil, came out rather anointed than sod; and died of old age at Ephesus.

2. Solo opere, in deed only; as the innocents of Bethlehem.

3. Voluntate et opere, both in will and deed; as in the primitive Church, Stephen, Polycarpus, Ignatius, Laurentius, Romanus, Antiochianus, and thousands. And in our days, Cranmer, Latimer, Hooper, Ridley, Farrar, Bradford, Philpot, Sanders, Glover, Taylor, and others innumerable, whose fiery zeal to God’s truth brought them to the flames of martyrdom to seal Christ’s faith. It is not the cruelty of the death, but the innocency and holiness of the cause that maketh a martyr.[141] Neither is an erroneous conscience a sufficient warrant to suffer martyrdom, because science in God’s word must direct conscience in man’s heart: for they who killed the apostles in their erroneous conscience thought they did God good service (John xvi. 2;) and Paul of zeal breathed out slaughters against the Lord’s saints (Acts ix. 1; Phil. iii. 6.) Now whether the cause of our Seminary priests and Jesuits be so holy, true, and innocent, as that it may warrant their conscience to suffer death, and to hazard their eternal salvation thereon, let Paul’s epistle written to the ancient Christian Romans {but against our new antichristian Romans) be judge.[142] And it will plainly appear that the doctrine which St. Paul taught to the ancient church of Rome is ex diametro opposite in twenty-six fundamental points of true religion to that which the new church of Rome teacheth and maintaineth; for St. Paul taught the primitive church of Rome—

1. That our election is of God’s free grace, and not ex operibus prævisis (Rom. ix. 11; xi. 5, 6.)

2. That we are justified before God by faith only, without good works (Rom. iii. 20, 28; iv. 2, &c.; i. 17.)

3. That the good works of the regenerate are not of their own condignity meritorious, nor such as can deserve heaven (Rom. viii. 18; xi. 6; vi. 23.)

4. That those books only are God's oracles and canonical Scripture, which were committed to the custody and credit of the Jews (Rom. iii. 2; i. 2; xvi. 26;) such were never the Apocrypha.

5. That the holy Scriptures have God's authority (Rom. ix. 17; iii. 4; xi. 32, compared with Gal. iii. 22.) therefore above the authority of the church.[143]

6. That all, as well laity as clergy, that will be saved, must familiarly read or know the holy Scripture (Rom. xv. 4; x. 1, 2, 8; xvi. 26.)

7. That all images made of the true God are very idols (Rom. i. 23 and Rom. ii. 22 compared.)[144]

8. That to bow the knee religiously to an image, or to worship any creature, is mere idolatry (Rom. xi. 4) and a lying service (i. 25.)

9. That we must not pray unto any, but to God only, in whom we believe (Rom. x. 13, 14; viii. 15, 27), therefore not to saints and angels.

10. That Christ is our only intercessor in heaven (Rom. viii. 34; v. 2; xvi. 27.)

11. That the only sacrifice of Christians, is nothing but the spiritual sacrifices of their souls and bodies to serve God in holiness and righteousness (Rom. xii. 1; xv. 16), therefore no real sacrificing of Christ in the mass.

12. That the religious worship called dulia, as well as latria, belongeth to God alone (Rom. i. 9; xii. 11; xvi. 18 compared.)

13. That all Christians are to pray unto God in their own native language (Rom. xiv. 11.)

14. That we have not of ourselves, in the state of corruption, freewill unto good (Rom. vii. 18, &c.; ix. 16.)

15. That concupiscence in the regenerate is sin (Rom. vii. 7, 8, 10.)

16. That the sacraments do not confer grace ex opere operato, but sign and seal that which is conferred already unto us (Rom. iv. 11, 12; ii. 28, 29.)

17. That every true believing Christian may in this life be assured of his salvation (Rom. viii. 9; xvi. 35, &c.)

18. That no man in this life, since Adam's fall, can perfectly fulfil the commandments of God (Rom. vii. 10, &c.; iii. 19, &c.; xi. 32.)

19. That to place religion in the difference of meat and days, is superstition (Rom. xiv. 3, 5, 6; xvii. 23.)

20. That the imputed righteousness of Christ, is that only that makes us just before God (Rom. iv. 9, 17, 23.)

21. That Christ's flesh was made of the seed of David, by incarnation; not of a wafer cake by transubstantiation (Rom. i. 3.)

22. That all true Christians are saints, and not those whom the pope only doth canonize (Rom. i. 7; viii. 27; xv. 31: xvi. 2, 15; xv. 25.)

23. That ipse, Christ, the God of peace, and not ipsa, the woman, would bruise the serpent's head (Rom. xvi. 20.)

24. That every soul must of conscience be subject, and pay tribute to the higher powers, that is, the magistrates which bear the sword (Rom. xiii. 1, 2, &c.;) and therefore the pope and all prelates must be subject to their emperors, kings, and magistrates, unless they will bring damnation upon their souls, as traitors, that resist God and his ordinance (Rom. xiii. 2.)

25. That Paul, not Peter, was ordained by the grace of God, to be the chief apostle of the Gentiles, and consequently of Rome, the chief city of the Gentiles (Rom. xv. 15, 16, 19, 20, &c.; xi. 4, 13, 16.)[145]

26. That the church of Rome may err and fall away from the true faith, as well as the church of Jerusalem, or any other particular church (Rom. xi. 20, 21, 22.)

And seeing the new upstart church of Rome teaches in all these, and in innumerable other points, clean contrary to that which the apostle taught the primitive Romans, let God and this epistle judge between them and us; whether of us both stands in the true ancient catholic faith, which the apostle taught the old Romans; and whether we have not done well to depart from them, so far as they have departed from the apostle's doctrine? and whether it be not better to return to St. Paul's truth than still to continue in Rome's error ? And if this be true, then let Jesuits and seminary priests take heed and fear, lest it be not faith, but faction; not truth, but treason ; not religion, but rebellion; beginning at Tiber and ending at Tyburn, which is the cause of their deaths. And being sent from a troublesome apostatical see, rather than from a peacable apostolical seat, because they cannot be suffered to persuade subjects to break their oaths, and to withdraw their allegiance from their sovereign, to raise rebellion, to move invasion, to stab and poison queens, to kill and murder kings, to blow up whole states with gunpowder, they desperately cast away their own bodies to be hanged and quartered: and (their souls saved, if they belong to God) I wish such honour to all his saints that send them (Psal. cxlix. 9.) And I have just cause to fear, that the miracles of Lipsius's two ladies, Blunstone's boy, Garnet's straw, and the maid's fiery apron, will not suffice to clear, that these men are not murderers of themselves, rather than martyrs of Christ.[146]

And with what conscience can any priest count Garnet a martyr, when his own conscience forced him to confess, that it was for treason, and not for

religion, that he died? But if the priests of such a gunpowder gospel be martyrs, I marvel who are murderers? If they be saints, who are Scythians? and who are cannibals, if they be catholics?

But leaving these, if they will be filthy, to their filthiness still, let us, to whose fidelity the Lord hath committed his true faith, as a precious deposit (1 Tim. vi. 20), pray unto God, that we may lead a holy life, answerable to our holy faith, in piety to Christ, and obedience to our king (Prov. xxiv. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 17;) that if our Saviour shall ever count us worthy that honour to suffer martyrdom for his gospel's sake (Acts v. 41), be it by open burning at the stake, as in Queen Mary's days; or by secret murdering, as in the Inquisition-house; or by outrageous massacring, as in the Parisian Matins; or in being blown up with gunpowder, as was intended in the Parliament-house; we may have grace to pray for the assistance of his Holy Spirit, so to strengthen our frailty, and to defend his cause, as that we may seal with our deaths the evangelical truth which we have professed in our lives: that in the days of our lives we may be blessed by his word (Luke xii. 8; Rev. xiv. 13;) in the day of death, be blessed in the Lord; and in the day of judgment be the blessed of his Father (Matt. xxv. 34.) Even so grant, Lord Jesus. Amen.

[141]1 Pet. ii. 19. Causa, non passio, facit martyrem.—Aug Ep. 61. Non mortes sed mores.—Dr. Boys; Tho. Aquin. 1. ii. quæst. 17, arc. 6.

[142]Epistola ad Romanos, is now Epistola in Romanos.

[143]Note, that "the scripture saith," "God saith," and "the scripture concludeth," is all one with Paul.

[144]To εἴδωλα, having reference to what he spake before (Rom i. 23) Of images.

[145]It seems by Rom. xv. 20, 29, and the whole last chapter, that the Christians who were in Rome before Paul came thither, were converted by those preachers whom he had sent thither before him; for he calls them his "helpers" (ver. 3, 9), "kinsmen" (ver. 7, 13), "fellow-prisoners" (ver. 7), "the first-fruits of Achaia," where he had preached (ver. 5), all familiar to him, and to Tertius, who wrote the epistle (ver. 22.) And therefore they came so joyfully to meet Paul at Apii Forum, hearing that he was coming towards Rome (Acts xxviii. 15.)

[146]Ut Alexandri causa iis qui illam scire cupiunt patefiat; judicatus est Ephesi ab Æmilio Frontino proconsule, non propter professiones nomen, sed propter perpetrata latrocinia, cum jam esset prævaricator (et proditor.)—Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. c. 18.

FINIS.

A Divine Colloquy between the Soul and her Saviour upon the effectual Merits of his dolorous Passion.

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou wash thy disciples' feet?

Christ. To teach thee how thou shouldst prepare thyself to come to my supper.

Soul. Lord, why shouldst thou wash them thyself? (John xiii. 4.)

Christ. To teach thee humility, if thou wilt be my disciple.

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou before thy death institute thy last supper? (Luke xxii. 19, 20.)

Christ. That thou mightst the better remember my death, and be assured that all the merits thereof are thine.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou go to such a place where Judas knew to find thee? (John xviii. 2.)

Christ. That thou mightst know that I went as willingly to suffer for thy sin, as ever thou wentest to any place to commit a sin.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou begin thy passion in a garden? (John xviii. 1.)

Christ. Because that in a garden thy sin took first beginning (Gen. iii. 3.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore did thy three select disciples fall so fast asleep, when thou didst begin to fall into thy agony? (Matt. xxvi. 40.)

Christ. To shew that I alone wrought the work of thy redemption (Isa. lxiii. 5.)

Soul. Lord, why were there so many plots and snares laid for thee? (Matt. xxvi. 4.)

Christ. That I might make thee to escape all snares of thy ghostly hunter (Psalm 134:7Psal cxxiv. 7.)

Soul. Lord, why shouldst thou suffer Judas, betraying thee, to kiss thee? (Matt. xxvi. 49.)

Christ. That by enduring the words of dissembling lips, I might there begin to expiate sin, where Satan first brought it into the world (Gen. iii. 4, 5.)

Soul. Lord, why wouldst thou be sold for thirty-pieces of silver? (Matt. xxvii. 3.)

Christ. That I might free thee from perpetual bondage.

Soul. Lord, why didst thou pray with such strong crying and tears? (Matt. xxvi. 39; Heb. v. 7.)

Christ. That I might quench the fury of God's justice, which was so fiercely kindled against thee.

Soul. Lord, why wast thou so afraid, and cast into such an agony? (Mark xiv. 33.)

Christ. That suffering the wrath due to thy sins, thou mightst be more secure in thy death, and find more comfort in thy crosses.

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou pray so oft and so earnestly that the cup might pass from thee? (Matt. xxvi. 39, 42, 44.)

Christ. That thou mightst perceive the horror of that curse and wrath, which being due to thy sins, I was then to drink and endure for thee (Gal. iii. 13.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou, after thy wish, submit thy will to the will of thy Father? (Luke xxii. 42.)

Christ. To teach thee what thou shouldst do in all thy afflictions; and how willingly thou shouldst yield to bear with patience that cross, which thou seest to come from the just hand of thy heavenly Father.

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou sweat such drops of blood? (Luke xxii. 44.)

Christ. That I might cleanse thee from thy stains and bloody spots.

Soul. Lord, why shouldst thou be taken when thou mightst have escaped thine enemies? (Luke xxii. 54.)

Christ. That thy spiritual enemies should not take thee, and cast thee into the prison of utter darkness (Matt. v. 25; xxii. 13.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be forsaken of all thy disciples? (Matt. xxvi. 56.)

Christ. That I might reconcile thee unto God, of whom thou wast forsaken for thy sins.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou stand to be apprehended alone? (John xviii. 8.)

Christ. To shew thee that my love of thy salvation was more than the love of all my disciples.

Soul. Lord, wherefore was the young man caught by the soldiers, and unstript of his linen, who came out of his bed, hearing the stir at thy apprehension and leading to the high priest? (Mark xiv. 51, 52.)

Christ. To shew their outrage in apprehending me, and my power in preserving out of their outrageous hands, all my disciples, who otherwise had been worse handled by them than was that young man.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be bound? (Matt. xxvii. 2.)

Christ. That I might loose the cords of thine iniquities.

Soul. Lord, why wast thou denied of Peter? (Luke xxii. 57, 58, 60.)

Christ. That I might confess thee before my Father, and thou mightst learn, that there is no trust in man, and that salvation proceeds of my mere mercy.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou bring Peter to repentance by the crowing of a cock? (Matt. xxvi. 74, 75.)

Christ. That none should despise the means which God hath appointed for their conversion, though they seem never so mean.

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou at the cock-crowing turn and look upon Peter? (Luke xxii. 61.)

Christ. Because thou mightst know, that without the help of my grace, no means can turn a sinner unto God, when he is once fallen from him.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wast thou covered with a purple robe? (John xix. 5.)

Christ. That thou mightst perceive that it was I that did away thy scarlet sins (Isa. i. 18.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be crowned with thorns? (Matt. xxvii. 29.)

Christ. That by wearing thorns, the first fruits of the curse, it might appear, that it is I which take away the sins and curse of the world, and crown thee with the crown of life and glory (1 Pet. v. 4; Rev. ii. 10.)

Soul. Lord, why was a reed put into thy hand? (Matt. xxvii. 29.)

Christ. That it might appear that I came not to break the bruised reed (Matt. xii. 20.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore wast thou mocked of the Jews? (Matt. xxvii. 29.)

Christ. That thou mightst insult over devils, who otherwise would have mocked thee, as the Philistines did Sampson (Judg. xvi. 25.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou have thy blessed face defiled with spittle? (Matt. xxvii. 30.)

Christ. That I might cleanse thy face from the shame of sin.

Soul. Wherefore, Lord, were thy eyes hood-winked with a veil? (Mark xiv. 65.)

Christ. That thy spiritual blindness being removed, thou mightst behold the face of my Father in heaven.

Soul. Lord, wherefore did they buffet thee with fists, and heat thee with staves? (Matt. xxvi. 67; Matt. xxvii. 30.)

Christ. That thou mightst be freed from the strokes and tearings of infernal fiends.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be reviled? (Matt. xxvii. 39.)

Christ. That God might speak peace unto thee by his word and Spirit.

Soul. Lord, wherefore was thy face disfigured with blows and blood? (John xix. 3; Isa. 1. 6.)

Christ. That thy face might shine glorious as the angels in heaven (Matt. xiii. 43.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be so cruelly scourged? (John xix. 1.)

Christ. That thou mightst be freed from the sting of conscience, and whips of everlasting torments.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be arraigned at Pilate's bar? (Mark xv. 1.)

Christ. That thou mightst at the last day be acquitted before my judgment-seat.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be falsely accused? (Luke xxiii. 2.)

Christ, That thou shouldst not be justly condemned.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be turned over to be condemned by a strange judge? (Matt. xxvii. 2.)

Christ. That thou being redeemed from the captivity of a hellish tyrant, mightst be restored to God, whose own thou art by right.

Soul. Wherefore, O Christ, didst thou acknowledge that Pilate had power over thee from above? (John xix. 11.)

Christ. That antichrist, under pretence of being my vicar, should not exalt himself above all principalities and powers (Tit. iii. 1; Rom. xiii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14.)

Soul. Lord, why wouldst thou suffer thy passion under Pontius Pilate, being a Roman president to Caesar of Rome? (Luke xxiii. 1, 2; John xix. 13, &c.)

Christ. To shew, that the Cæsarian and Pontifician polity of Rome should chiefly persecute my church, and crucify me in my members (note well Rev. xi. 8, and Rev. xvii. 5, 6; John xix. 16.)

Soul. But why, Lord, wouldst thou be condemned? (Luke xxiii. 24; Rom. viii. 3.)

Christ. That the law being condemned in me, thou mightst not be condemned by it.

Soul. But why wast thou condemned, seeing nothing could be proved against thee? (Matt. xxvii. 24; John xix. 6.)

Christ. That thou mightst know, that it was not for my faults, but for thine that I suffered.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wast thou led to suffer out of the city? (Matt. xxvii. 33; Heb. xiii. 12.)

Christ. That I might bring thee to rest in the heavenly city.

Soul. Lord, why did the Jews compel Simon of Cyrene, coming out of the field, to carry thy cross? (Luke xxiii. 26; Matt. xxvii. 32.)

Christ. To shew the weakness whereunto the burden of thy sins brought me, and what must be every Christian's case which goeth out of the field of this world toward the heavenly Jerusalem.

Soul. Lord why wast thou stripped of thy garments? (John xix. 23.)

Christ. That thou mightst see how I forsook all to redeem thee.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be lifted upon the cross? (John xii. 32.)

Christ. That I might lift thee up with me to heaven.

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou hang upon a cursed tree? (Gal. iii. 13.)

Christ. That I might satisfy for thy sin committed in eating the forbidden fruit of a tree (Gen. ii. 17.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou hang between two thieves? (Luke xxiii. 33.)

Christ. That thou mightst have place in the midst of heavenly angels.

Soul. Lord, wherefore were thy hands and feet nailed to the cross? (Psal. xxii. 16; John xx. 25.)

Christ. To enlarge thy hands to do the works of righteousness, and to set thy feet at liberty to walk in the ways of peace.

Soul. Lord, wherefore did they crucify thee in Golgotha, the place of dead mens' sculls? (Matt. xxvii. 33.)

Christ To assure thee that my death is life unto the dead.

Soul. Lord, why did not the soldiers divide thy seamless coat? (John xix. 24.)

Christ. To shew that my church is one, without rent or schism.

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou taste vinegar and gall? (Matt. xxvii. 34.)

Christ. That thou mightst eat the bread of angels, and drink the water of life.

Soul. Lord, why saidst thou upon the cross, "It is finished?" (John xix. 30.)

Christ. That thou mightst know that by my death the law was fulfilled, and thy redemption effected (Rom. x. 4; 2 Cor. iii. 13.)

Soul. Lord, why didst thou cry out upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark xv. 34.)

Christ. Lest thou, being forsaken of God, shouldst have been driven to cry in the pains of hell, wo and alas! for evermore.

Soul. Lord, wherefore was there such a general darkness when thou didst suffer and cry out upon the cross? (Matt. xxvii. 45.)

Christ. That thou mightst see an image of those hellish pains which I suffered to deliver thee from the endless pains of hell, and everlasting chains of darkness (2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude v. 6.)

Soul. Lord, why wouldst thou have thy arms nailed abroad?

Christ. That I might embrace thee more lovingly in the everlasting arms of mercy (Mark. x. 16; Col. ii. 14; Deut. xxxiii. 27.)

Soul. Lord, why did the thief, that never wrought good before, obtain paradise upon so short repentance? (Luke xxiii. 43.)

Christ. That thou mayst see the power of my death to forgive them that repent, that no sinner needs despair.

Soul. Lord, why did not the other thief which hanged as near thee obtain the like mercy? (Luke xxiii. 39.)

Christ. Because I leave whom I will, to harden themselves in themselves, to destruction, that all should fear, and none presume (Rom. ix. 18.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou cry with such a loud and strong voice in yielding up the ghost? (Matt. xxvii. 50.

Christ. That it might appear that no man took my life from me, but that I laid it down of myself (John x. 18.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou commend thy soul into thy Father’s hands? (Luke xxiii. 46.)

Christ. To teach thee what thou shouldst do, being to depart this life.

Soul. Lord, wherefore was the veil of the temple rent in twain at thy death? (Matt. xxvii. 51.)

Christ. To shew that the Levitical law should be no longer a partition-wall between Jews and Gentiles, and that the way to heaven is now open to all believers (Eph. ii. 14; Heb. x. 19, 20.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore did the earth quake and the stones cleave at thy death? (Matt. xxvii. 51.)

Christ. For horror to bear her Lord dying, and to upbraid the cruel hardness of sinners’ hearts.

Soul. Lord, wherefore did not the soldiers break thy legs, as they did those of the thieves who hanged at thy right and left hand? (Exod. xii. 46; John xix. 33.)

Christ. That thou mightst know that they had not power to do any more unto me than the scripture had foretold that they should do, and I should suffer to save thee.

Soul. Lord, wherefore was thy side opened with a spear?

Christ. That thou mightst have a way to come nearer my heart.

Soul. Lord, wherefore ran there out of thy precious side blood and water?

Christ. To assure thee that I was slain indeed, seeing my heart-blood gushed out, and the water which compassed ray heart flowed forth after it, which once spilt, must needs die.[147]

Soul. Lord, wherefore ran the blood first by itself, and the water afterwards by itself, out of thy blessed wound? (1 John v. 6.)

Christ. To assure thee of two things:—First, That by my blood-shedding justification and sanctification were effected to save thee. Secondly, That my Spirit, by the conscionable use of the water in baptism, and blood in the eucharist, will effect in thee righteousness and holiness, by which thou shalt glorify me.

Soul. Lord, wherefore did the graves open at thy death? (Matt. xxvii. 52.)

Christ. To signify that death, by my death, had now received his death's wound, and was overcome.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be buried? (Matt. xxvii. 60.)

Christ. That thy sins might never rise up to judgment against thee.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wouldst thou be buried by two such honourable senators as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea? (Matt. xxvii. 57; John xix. 39, 40.)

Christ. That the truth of my death, the cause of thy life, might more evidently appear unto all.

Soul. Lord, wherefore wast thou buried in a new sepulchre, wherein was never man laid? (John xix. 41; Matt. xxvii. 60.)

Christ. That it might appear that I, and not another, arose; and that by my own power, and not by another's virtue, like him who revived at the touching of Elisha's bones (2 Kings xiii. 21.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore didst thou raise up thy body again? (Matt. xxviii. 6.)

Christ. That thou mayst be assured that thy sins are discharged, and that thou art justified (Rom. iv. 25.)

Soul. Lord, wherefore did so many bodies of thy saints, which slept, arise at thy resurrection? (Matt. xxvii. 52, 53; Acts xvii. 31.)

Christ. To give thee assurance, that all the saints shall arise, by virtue of my resurrection, at the last day.

Soul. Lord, what shall I render unto thee for all these benefits? (Psal. cxvi. 12.)

Christ. Love thy Creator, and become a new creature (Gal. vi. 15.)

The Soul's Soliloquy, ravished in contemplation of the Passion of our Lord.

What hadst thou done, O my sweet Saviour, and ever-blessed Redeemer, that thou wast thus betrayed of Judas, sold of the Jews, apprehended as a malefactor, and led bound as a lamb to the slaughter? What evil hadst thou committed, that thou shouldst be thus openly arraigned, accused falsely, and unjustly condemned before Annas and Caiaphas, the Jewish priests, at the judgment-seat of Pilate, the Roman president? What was thine offence? or to whom didst thou ever wrong? that thou shouldst be thus pitifully scourged with whips, crowned with thorns, scoffed with flouts, reviled with words, buffeted with fists, and beaten with staves? O Lord, what didst thou deserve to have thy blessed face spit upon, and covered as it were with shame? to have thy garments parted, thy hands and feet nailed to the cross? to be lifted upon the cursed tree, to be crucified among thieves, and made to taste gall and vinegar; and in thy deadly extremity, to endure such a sea of God's wrath, that made thee to cry out, as if thou hadst been forsaken of God thy Father; yea, to have thy innocent heart pierced with a cruel spear, and thy precious blood to be spilt before thy blessed mother's eyes? Sweet Saviour, how much wast thou tormented to endure all this, seeing I am so much amazed to think upon it! I inquire for thy offence, but I can find none in thee; no, nor so much as guile to have been found in thy mouth. Thy enemies are challenged, and none of them dare rebuke thee of sin; thy accusers, that are suborned, agree not in their witness; the judge that condemns thee, openly cleareth thy innocency; his wife sends him word she was warned in a dream that thou wast a just man, and therefore should take heed of doing injustice unto thee. The centurion that executed thee, confessed thee of a truth to be both a just man, and the very Son of God.

The thief that hanged with thee justifieth thee, that thou hast done nothing amiss. What is the cause, then, O Lord, of this thy cruel ignominy, passion, and death? I, O Lord, I am the cause of these thy sorrows; my sins wrought thy shame, my iniquities are the occasion of thy injuries. I have committed the fault, and thou art plagued for the offence; I am guilty, and thou art arraigned; I committed the sin, and thou sufferedst the death; I have done the crime, and thou hangest on the cross. Oh the deepness of God's love! Oh the wonderful disposition of heavenly grace! O the unmeasurable measure of divine mercy! The wicked transgresseth, and the just is punished; the guilty let escape, and the innocent is arraigned; the malefactor is acquitted, and the harmless

condemned; what the evil man deserveth, the good man suffereth; the servant doeth the fault, the master endures the strokes. What shall I say? Man sinneth, and God dieth. O Son of God! who can sufficiently express thy love, or commend thy pity, or ex-fot thy praise? I was proud, and thou art humble; I was disobedient, and thou becamest obedient; I did eat the forbidden fruit, and thou didst hang on the cursed tree; I played the glutton, and thou didst fast; evil concupiscence drew me to eat the pleasant apple, and perfect charity led thee to drink of the bitter cup; I essayed the sweetness of the fruit, and thou didst taste the bitterness of the gall. Foolish Eve smiled when I laughed, but blessed Mary wept when thy heart bled and died. O my God here I see thy goodness and my badness, thy justice and my injustice, the impiety of my flesh, and the piety of thy nature. And now, O blessed Lord, thow hast endured all this for my sake, what shall I render unto thee for all thy benefits bestowed upon me a sinful soul? Indeed, Lord, I acknowledge that I owe thee already, for my creation, more than I am able to pay; for I am in that respect bound with all my powers and affections to love and adore thee. If I owed myself unto thee for giving me myself in my creation, what shall I now render thee for giving thyself for me to so cruel a death, to procure my redemption? Great was the benefit that thou wouldst create me of nothing; but what tongue can express the greatness of this grace, that thou didst redeem me with so dear a price, when I was worse than nothing? Surely, Lord, if I cannot pay the thanks I owe thee (and who can pay thee, who bestowest thy graces without respect of merit or regard of measure?) it is the abundance of thy blessings that makes me such a bankrupt, that I am so far unable to pay the principal, that I cannot possibly pay so much as the interest of thy love.

But, O my Lord, thou knowest that since the loss of thy image, by the fall of my unhappy parents, I cannot love thee with all my might and mind, as I should; therefore as thou didst first cast thy love upon me when. I was a child of wrath and a lump of the lost and condemned world, so now, I beseech thee, shed abroad thy love by thy Spirit through all my faculties and affections, that though I can never pay thee in that measure of love which thou hast deserved, yet I may endeavour to repay thee in such a manner as thou vouchsafest to accept in mercy; that I may in truth of heart love my neighbour for thy sake, and love thee above ail for thine own sake. Let nothing be pleasant unto me, but that which is pleasing unto thee. And, sweet Saviour, suffer me never to be lost or cast away, whom thou hast bought so dearly with thine own most precious blood. O Lord, let me never forget thine infinite love, and this unspeakable benefit of my redemption; without which, it had been better for me never to have been, than to have any being.

And seeing that thou hast vouchsafed me the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, suffer me, O heavenly Father, Who art the Father of spirits, in the mediation of thy Son, to speak a few words in the ears of my Lord: if thou, O Father,

despisest me for my iniquities, as I have deserved, yet be merciful unto me for the merits of thy Son, who so much for me hath suffered. What if thou seest nothing in me but misery, which might move anger and passion; yet behold the merits of thy Son, and thou shalt see enough to move thee to mercy and compassion; behold the mystery of his incarnation, and remit the misery of my transgression. And as oft as the Wounds of thy Son appear in thy sight, O let the woes, of my sins be hid from thy presence; as oft as the redness of his blood glitters in thy eyes, O let the guiltiness of my sins be blotted out of thy book. The wantonness of my flesh provokes thee to wrath, O let the purity of his flesh persuade thee to mercy; that as my flesh seduced me to sin, so his flesh may reduce me into thy favour. My disobedience hath deserved a great revenge, but his obedience merits a greater weight of mercy; for what can man deserve to suffer, which God, made man, cannot merit to have forgiven? When I consider the greatness of thy passion, then do I see the trueness of that saying, That Christ came into the world to save the chiefest sinners. Darest thou, O Cain, say that thy sins are greater than may be forgiven? thou liest like a murderer; the mercies of one Christ are able to forgive a world of Cains, if they will believe and repent. “The sins of all sinners are finite, the mercies of God are infinite. Therefore, O Father, for the death and passion’s sake which thy Son Jesus Christ has suffered for me, and I have now remembered to thee, pardon and forgive thou unto me all my sins, and deliver me from the curse and vengeance which they have justly deserved, and through his merits, make me, O Lord, a partaker of thy mercy. It is thy mercy that I so earnestly knock for; neither shall my importunity cease to call and knock, with the man that would borrow the loaves, until thou arise and open unto me thy gates of grace; and if thou wilt not bestow on me thy loaves, yet, O Lord, deny me not the crumbs of thy mercy, and those shall suffice thy hungry handmaid. And seeing thou requirest nothing for thy benefits, but that I love thee in the truth of my inward heart, whereof a new creature is the truest outward testimony, and that it is as easy for thee to make me a new creature, as to bid me to be such; create in me, O Christ, a new heart, and renew in me a right spirit, and then thou shalt see how, mortifying old Adam and his corrupt lusts, I will serve thee as thy new creature, in a new life, after a new way, with a new tongue,, and new manners, with new words, and new works, to the glory of thy name, and the winning other sinful souls to thy faith, by my devout example. Keep me for ever, O my Saviour, from the torments of hell, and tyranny of the devil; and when I am to depart this life, send thy holy angels to carry me, as they did the soul of Lazarus, into thy kingdom; receive me into that joyful paradise, which thou didst promise to the penitent thief, who at his last gasp upon the cross so devoutly begged thy mercy, and admission into thy kingdom. Grant this, O Christ, for thy own name’s sake, to whom, as is most due, I ascribe all glory, and honour, praise, and dominion, both now and for ever.”

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[147]There is about man’s heart a skin called pericardium, containing water, which cools and moistens the heart, lest it should be scorched with continual motion. This skin once pierced, man cannot live,—Columb. Anatom. 1. 7; Horst. de Nat. Human, 1. i. exerce. 8. q. 5.

Indexes

Index of Scripture References

Genesis

1:1 1:18 1:26 1:26 2:2 2:4 2:17 2:23 3:3 3:4-5 3:8 3:10 3:17 3:22 3:22 3:23 3:24 4:1 4:4 4:4 4:14 4:46 5:16 5:24 6:5 6:5 6:6 7:1 11:7 11:7 11:79 14:14 15:1 15:6 15:11 15:16 17:1 17:1 18:19 19:24 20:7 20:7 22:1 22:3 22:5 25:35 28:1 28:1 30:27 31:7 31:55 32:1-2 32:1-2 32:3 32:10 32:28 35:7 39:3 39:9 39:11 39:22-23 43:3 47:9 49:1

Exodus

2:2 3:5 3:7 3:13 3:14 3:14 6:3 6:3 7:1 12:15 12:15 12:46 12:48 13:2 13:11-12 15:1 15:3 16:23 16:23 16:35 19:1 20:2 22:29 23:2 25:31 26:36 27:20-21 30:6-7 31:12-13 31:13-14 31:15 32:6 32:18 32:19 33:5-6 33:31 34:1 34:6-7 34:21 34:29 34:29 35:2 35:2-3

Leviticus

6:2-4 6:6-7 10:2 10:3 11:3 18:25 19:2 19:17 20:6 20:7 21:44 23:1 23:3 23:28 23:32 23:32 23:36 23:37 23:37-38 23:38 26:18 26:26

Numbers

5:6-8 6:23 6:23 6:27 6:27 9:13 10:2-3 14:42-43 15:32 15:38 16:40 21:9 23:10 23:19 23:19 25:11 28:9-10

Deuteronomy

1:4 4:2 4:13 4:35 5:14 5:14 5:15 5:16 6:4 6:6-7 6:7 7:9-10 8:10 13:3 15:10 15:13-14 18:10 18:18-19 23:4 23:13 25:4 27:17 27:26 27:26 28:15 28:47 28:58 29:19 30:4 30:16 32:4 32:4 32:15 32:39 33:3 33:27

Joshua

5:14 6:13 7:6 7:16 10:12 10:43 13:14 24:15 24:19

Judges

2:1 2:5 7:7 7:13 13:19 13:19-20 13:23 16:21 16:25 16:26

Ruth

1:20 3:9

1 Samuel

1:7 3:10 3:12 3:18 5:7 6:9 6:19 7:5-6 7:6 7:6 9:13 9:13 9:13 12:19 12:23 14:27 15:22 15:29 18:4 18:7 21:4 25:17 30:8

2 Samuel

3:35 5:8 6:7 7:14-15 7:18 7:22 7:23 12:3 12:12 12:16 16:9 18:27 19:33 22:5 24:1 24:13 24:14

1 Kings

8:9 8:17 8:27 8:30 8:39 10:8 12:33 19:4 19:4 19:6-8 19:8 20:31 20:31 20:32-34 21:1 21:20 21:27

2 Kings

1:2-3 2:11 2:11-12 3:27 4:22 5:7-8 5:10 6:16 6:25 13:21 15:12 20:7 20:11 22:1 22:20

1 Chronicles

13:9 29:11-12 29:14

2 Chronicles

2:5-6 3:1 12:5 12:7 15:4 16:12 19:10 19:11 20:1 20:1 20:1 20:3 20:20 26:19 32:1 32:8 33:18-19

Ezra

1:1 8:21 10:6

Nehemiah

1:1 1:1 5:17 8:1 9:4 9:14 13:15 13:15-16 13:19 13:19 23:19

Esther

1:3 1:4 4:1 4:1-2 4:3 4:16 4:16 4:16 4:16 9:19 9:21 9:22

Job

1:1 1:4 1:7 1:10 1:10 2:10 2:10 3:1 3:25 4:9 6:40 9:9 11:7 11:13-14 12:4 13:15 14:1 14:5 14:5 14:5 14:5 14:5 14:14 15:2 15:4 15:8 15:25 15:36 17:13 17:14 17:44 19:25-26 26:14 31:17-18 33:19 33:22 33:23 33:24 33:24 35 38:31

Psalms

1 1:1 2:7 2:9 3 3 4 4:4 4:8 5 6 6:1 6:8 8:1 8:1 8:3 8:5 8:5 9:2 10:17 12 13 14:1 14:4 15 15:4 16 16:11 16:11 18:5 18:26 18:32 19 19 19:1 19:1 19:5 19:5 19:5 22 22 22:16 23 23:1 24:7 25 26:6 27:10 27:14 30 30:1 31:5 31:5 31:5 32 32:1 32:5 33:6 33:6 34:7 34:7 34:9 34:9-10 34:11 34:15 34:19 34:19 36:8 36:19 37:4 37:11-13 37:29 37:37 39:9 41:3 42 42:2 42:2 45:7 46 47:4-6 47:8 49:18 50:15 51 51:1-2 51:4 51:5-6 51:12 51:13-14 51:17 52:5 53:4 55:16-17 56:8 64:21 67 67:1 68:19 69 69:9-10 69:22 70 73:25 76:5 78:24-25 80 80:1 83:18 84:10 86:7 87:3 87:3 88 88:7 89:31 89:33 90 90:1 90:1 90:2 90:2 90:5-6 90:9 90:12 91 91:5 91:9 91:11 91:11 91:11 91:11 91:11 91:14-15 92 92:5 92:9 95 95:7 98 101:6-7 101:18 102:27 103 103 103:8 103:10 103:11 104:15 105:37 106:1 106:23 106:29 106:40 106:41 106:48 107 107:17 108:1 109:23 110:1 110:3 110:3 110:7 111 111:1 112 112:1 113:1 113:9 114:7 115:3 115:3 115:17-18 116 116 116:8 116:11 116:12 116:19 118:1 118:5 118:6-7 118:14 118:24 119 119:11 119:21 119:62 119:71 119:112 121:4 124:7 125:34 127 127:1-2 130:6 136 137 139:1 139:2-3 139:5 140 140 141 141:3 143:3 144 144 144:4 145 145:1 145:7 145:8-9 145:9 145:9 145:9 145:15-16 145:16 145:17 146 147 147:5 147:9 149:6 149:9 165 167:19-20

Proverbs

2:17 3:2 5:8 6:27 8:12 9:5 12:10 16:7 19:17 21:17 23:1-2 23:17 24:16 24:21 28:9 28:13 29:18 30:4 31:4-5

Ecclesiastes

1:17 2:9 3:14 4:4 5:1 8:11 10:17 12:1 12:12 12:14 12:14

Song of Solomon

1:3 1:4 2:1 2:3 2:14 2:17 5:3 8:6

Isaiah

1:8 1:13 1:15 1:18 2:2 2:3 2:22 3:1 4:5 6:3 6:8 6:8-10 9:6 9:6 9:6 11:1 25:7-8 25:7-8 26:1 26:19-20 26:20 26:20 28:13 28:21 33:14 35:6 38:2-3 38:12 38:14 40:3 40:26 40:28 40:31 42:8 44:6 45:5-8 50:6 51:5-6 53:3 53:6 55:1 55:1-2 55:1-2 55:6-8 55:7 55:7 55:7 55:9 56:2 56:6 57:1 57:2 57:2 57:21 58:3 58:6 58:7 58:10 58:13 58:13 58:13 59:13-14 59:20 61:1 61:9 63:5 63:9 63:9-10 63:10 63:16 64:6 65:1 65:17 65:20 65:20 66:22 66:22

Jeremiah

8:22 10:10 10:25 10:25 11:20 13:23 15:1 15:22 17:10 17:10 17:21-22 17:27 17:27 18:20 20:12 20:14 23:7-8 23:23-24 23:24 25:11-12 28:13 31:18-20 48:11

Lamentations

1:9 1:12 3:20 3:22 3:23 3:40 4:4 5:16

Ezekiel

2:10 4:15 4:16 4:16 5:16 9:4 9:4 16:6 18:7 20:12 20:19-21 20:20 20:20 20:24 23:38 33:11 33:11 33:14 33:16 37:7-8 39:8 46:1-3 46:10

Daniel

1:4 4:17 4:24 4:25 4:27 4:27 4:32 4:34 5:1 5:4 5:26 6:23 6:26 9:1 9:1 9:16 9:21 10:3 11:8 12:2

Hosea

1:4 1:7 2:13 2:21 5:15 13:2 14:3

Joel

1:10 1:13 1:13 1:14 1:14 2:12 2:15 2:15 2:17 2:17 2:18-19 2:26 2:28-29 3:1-2 3:11 3:12

Amos

5:8 6:6

Jonah

3:1 3:5 3:5 3:5 3:5-6 3:7 3:8 3:10

Micah

5:1 6:10-11

Habakkuk

2:6 2:18-19 3:2 3:3 5:1

Haggai

2:5-6

Zechariah

2:8 3:2 3:4 5:2 7:5 7:9-10 12:10 12:10 13:1 14:4-5 14:17 15:17

Malachi

1:6 1:8 3 3:6 3:17

Matthew

3:9 3:11 3:16 3:16-17 3:17 3:39 4:4 4:10 5:11 5:16 5:17 5:19 5:20 5:23 5:23-24 5:25 5:45 6:6 6:12 6:14 6:15 6:17 6:19-20 6:32 7:12 7:13 7:14 7:14 7:22 7:22-23 8:2 8:8 8:11 9:12 9:12-13 9:15 9:15 9:15 9:20 10:22 10:42 11:5 11:21 11:25 11:25-27 11:26 11:27 11:28 11:28 11:28 12:1 12:5 12:8 12:8 12:11 12:11 12:20 12:36 12:40 13:19 13:41 13:43 13:43 13:43 14:19 14:19 14:19 14:31 15:1 15:36 16:17 16:19 16:19 16:26 17:2 17:4 17:4 17:5 17:20 17:21 18:1 18:10 18:18 18:20 18:21-22 18:35 19:6 19:8 19:8 19:13 19:23 19:23-24 19:28 19:29 19:30 20:53 21:42 22:1 22:11 22:11 22:12 22:13 22:13 22:14 22:14 22:43 23:27-28 23:33 24:2 24:20 24:27-28 24:28 24:29 24:35 25:1 25:1 25:1 25:1 25:10 25:11 25:21 25:21 25:21 25:24 25:31 25:33 25:34 25:34 25:34 25:34 25:34 25:35 25:36 26:1 26:4 26:18 26:26 26:26 26:26 26:26-28 26:28 26:28 26:28 26:30 26:30 26:30 26:39 26:39 26:39 26:40 26:40 26:41 26:42 26:42 26:44 26:49 26:50

26:56 26:67 26:74-75 27:2 27:2 27:3 27:4 27:24 27:25 27:29 27:29 27:29 27:30 27:30 27:32 27:33 27:33 27:34 27:34 27:39 27:45 27:46 27:49-51 27:50 27:51 27:51 27:52 27:52 27:52-53 27:53 27:57 27:60 27:60 28:1 28:5 28:6 28:19 28:19 28:19

Mark

1:4 2:7 2:22 3:4 3:5 3:35 5:7 6:20 6:41 8:6 9:5 9:24 9:41 10:16 14:23-24 14:25 14:26 14:33 14:51-52 14:61 14:65 15:1 15:9 15:31 15:34 16:9

Luke

1:6 1:21 1:32 1:74-75 1:74-75 1:77 2:7 2:29 2:29 2:29 2:37 3:4-5 3:23 4:18 5:21 5:36-37 6:25 6:35-36 7:32-33 8:2 8:17 8:28 8:28 9:16 9:30 9:31 9:31 9:31 10:16 10:16 10:16 10:16 11:13 11:28 12:2 12:8 12:19-20 12:20 12:48 12:48 13:4 13:5 13:15 13:24 13:24 13:27 13:28 13:28 14:4 14:13 14:14 14:14 14:14 15:1 15:7 15:10 15:10 15:24 16:1 16:2 16:2 16:2 16:15 16:22 16:22 16:22 16:22 16:22-23 16:23 16:23 16:23 17:3-4 17:31 17:34-36 18:22 19:1 19:8-9 19:9 19:17 20:35 21:24-25 21:28 21:34 22:12 22:19 22:19-20 22:31-32 22:42 22:44 22:54 22:57-58 22:60 22:61 22:61-62 22:62 22:62 23:1-2 23:2 23:24 23:26 23:33 23:39 23:42 23:43 23:43 23:43 23:43 23:46 24:27 24:30 24:30 24:30 24:32 24:41 24:42 24:47

John

1:1 1:1 1:9 1:13 1:16 1:18 1:29 1:31 1:37 3:3 3:5 3:16 3:29 4:11 4:24 4:24 5:4 5:5 5:9 5:19 5:19-23 5:22 5:24 5:25 5:26 5:28 5:28-29 5:28-29 5:45 5:45 6:4 6:9 6:11 6:11 6:15 6:32 6:34 6:35 6:35 6:38 6:49 6:50 6:51 6:51 6:54 6:57 6:58 8:4 8:7 8:44 8:46 8:47 8:47 8:58 9:7 9:31 10:4 10:18 10:27 11:4 11:5 11:24-26 11:25 11:26 11:41-42 11:44 12:2 12:13 12:26 12:32 12:49 13:1 13:1 13:4 13:5 13:14 13:34 13:35 14:2 14:2 14:2-3 14:6 14:9 14:14 14:16 14:16 14:17 14:23 14:26 15:5 15:5 15:10 15:16 15:26 16:2 16:15 16:16 16:21 16:21 16:22 17:3 17:3 17:3 17:3 17:5 17:11 17:12 17:14 17:14 17:20-21 17:21 17:22 17:22 17:23 17:23 17:24 17:26 18:1 18:2 18:8 18:37 19:1 19:3 19:5 19:6 19:11 19:13 19:16 19:23 19:24 19:30 19:33 19:39-40 19:41 20:17 20:17 20:21 20:21 20:21-22 20:22-23 20:22-23 20:22-23 20:23 20:23 20:23 20:25 20:29

Acts

1:2-3 1:7 1:11 1:11 1:12 1:13-14 1:24 1:24 1:24 1:25 2:1 2:1 2:4 2:36 2:37 2:38 2:38 2:38 2:41 2:42 2:42 2:45 2:46 3:19 3:21 3:22-24 4:11 4:12 4:32 4:32 5:4 5:41 5:41 6:15 7:1 7:5 7:6 7:48 7:48 7:59 7:59 8:2 8:22 9:1 9:4 9:6 9:9 10:15 10:33 10:43 10:43 11:26 12:6 12:11 12:15 13:2 13:4 13:38 13:48 14:15 14:17 15:6 15:9 15:10 15:10-11 15:19-21 15:24 15:24 15:28 16:12-13 16:18 16:18 17:11 17:25 17:25 17:25 17:28 17:28 17:31 17:31 17:31 17:31 19:8 20:4-5 20:7 20:7 20:7 20:11 20:28 20:28 20:28 20:28 21:4 21:26 22:28 24:16 26:6-7 26:29 27:23 27:33 27:35 28:11 28:15 28:23 194

Romans

1:1 1:2 1:3 1:4 1:7 1:9 1:16 1:17 1:19-20 1:21 1:23 1:23 1:23 1:24 1:24 1:25 1:26 1:28 2:4 2:4 2:4-5 2:5 2:5 2:5 2:5 2:6 2:8 2:12 2:12 2:15 2:16 2:22 2:28-29 3:2 3:4 3:12 3:19 3:20 3:28 4:2 4:5 4:8 4:9 4:11 4:11 4:11-12 4:17 4:19 4:23 4:25 4:25 4:25 4:25 5:1 5:2 5:2 5:5 5:8 5:8-9 5:9-10 5:17 5:20 5:20 5:20-21 6:1-2 6:4-5 6:4-5 6:6 6:7 6:11 6:12 6:13

6:13 6:23 6:23 7:7-8 7:10 7:10 7:18 7:24 7:24 8:1 8:1 8:1-2 8:3 8:5 8:7 8:9 8:9 8:9 8:10 8:11 8:11 8:15 8:15 8:15-16 8:16 8:17 8:17 8:18 8:18 8:18 8:20 8:22 8:22 8:27 8:27 8:28 8:28 8:28 8:28 8:29 8:29 8:29-30 8:30 8:31 8:33-34 8:34 8:34 8:34 8:38 8:39 9:3 9:11 9:11 9:15 9:15-16 9:16 9:17 9:18 9:18 9:19 10:1-2 10:4 10:8 10:13 10:13-14 10:14 10:20 11:4 11:4 11:5-6 11:6 11:13 11:16 11:20-22 11:29 11:29 11:32 11:32 11:33 11:33 11:35-36 11:36 11:36 12:1 12:1 12:2 12:2 12:4-5 12:10 12:11 12:11 12:19 12:20 13:1 13:1-2 13:2 13:14 14:3 14:3 14:5 14:5 14:6 14:6 14:11 14:14 14:17 14:17 14:17 14:23 14:23 15:1 15:3 15:4 15:4 15:5 15:7 15:7 15:9 15:13 15:15-16 15:16 15:16 15:18 15:19 15:20 15:20 15:22 15:25 15:25 15:29 15:31 16:2 16:5 16:10 16:14 16:15 16:17 16:17 16:18 16:20 16:26 16:26 16:27 16:35 17:23

1 Corinthians

1:1 1:2 1:10 1:11 1:26 1:30 1:31 2:5 2:5 2:14 2:14 3:16 3:22 3:22 3:32 4:1 4:1-2 4:5 4:5 5:4 5:4 5:5 5:8 5:10 6:1 6:1-3 6:2-3 6:2-3 6:3 6:3 6:11 6:15 6:17 6:19 6:19 6:19 6:20 7:4 7:5 7:5 8:4 8:6 9:5 9:9 9:19-20 10:3 10:7 10:7-8 10:13 10:13 10:16 10:16 10:16 10:16 10:16 10:16 10:16 10:17 10:17 10:17 10:17 10:21 10:31 11:1 11:4 11:10 11:10 11:20 11:23 11:23 11:23 11:24 11:25 11:25 11:25 11:25 11:25 11:26 11:26 11:26 11:27 11:28 11:30 11:32 11:32 11:32 11:34 12:10 12:12 12:13 12:13 12:13 13:8 13:11 13:11 13:12 13:12 14:14 14:15 14:25 14:33 14:36-37 14:37 14:37 14:40 15:8 15:14 15:22 15:28 15:28 15:41 15:43 15:43-44 15:46 15:51 15:52 15:53 15:54 15:54-55 15:57 15:58 16:1 16:1 16:1 16:1 16:1-2 16:2 16:17 18:26 19:2 23:12 25:24

2 Corinthians

1:3 1:5 1:20 2:7 2:10 3:5 3:13 3:16 3:17 3:17 3:17 3:18 3:18 3:18 4:4 4:17 4:17 4:17 5:1 5:1 5:6 5:6 5:8 5:10 5:10 5:10 5:17 5:18 5:18 5:18-19 5:18-19 5:19 5:20 6:2 6:4-5 6:16 6:16 6:18 7:1 7:10 7:11 8:1 8:4 8:6 8:7 8:7 8:12 8:12 8:12 8:19 8:19 9:5-7 9:6 9:6 9:7 9:8 10:4 10:8 12:4 12:4 12:7 12:9 12:14 12:24 13:5 13:13 13:14 13:14

Galatians

1:15 2:10 2:20 3:1 3:10 3:10 3:13 3:13 3:13 3:13 3:15 3:22 4:6 4:6 4:6-7 4:10 4:14 5:6 5:17 5:22 5:24-25 6:9 6:15 6:15

Ephesians

1:4 1:5 1:10 1:11 1:21 2:2 2:2 2:2 2:3 2:10 2:10 2:14 2:14 2:19 2:19-20 2:20 3:6 3:12 3:14-15 3:17 3:17 3:19 4:5 4:5 4:5-6 4:8 4:11 4:12 4:13 4:17 4:23-24 4:24 4:24 4:24 4:26 4:30 5:1 5:16 5:18-19 5:19 5:23 5:31-32 5:32

Philippians

1:6 1:11 1:23 1:23 1:23 1:23 1:23 2:3 2:6 2:12-13 3:6 3:8 3:8 3:8 3:8 3:9 3:10 3:10-11 3:11 3:12 3:19 3:20 3:21 3:21 3:21 3:21 4:4 4:7 4:8 4:13

Colossians

1:1-2 1:6 1:13 1:18 1:18 1:22 2:3 2:6 2:8 2:9 2:9 2:14 2:16 2:17 2:17 3:2 3:3 3:5 3:10 3:10 3:10 3:16 4:11

1 Thessalonians

1:10 1:10 2:13 4:1 4:3 4:13 4:13 4:14 4:14 4:14 4:16 4:16-17 4:17 4:17 4:17 5:18 5:23 5:23 5:23 5:26

2 Thessalonians

1:6 1:10 1:11 2:8 3:5

1 Timothy

1:5 1:8 1:15 1:15 1:16 2:4 2:5 2:5 2:5 2:5 2:19 3:3 3:16 4:2 4:4 4:4-5 4:5 4:8 4:8 5:23 6:15 6:16 6:16 6:16 6:19 6:19 6:20

2 Timothy

2:4 2:11 2:19 4:7-8 4:8 4:8 4:8 4:8

Titus

1:5 1:5 1:15 2:3 2:11-12 3:1 3:4 3:5 3:5 3:5

Philemon

1:2 1:16

Hebrews

1:1 1:3 1:3 1:7 1:14 1:14 1:14 1:14 1:14 2:1 2:3 2:5 2:7 2:7-8 2:10 2:13-14 2:15 2:16 2:18 3:7 3:12 3:13 3:13 3:17-18 4:2 4:6 4:9 4:12 4:15 4:15 4:16 5:1 5:4 5:4 5:4 5:7 5:7 5:8-9 5:14 5:14 6:1 6:1-2 6:6 6:18 7:4 7:11-12 7:15 7:25 7:25 7:27 7:28 8:4 9:4 9:11 9:17 9:22 9:24 9:24 9:26 10:10 10:12 10:19-20 10:29 10:34 11:1 11:2 11:3 11:6 11:6 11:6 11:6 11:6 11:9-10 11:10 11:10 11:15 11:16 11:16 11:25 12 12:1-2 12:6-8 12:7 12:10 12:11 12:11 12:14 12:14 12:14 12:17 12:22 12:22 12:22-23 12:22-24 12:24 12:24 13:3 13:12 13:15 13:15-16

James

1:5 1:17 1:17 1:17 1:18 2:10 2:10 2:19 2:26 3:2 4:1 4:14 5:9 5:13 5:14 5:14-16 5:14-16 5:15 5:19

1 Peter

1:2 1:2 1:2 1:4 1:4 1:5 1:7 1:8 1:9 1:12 1:15-16 1:18 1:19 1:24 2:1 2:5 2:5 2:9 2:10 2:13 2:13-14 2:17 2:19 2:21 2:22 2:24 3:19 3:19 4:4 4:14 5:4 5:4 5:4 5:8 5:8 5:9 5:9 5:10 5:12

2 Peter

1:10 2:4 2:4 2:9 2:10 2:12 2:13 2:20 2:22 3:9 3:10 3:10-12 3:13

1 John

1:7 1:7 2:1 2:4 3 3:1 3:2 3:9 3:20 4:1 4:1 4:13 5:3 5:4 5:6 5:7 5:7 5:7 5:16 5:18 8:36

Jude

1:6 1:6 1:6-7 1:7 1:14 1:14 1:15 5:6

Revelation

1:5 1:6 1:8 1:8 1:10 1:10 1:10 1:10 1:10 1:10 1:10 1:10 1:13 2:2 2:7 2:7 2:10 2:10 2:10 2:10 2:17 2:17 3:4 3:7 3:9 3:14 3:18 3:18 3:20 3:21 4:8 4:8 4:10 5:1 5:9 5:10 5:12-13 6:1 6:8 6:10 6:15-16 6:16-17 6:16-17 7:9 7:9 8:2 9:7 10:6 10:7 11:6 11:8 11:18 14:1 14:13 14:13 14:13 14:13 14:13 14:13 15:4 16:15 17:5 17:5-6 18:4 19:6-7 19:7 19:7 19:8 19:8 19:9 20:6 20:11-12 20:13 21:2 21:2 21:2 21:4 21:6 21:8 21:8 21:11 21:12 21:13 21:16 21:18 21:19 21:20 21:21 21:23 21:24 21:27 21:27 22:1 22:2 22:2 22:10 22:12 22:12 22:12 22:12 22:12

2 Maccabees
8:21 15:36

Index of Greek Words and Phrases

ἀγέννητος: 1
ἀεὶ, ἀεὶ: 1
ἀνάπλασις: 1
ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰθεῖν: 1
ἀπὸ τοῦ θεῖν: 1
ἀυτόθεος: 1
ἄναρχος: 1
ἅμα: 1
Ἀθηνᾶ: 1
Ἀνάλυσις. : 1
Ἀπόλυσις ἐν εἰρήῃ : 1
Ἂν τινῶν ὑφῆτς τὰς ὑμαρτίας : 1
ἐφόπτην: 1
ἔργα καὶ ἡμίρ: 1
ἱερεὺς: 1
Ἴσην παρέχει ἐξουσίαν: 1
ὀργανικὸς: 1
ὁ ὢν: 1
ὁ ζῶν: 1
ὁλόγος: 1
ὁμοῦ: 1
Θεὸς: 1
Κύριος: 1
Κύριος ἀνέστη, ὀρθῶς ανέστη.: 1
Καὶ ἀφὶς ἡμίν τάς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν.: 1
Μύελος ἀνδρῶν: 1
Πάντα ἰδὼν Δμὸς ὀφθαλμὸς καὶ πάντα νοήσας: 1
Στεφανος: 1
Το εἔδωλα: 1
αὐτάγαθον: 1
αὐτάρκης: 1
αὐταρκης: 1
αὐτιξουσίος: 1
αὐτούσιος: 1
αὐτοκρατωρ: 1
αρκεω: 1
αυτος: 1
κόλλησις: 1
κύρος: 1
κύρω: 1
κατοίκησις: 1

κυρέω: 1
λέγων: 1
λόγος: 1
οὐαὶ: 1
οὐαὶ, οὐαὶ: 1
οὐκ ἀεὶ, οὐκ ἀεὶ: 1
παητοκράτωρ: 1
πλάσις: 1
σύσσωμα: 1
την κυριακην: 1
τρόπου ὑπράξεως: 1

Index of Hebrew Words and Phrases

א: 1
ב: 1
ברא: 1
ר: 1
ש: 1

Index of Latin Words and Phrases

“Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo:: 1

Ad pœnam tardus Deus est, ad præmia velox;: 1

Nuper eram judex, jam judicis ante tribunal: 1

Acti agimus: 1

Adon derivatur ab Eden, basis, quia Deus est fundamentum et sustentator omnium creaturarum. Hinc Adon, Dominus, cui rei domesticæ cura incumbit, et ei tanquam columnæ innititur. Quando de creaturis usurpatur Adonai, est Jod cum patach: Sed de Creatore cum cametz. Ab Adonai manasse videtur Ethnicorum : 1

Audio quid verba sonent, neque enim mortis tantum ac resurrectionis suæ beneficium nobis offert Christus, sed corpus ipsum in quo passus est ac resurrexit. Concludo, realiter, hoc est vere nobis in cœena dari Ckristi corpus, ut sit animis nostris in eibum salutarem.: 1

Ave Rex: 1

Causa, non passio, facit martyrem.: 1

Christus omnibus pastoribus et doctoribus ecclesiæ, Ἰσην παρέχει ἐξουσίαν: 1

Corpus non adest, cum pane: 1

Creaturæ quædam æternæ sunt a posteriori: a priori solus Deus est æternus.: 1

Credo vitam æternam,: 1

Cum vexamur ac premimur, turn maximas gratias agimus indulgentissimo patri, quod corruptelam nostram non patitur longius procedere, sed plagis ac verberibus emendat.: 1

Cupio dissolvi: 1

Cur Deus Hom. furor et ira in Deo, non passionem mentis, sed ultionis acerbitatem notant.: 1

Da Domine quod jubes, et jube quod vis.: 1

Deus est Sharldi, : 1

Deus est causa causarum et ens entium.: 1

Deus potest omnia quæ contradictionem non implicant.: 1

Diem igitur octavum Dominicam diem esse necesse est.: 1

Dii creavit: 1

Disciti jam moniti Dominumn non temnere Christum.: 1

Dum legimus vel audimus quot et quanta ille sine culpa sustinuit, intelligimus nos peccatores omnia debere libenter sustinere.: 1

Edo vitam ceternam,: 1

Ego plus quam millies Deo vovi: 1

Ego tunc nos demum participare Christi bonis agnosco postquam Christum ipsum obtinemus. Obtinetur non tantum quum pro nobis factum fuisse victimam credimus: sed dum in nobis habitat, dum ejus sumus membra, ex came ejus, dum in unam denique et vitam et substantiam (ut ita loquar.) cum ipso coalescimus.: 1

Epicteti dict.: 1

Epistola ad Romanos: 1

Epistola in Romanos: 1

Et ex illo cœpit habere festivitatem suam: 1

Euge bone serve: 1

Euge bone serve!: 1

Exemplum accidit, mulieris, domino teste, quæ theatrum adiit, et inde cum dæmonio rediit. Itaque in exorcismo cum oneraretur immundus spiritus quod ausus est fidelem aggredi: constanter justissime quidem (inquit) feci: In meo eam inveni.: 1

Exhibet omnia, accipit nihil; ipsum igitur bonum, est Deus ipse semper.: 1

Fidem mitte in cœlum, et eum in terris tanquam præsentem tenuisti.: 1

Fidem quum dico; non intelligo quamlibet opinionem, sed fiduciam qua quum audis panem tesseram esse corporis Christi, non dubitas impleri à Domino, quod verba sonant: corpus quod nequaquam cernis, spirituale esse tibi alimentum, vinque ex Christi carne vivificam in nos per spiritum diffundi.: 1

Films Dei : 1

Fleres, si scires unum tua tempora mensem: rides, quum non sit forsitam una dies.: 1

Heu perdidi diem!: 1

Hinc Deus dicitur, : 1

Homo est fatuus usque ad 40 annum, deinde ubi agnovit se esse fatuum, vita consumpta est.: 1

Humana natura est distinctum individuum à natura divina, etsi non sit distincta persona.: 1

Ideo dicitur pater : 1

In creaturis multa inveniuntur bona, ergo Creator multo magis est bonus. Imo: 1

In medio gentium posui eam: 1

Incruentum sacrificium.: 1

Ineptè faciunt: 1

Infirmitates meræ privationes non pravæ dispositionis.: 1

Intellectus scientia et sapientia in Deo non distinguuntur.: 1

Ira Dei non est aliud quam voluntas puniendi.: 1

Jehovah non habet plurale, et in scripturis soli vero Deo tribuitur.: 1

Judam non tam scelus quam desperatio facit penitus interire.: 1

Laudat, et hortatu comprobat acta suo.: 1

Legis substantia est sex diebus, terrenis negotiis incumbere; septimâ, divino cultui dare operam.: 1

Lumen est umbra Dei, et Deus est lumen luminis. : 1

Malum pati malum non est; malum facere malum est.: 1

Milites sacramento erant jurati et obstricti ad præstandam soli imperitori fidelitatem et obedientiam.: 1

Ministerii claves duplex est, una scientia discernendi: 1

Ministri peccata remittunt non αὐτιξουσίος: 1

Morbus est utilis quædam institutio, quæ docet, caduca spernere, et cœlestia spirare.: 1

Morbus non malis adnumerandus, quia multis utiliter accidit.: 1

More porta gloriæ.: 1

Nam sapientia in homine est habitus intellectui impressus, qui de Deo dici non debet, cujus intellectus est ipsa sapientia.: 1

Ne verbis quod seis ostentes, sed rebus te ostende scire.: 1

Nescis quid vesper serus vehat.: 1

Nitimur in vetitum.: 1

Nobile vincendi genus est patientia: vincit qui patitur: si vis vincere, disce pati. Optima injuriæ ultio est oblivio, efficit enim ut animum levet, nec magis lædat, quam si facta non esset.: 1

Non clamans, sed amana, psallit in aure Dei.: 1

Non dixit dominus, Hæc sunt signa corporis mei, sed hoc est corpus meum. Oportet ergo, non ad naturam eorum quæ proposita sunt aspicere, sed ad ipsorum virtutem et gratiam. Non hoc corpus quod videtis manducaturi estis, et bibituri illum sanguinem quem fusuri sunt qui me crucifigent. Sacramentum aliquid vobis commendo; spiritualiter intellectum vivificabit vos.: 1

Non humana traditione, sed Christi ipsius observatione et instituto: 1

Non ignare mali, miseris succurrito Christe.: 1

Non mortes sed mores.: 1

Non remittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum.: 1

Non vox, sed votum; non miisica chordula, sed cor:: 1

Nos scimus bonam esse legem, modo judex eâ legitime utatur: 1

Novit Dominus mutare sententiam, si tu noveris emendare vitam.: 1

Nubecula est, cito transibit.: 1

Nunc dimittis: 1

Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit.: 1

Omnia potentia excludit omnes defectus, qui sunt impotentia, seu, posse mentiri, mori, peccare, &c.: 1

Opera Trinitatis ad extra indivisa, ad intus divisa.: 1

Origo essentiæ in divinis nulla est, origo personarum locum habet in Filio, et Spiritu Sancto; Pater enim est prior Filio, non tempore, sed ordine: 1

Pœnitentia cum de Deo enunciatur, non affectum in Deo, sed effectum Dei in hominibus significat.: 1

Par eat potestas Dei ad instituendos, et restituendos homines.: 1

Pastores omnes hic exoratos vellem, ut in hujus controversiæ statum penitius introspiciant; nec fideles ex hac vita migrantes, et panem vitæ petentes, viatico suo fraudari sinant, ne lugubris ista in iis ad impleatur lamentatio. Parvuli panem petunt, et non sit qui frangat eis.: 1

Post lachrymas, gemitusque graves, clementia Christi confestim est oculos ante locanda tuos.: 1

Principibus ad salutem sola satis vera est pietas, absque illâ vero, nihil est vel exercitus vel imperatoris fortitudo, vel apparatus reliquus.: 1

Quamobrem cum dies dominicus: 1

Quem dies vidit veniens superbum: hunc dies videt fugiens jacentem.: 1

Qui monet ut facias, quod jam facis, ipse monendo: 1

Qui vos audit, me audit: 1

Quid nobis tecum?: 1

Quilibet sacerdos (quantum est ex virtute clavium) habet potestatem indifferenter in omnes.: 1

Quisquis amat dictis absentem rode e amicum, Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi.: 1

Quod se nobis communicat, id sit arcanâ spiritus sancti virtute, quæ res locorum distantiâ sejunctas, ac procul dissitas non modo aggregare, sed coadunare in unum potest.: 1

Quum cœna cœlestis sit actio, minime absurdum est Christum in cœlo manentem à nobis recipi.: 1

Quum congregamini, non, sicut justum est, in die Domini nostri comeditis et bibitis.: 1

Sacra tene, paci consule, disce pati.: 1

Sacramentum requirit sacram mentem.: 1

Sancta non nisi sancte et sanctis.: 1

Sceleratior omnibus, O Juda, extitisti, quem non pœnitentia duxit ad Dominum, sed desperatio traxit ad laqueum.: 1

Schola crucis, schola lucis. Gubernator in tempestate dignoscitur, in acie miles probatur; delicata jactatio est, cum periculum non est: conflictatio in adversis, probatio est veritatis.: 1

Sola voluntate: 1

Solo opere: 1

Spiritus S. à Patre, et à Filio procedit, tanquam ab uno et eodem principio, in duabus tantum personis subsidente, non autem tamquam à duobus ac diversis principis.: 1

Summum hominis bonum, bonus ex hac vita exitus.: 1

Sursum corda: 1

Timor mortis ipsa morte pejor.: 1

Tolle malos, extolle pios, cognosce teipsum:: 1

Unus est panis communi notione sacramenti, non autem necessario unus numero.: 1

Ut Alexandri causa iis qui illam scire cupiunt patefiat; judicatus est Ephesi ab Æmilio Frontino proconsule, non propter professiones nomen, sed propter perpetrata latrocinia, cum jam esset prævaricator (et proditor.): 1

Vel de præcipiti venias iu Tartara saxo, Ut qui Socraticum de nece legit opus.: 1

Veritas Dei in verbis, fides Dei dicitur, quod certo fiant, quæ ab ipso dicta sunt. Item constantia, quia sententiam non mutat.: 1

Veritas est harmonia tum intellectus et verborum cum rebus, tum etiam rerum ipsarum cum Ideis in mente divina.: 1

Voluntate et opere: 1

aliud et aliud: 1

aliud et aliud, : 1

alius et alius, : 1

crede et resipisce: 1

cupio dissolvi: 1

dulia: 1

ero qui ero, : 1

ex diametro: 1

ex opere operato: 1

ex operibus prævisis : 1

fiat justitia: 1

foro conscientiæ: 1

foro judicii: 1
id est, simul loco, sed : 1
id est, simul tempore.: 1
in foro judicii: 1
in foro pœnitentiæ: 1
ipsa: 1
ipse: 1
ipsum bonum.: 1
jus dare: 1
jus dicere: 1
latria: 1
non solum quia Ipse nihil desiderat, sed etiam quia nihil in eo desiderari potest. Creaturas fecit perfectas in suo quasque genere, ergo ipse perfectissimus est in se et per se.: 1
post dies octo: 1
primum ens: 1
primum vivens: 1 2
quoad essentiam absolutam, est quidem à seipso et : 1
regia mensura: 1
sacerdos: 1
secundum allegata et probata: 1
sic volo, sic jubeo: 1
sive esse personalis per æternam generationem à Patre existit: ideoque non est : 1
sustine et abstine: 1
termini à quibus : 1
terminus ad quem : 1
torrenti simili: 1
ultimum moriens: 1
viaticum: 1

Index of Pages of the Print Edition

i ii iii iv v vi vii viii ix x xi xii xiii xiv xv xvi xvii xviii xix xx xxi
xxii xxiii xxiv xxv xxvi xxvii xxviii xxix xxxi xxxii xxxiii xxxiv xxxv xxxvi
xxxvii xxxviii 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41
42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62
63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83
84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103
104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119
120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135
136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151
152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167
168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183
184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199
200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212 213 214 215
216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231
232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247
248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263
264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279
280 281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295
296 297 298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311
312 313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324 325 326 327
328 329 330 331 332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343