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SACRA PRIVATA:

OR THE

PRIVATE MEDITATIONS AND PRAYERS

OF THE

RIGHT REV. THOMAS WILSON, D. D.

LORD BISHOP OF SODOR AND MAN.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A SHORT INTRODUCTION

FOR THE

TRUE UNDERSTANDING OF THE LORD'S
SUPPER.

Philadelphia.

HOGAN & THOMPSON, 139½ MARKET STREET.
PITTSBURGH—D. M. HOGAN.

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P R E F A C E.

THE truly Reverend Doctor THOMAS WILSON, fifty-eight years Bishop of Sodor and Man, was blessed, with the spirit of prayer in a very uncommon measure: of which his *Sacra Privata*, or *Private Meditations* and *Prayers*, are an eminent instance.

They have hitherto been locked up from the world in an expensive book; and are mixed throughout with so much meditation and prayer that can come properly from the clergy only, (to whom they are an invaluable treasure,) as to unfit them for general use.

They are now presented to the public in a separate volume: so that pious Christians may, at a reasonable expense, distribute them amongst such people as either will not or cannot buy them; and the petitions peculiar to the clergy only are all thrown out.

The pious reader will find those Meditations and Prayers too long, according to the present division of them, which there is no occasion to adhere to. He may take them up, and lay them down, at his own discretion and convenience. It is recommended to him to go through them regularly, and to continue the use of them his whole life ; selecting such parts for more frequent meditation, as are best adapted to his necessity and disposition.

As prayer is one of the most important works a man can be engaged in, and few find themselves able to discharge it in the manner they wish to do ; it is humbly hoped, that this book, if duly attended to as it deserves, may with God's assistance teach them to pray ; may lead our thoughts to meditate on religious subjects ; and habituate us to clothe our meditations in the language of decent, pious, and fervent prayer.

That this valuable book may have this effect, is the intention and the earnest prayer of

THE EDITOR.

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ON DEVOTION AND PRAYER.

TRUE Devotion consists in having our hearts always *devoted* to God as the soul Fountain of all happiness, and who is ready to hear and help his otherwise helpless, miserable creatures.

It is to be attained,

1st. By earnest prayer. HE THAT HUNGERS AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS, WILL CERTAINLY BE FILLED.

2dly. By possessing our hearts with a deep sense of our own *misery*, our *wants*, and *danger*: 'This is the grace of *humility*.

3dly. By considering God's *goodness*, *power*, and *readiness* to help us: 'This is called *faith in God*.

Lastly; By convincing our hearts of the vanity of every thing else to afford us any real help or comfort: 'This is to be effected by *self-denial*.

Dying persons are generally more devout than others, because they then see their own misery, that nothing in this world can help them, and that God is their only refuge.

We must change our lives if we desire to change our hearts. God will have no regard to the prayers of those who have none to his commands.

'The Spirit of God will not dwell in a *divided*

heart. We cannot feel the pleasure of devotion while the world is our delight. Not that all pleasures are criminal; but the closer union we have with the world, the less is our union with God. A Christian, therefore, who strives after devotion, should taste sensual pleasures very sparingly; should make necessity, not bodily delight, his rule.

In order to dispose our hearts to devotion, THE ACTIVE LIFE is to be preferred to the CONTEMPLATIVE.

To be doing good to mankind, disposes the soul most powerfully to devotion. And indeed we are surrounded with motives to piety and devotion, if we would but mind them.

The *poor* are designed to excite our *liberality*;—the *miserable*, our *pity*;—the *sick*, our *assistance*;—the *ignorant*, our *instruction*;—those that are *fallen*, our *helping hand*. In those that are *vain*, we see the vanity of this world. In those that are *wicked*, our own frailty. When we see *good* men rewarded, it confirms our *hope*; and when *evil* men are punished, it excites us to *fear*.

He that would be *devout* must beware of indulging an habit of *wandering in prayer*. It is a crime that will grow upon us, and will deprive us of the blessings we pray for.

Avoid, as much as may be, *multiplicity of business*: Neither the innocency nor the goodness of the employment will excuse us, if it possess our hearts when we are praying to God.

When our Lord bids us TO TAKE NO THOUGHT FOR THE MORROW, he intended to hinder those *cares* and *fears* which are apt to distract our devotions,—which are the more unreasonable, because they can never change the state of things.

Never be curious to know what passes in the world, any further than duty obliges you ; it will only distract the mind when it should be better employed.

Never intermit devotion, if you can help it ; you will return to your duty like Sampson when his locks were cut, weak and indifferent as other people of the world.

The oftener we renew our intercourse with God, the greater will be our devotion.

Frequent prayer, as it is an exercise of holy thoughts, is a most natural remedy against the power of sin.

Importunity makes no change in God, but it creates in us such dispositions as God thinks fit to reward.

Make it a law to yourself to meditate before you pray ; as also to make certain pauses, to see whether your heart goes along with your lips.

They whose hearts *desire nothing*, *pray for nothing*.

Give me, O God, the spirit of true devotion, such as may give life to all my prayers, so that they may find acceptance in thy sight, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen*.

SACRA PRIVATA.

Mat. vi. 6. *Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.*

How good is God ! who will not only give us what we pray for, but will reward us for going to him, and laying our wants before him.

May I always present myself before God,—with a firm faith and hope in his promises and mercy ;—with great reverence to his infinite majesty ;—with the humility of an offender ;—and with a full purpose of keeping all God's commandments !

May the thoughts of eternity quicken my devotions ;—my wants make me earnest ;—my backslidings make me persevere ;—and may I never willfully give way to any distracting thoughts.

May I wait with patience, and leave it to Thee, my God and Father, *how* and *when* to grant my petitions.

He that has learned to pray as he ought, has got the *secret* of an holy life.

It is a greater advantage to us than we imagine, that God does not grant our petitions immedi-

ately. We learn by *that*, that whereunto we have already attained, *it was the gift of God*.

The best way to prevent wandering in prayer is, not to let the mind wander too much at other times; but to have God always in our minds in the whole course of our lives. The end of prayer is not to inform God, but to give man a sight of his own misery; to raise his soul towards heaven, and to put him in mind that there is his Father and his inheritance.

Matt. vii. 7. *Ask, and it shall be given you.*

Grant me, Lord, a faith which shall make me know my wants, that I may ask them with earnestness and humility, and depend upon thy gracious promise.

THE DUTIES OF A CHRISTIAN.

That man leads a sincere Christian life,

1st. Who endeavors to serve and obey God to the best of his understanding and power.

2dly. Who strives to please his neighbour to edification.

3dly. Who endeavours to do his duty in that state of life into which it has pleased God to call him.

Whoever would continue in the practice of these things unto his life's end, it is necessary that he should,—call himself often to an account, whether he does so or not;—constantly pray for grace to know, and to do, his duty;—and preserve himself in such a teachable temper as to be always ready to receive the truth when it is fairly proposed to him.

It is a rudeness amongst men to ask a favour, and not stay for an answer. And do we count it no fault to pray for blessings,—and never to think of them afterwards,—never to wait for them,—never to give God thanks for them?

Let us make prayer familiar to us, for without the help of God, we are every hour in danger.

The Devil knows, that when we have a relish for prayer, and apply ourselves in good earnest to it, we are in the way of life; he therefore strives by all ways possible to divert us.

Let us not run over our prayers with an insensible and distracted mind.

Let your prayers be as *particular as may be*, against the sins of your particular state, and for the graces which you in particular do most stand in need of. This is the best preservative against sin;—makes us best acquainted with our condition;—puts us continually in mind of mending what is amiss;—lets us see what particular graces we most want, what are most needful for the cure of our own particular corruption and disorder;—and is the best trial of our hearts. For example; if I pray for *charity*, and for every instance which is necessary to render me truly charitable, I pray for grace—to avoid evil speaking,—to pray for my enemies,—to do them good, &c. and so of all other sins and graces.

God grant that I may never seek his face in vain!

Luke xi. 1. *Lord, teach us to pray.* Pour upon us the spirit of supplication and prayer.

God will deny us nothing that we ask in the name of his Son.

Prayers through Jesus Christ.

When we offer our prayers through his mediation, it is then *he* that prays, *his* love that intercedes, *his* blood that pleads, it is *he* who obtains all from his Father.

Preparatory Prayer.

O Holy Spirit of grace! give us a true sight of our miseries, and a sincere shame and sorrow, when we make confession of our sins ;—a feeling sense of our need of mercy, and an hope of obtaining pardon, when we beg it for thy Son's sake. May we resign our wills to Thee, and to thy goodness, when we pray for temporal things: —and when we pray for spiritual graces, may we hunger and thirst after righteousness. Give us a real love for thy holy Word, and grace to hear it with attention. May we thankfully close with all the means of grace and salvation. When we praise thee for thy works of nature and of grace, and give Thee thanks for thy mercies, let us do it with high esteem and gratitude. Cause us to hear thy holy Word with faith and attention, and to profit by what we hear, that we may return from thy church with a blessing.

MORNING PRAYER.

Joshua xxiv. 15. *Choose you this day whom you will serve.*

Whom have I in heaven but thee, O Lord? and there is none on earth that I desire besides Thee. Thou art my God, and I will thank thee; Thou art my God, and I will serve thee. Be thou my only ruler and governor.

They that have a convenient place to sleep in, and they that have the comfort to sleep, have both great reason to be thankful. And even they that want these mercies, ought to bless God, if in the midst of these afflictions he is pleased to refresh them with the comforts of grace.

Gracious God, continue to me these favours so long, and in such measure, as shall most contribute to thy honour, and my salvation. And in great mercy support and relieve all that want these blessings.

What shall I offer unto the Lord for his mercies renewed unto me every morning?—*The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit: a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise.**

But most unfit is mine to be to God presented, until I have obtained his pardon, through the merits of the Lord Jesus, for the many sins by which it hath been defiled.

Jer. iii. 12. *I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God.*

Psa. xxxii. 5. *I acknowledge my sin unto thee, O God, and mine iniquities will I not hide.*

I do therefore implore thy pardon, and plead thy gracious promises, *with full purpose of heart*, by the assistance of thy grace, never again to return to folly.

Jer. xvii. 9. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

I cannot answer for mine own heart ; but there is no word, O Lord, impossible with thee. In *Thee* do I put my trust ; let me never be put to confusion.

Keep it ever in the heart of thy servant, that *it is indeed an evil thing and bitter to offend the Lord.*

Keep me from presumptuous sins, that I may never grieve thy Holy Spirit, nor provoke Thee to leave me to myself.

Matth. xxvi. 41. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.*

Lord, make me ever mindful of my infirmities and backslidings, that I may be more watchful, and more importunate for grace, for the time to come.

1 Peter v. 8. *Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.*

O Lord, grant that this adversary of our souls may never find me off my guard, or from under thy protection.

Matth. xvi. 24. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

O my Saviour? how long have I professed to follow Thee, without following the blessed steps of thy most holy life,—thy *patience* and *humility*,—thy great disregard for the world, its pleasures, profits, honours, and all its idols !

O Lord, obtain for me the spirit of mortification and self-denial, that I may follow Thee as I hope to live with thee for ever. *Amen.*

Matth. vi. 24. *No man can serve two masters. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

May my fear and love never be divided between Thee and the world. May I never set up any thing, O God, in competition with thee in the possession of my heart. May I never attempt to reconcile thy service with that world which is at enmity with Thee, my God and Father.

Mark x. 17. *What shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?*

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

O that this love of God may be the commanding principle of my soul! May I always have this comfortable proof of his love abiding in me, that I study to please him, and to keep his commandments. And may my love to my neighbour be such as he has commanded, that I may forgive, and give, and love, as becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Eccles. xii. 13. *Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man; that is, the happiness of man.*

May I, great God, continue in thy fear all the day long. May I keep thy statutes, and observe thy laws.

Heb. iv. 13. *All things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.*

Grant that I may always live and act as having Thee, O God, the constant witness of my conduct, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Eccles. ix. 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might:—for the night cometh when no man can work.*

Make me, O God, ever sensible of the great evil of delaying the work in its season, which thou hast appointed, lest the night surprise me unawares.

1 John v. 14. *This is the confidence we have in God, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.*

That it may be unto thy servant according to his word, I beseech Thee, to hear me in the full importance of that holy prayer which thy blessed Son hath taught us :

Our Father, which art in heaven :

In whom we live, and move, and have our being ; grant that I, and all Christians, may live worthy of this glorious relation, and *that we may not sin ; knowing that we are accounted thine.*

We are thine by adoption ; O make us thine by the choice of our will.

Hallowed be thy name.

O God, whose name is great, wonderful, and holy, grant that I and all thy children may glorify Thee, not only with our lips, but in our lives ; that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is in heaven.

Thy kingdom come.

May the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ. And may all that own Thee for their King, become

thy faithful subjects, and obey thy laws. De-throne, O God, and destroy Satan, and his kingdom ; and enlarge the kingdom of grace.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

We adore thy goodness, O God, in making thy will known to us in thy holy Word. May this Thy Word be the rule of our will, of our desires, of our lives, and actions. May we ever sacrifice our will to thine ; be pleased with all thy choices for ourselves and others ; and adore thy providence in the government of the world.

Give us this day our daily bread.

O Heavenly Father, who knowest what we have need of, give us the necessaries and comforts of this life with thy blessing ; but above all give us the bread that nourisheth to eternal life.

Acts xvii. *O God, who givest to all life, and breath, and all things ; give us grace to impart, to such as are in want, of what Thou hast given more than our daily bread.*

And forgive us our tresspasses, as we forgive them that tresspass against us.

Make us truly sensible of thy goodness, and mercy, and patience towards us, that we may from our hearts forgive every one his brother their trespasses.

May my enemies ever have place in my prayers and in thy mercy.

And lead us not into temptation.

Support us, O Heavenly Father, under all our

saving trials, and grant that they may yield us the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

But deliver us from evil.

From all sin and wickedness, from our spiritual enemy, and from everlasting death, good Lord deliver us.

Deliver us from the evil of *sin*, and from the evil of *punishment*.

Deliver us, O Heavenly Father, from our evil and corrupt nature,—from the temptations and snares of an evil world,—and from falling again into the sins we have repented of.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

By thy Almighty power, O King of Heaven, for the glory of thy name, and for the love of a Father, grant us all these blessings which thy Son has taught us to pray for.

Unto him that is able to do for us abundantly more than we can ask or think, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. *Amen.*

To God the Creator, the Preserver, and Disposer of all things, be the glory of all the good wrought in us, by us, and upon us.

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Thine *infinite power, wisdom, goodness, faithfulness, and truth*, are the only sure foundation on which we may depend. O give us a firm faith in these thy glorious perfections.

With angels and archangels, and all the company of Heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to Thee, O God most High. *Amen.*

Jude 24, 25. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. *Amen.*

Rom. xi. 36. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. *Amen.*

Rom. xvi. 27. To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Mark ix. 23. *All things are possible to him that believeth.*

Yes, Lord, and therefore I beg that faith of Him to whom all things are possible, that I may be able to *discover*, to *avoid*, to *resist*, and to *root out*, whatever is evil in me.

O Jesus, obtain this grace for thy otherwise helpless creature.

Grant that I may this day escape all the snares laid for me by the *devil*, the *world*, or mine own corrupt heart.

Grant that I may this day omit no part of my duty.

1 Tim. iv. 15. *Give thyself wholly to these things, that thy profiting may appear to all.*

God grant that I may do so; and I pray God

preserve me from ease, idleness, and trifling away my precious time.

Philemon 4. *I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers.*

Extend and suit thy graces to all conditions of men, that we may all be *upright in our dealings*, obedient to our governor-, peaceable in our lives, sober, honest, temperate, chaste in our conversation, and charitable to the poor, and one towards another.

Increase the number and the graces of all such as love and fear Thee, enlighten the minds of the *ignorant*, awaken the consciences of the *careless*, silence the *gainsayers*, convert the *profane*, and all that hold the truth in unrighteousness.

Rebuke the spirit of antichrist, idolatry, and libertinism,—the sins of imtemperance, licentiousness, litigiousness, and defrauding the public.

In tender mercy remember, O God, all *sick and dying persons*, that they may omit nothing that is necessary to make their peace with Thee. Be gracious unto all that are under any *affliction* of mind or body, or under any pressing calamity, all *desolate widows* and *fatherless children*,—all that call upon Thee in their distress, and have none else to help them.

Prov. xxi. 1. *The king's power is in the hand of the Lord; as the rivers of waters, he turneth it whithersoever he will.*

Let this thy power, O Lord, be magnified on all that are in authority. That we may be governed with truth and justice, by men fearing and honouring God, protecting the Christian Religion,

and punishing evil doers. To this end vouchsafe them, I beseech Thee, all the graces necessary for their high station, and for their eternal happiness.

Col. iv. 1. *Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.*

O heavenly Lord and Master, bless me with good and faithful servants. Let thy blessing be upon them, and upon my affairs committed to their care ; and may I never be wanting in my duty to them, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Relations, Benefactors, &c.

Be gracious, O God, to all my relations, benefactors, enemies, and all that have desired my prayers ; all who by their own labors, do minister to our necessities, together with all our known and unknown benefactors. Render, O God, a good reward, and a plentiful return, to all those who have been kind and charitable. Grant that we may all so live here, as that we may meet hereafter in the Paradise of God.

John xvi. 23. *Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.*

These are what I ask, O God and Father, above all things, for myself, and for all that have desired my prayers: That we may be restored to thy likeness, and never deface it by our sins; that the image of Satan may be destroyed in us; that all carnal affections may die in us; and that all things belonging to the Spirit may dwell in our hearts by faith; That thy name, and the

name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in him ; that our hearts may be entirely thine ; that we may never grieve thy Holy Spirit ; but that we may continue thine for ever, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Ephes. iv. 29. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*

Grant, O God, that I may delight in thy Law ; that my conversation may be truly Christian.

May I never hear with pleasure, nor ever repeat, such things, as may dishonour God, or injure my neighbour, or my own character.

James iv. 11. *Speak not evil one of another.*

Ephes. v. 4. *Foolish talking or jesting are not convenient, but rather giving of thanks.*

Ps. cxxxiii. 3. *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.*

Matt. xii. 34. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. How can ye, being evil, speak good things?*

O Holy Spirit of grace, enable me to overcome the shame of a degenerate age, which will hear nothing with delight, but what concerns this world. O touch my heart with the true love of God, the excellences of his laws, the pleasantness of his service, and the wonders of his providences. This I beg for Jesus Christ's sake.

John xv. 7. *Ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*

These, O Jesus, are the things that I ask. *Intercede for me!* that I may be truly sensible of the diseases I labour under, and thankfully em-

brace the means which thy goodness hath ordained for my recovery.

Grant that the end of all my actions and designs may be the glory of God.

Enable me to resist all the sinful appetites of my corrupt nature.

Grant that I may hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Vouchsafe me the spirit of adoption,—of supplication and prayer,—of praise and thanksgiving.

Obtain for me, O Jesus, the graces of mortification and self-denial ; the graces of a true humility, and the fear of God.

Grant, O God, that I may never knowingly live one moment under thy displeasure, or in any known sin.

Grant, O God, that as I have been regenerate, and made thy child by adoption and grace, I may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Enable me, gracious God, to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust, that I may be partaker of the Divine nature.

Lord, grant me grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil ; and with a pure heart and mind to follow Thee, the only God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Let thy love, O God, be shed abroad in my heart, by the power of the Holy Ghost, and grant that it may appear in my *life*, my *conversation*, my *words*, and *actions*, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Blessed be God that I was admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion. Grant, O God, that

I may avoid all those things that are contrary to my profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Keep me, I beseech Thee, O heavenly Father, under the protection of thy good providence, and make me to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy name ; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Put away from me all hurtful things, and give me those things that be profitable for me, through Jesus Christ.

Mercifully grant unto me, O God, such a measure of thy grace, that running the way of thy commandments, I may obtain thy gracious promises, and be made partaker of thy heavenly treasure through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Forgive me those things whereof my conscience is afraid, and give me those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ.

That I may obtain that which thou dost promise, make me to love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ.

Keep me from all things hurtful, and lead me to all things necessary to my salvation, through Jesus Christ.

The Lord deliver me from every evil work, and preserve me to his heavenly kingdom : To whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

O that thy Holy Spirit may direct and rule my heart, O God, through Jesus Christ.

Of thy bountiful goodness, O Lord, keep me, I beseech Thee, from all things that may hurt me, that I may cheerfully accomplish those

things which thou wouldst have done, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Grant, O God, that I may be cleansed from all my sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind, through Jesus Christ.

Deliver me, O Lord, from the bonds of those sins, which through my frailty I have committed, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Faith.

O that I may believe in thee, O God, and put my whole trust and confidence in Thee alone, and not in any thing that I myself can do.

Grant, O God, that I may so perfectly and without all doubt, believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, that my faith in thy sight may never be reprov-
ed, for the sake of the same Jesus Christ.

Against Wavering.

Grant, O God, that we may not be carried about with every blast of vain doctrine, but that we may be firmly established in the truth of thy holy gospel, through Jesus Christ.

Grant, O God, that I may perfectly know thy Son Jesus Christ.

Grant, O God, that I may perfectly know thy Son Jesus Christ to be the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*,—the *Author* of the *Way*, the *Teacher* of the *Truth*, and the *Giver* of *Life*;—that I may steadfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life, through the same Jesus Christ.

Covetousness.

Give me grace to forsake all covetous desires,

and inordinate love of riches and pleasures, through Jesus Christ.

Grant that I may both perceive and know what things I ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same, through Jesus Christ.

Grant me, O God, the true circumcision of the Spirit, that my heart, and all my members, being mortified from all carnal lusts, I may in all things obey thy blessed will.

O that we, who know Thee now by faith, may, after this life, have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead.

In all our dangers and necessities, stretch forth thy right hand to save and defend us.

Charity.

O send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into my heart that most excellent gift of Charity, that very bond of peace and of all virtue, without which, whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee.

Grant, I do most humbly beseech Thee, O God, that as by thy special grace, Thou dost put into my mind good desires, so by thy continual help I may bring the same to good effect, through Jesus Christ.

O everlasting God, grant, that as thy Holy Angels do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth, through Jesus Christ.

Grant me grace so to follow thy blessed Saints in virtuous and godly living, that I may come to those unspeakable joys which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love Thee.

I pray God, my whole spirit, (my understanding, will, and conscience,) my soul, (my appetites, affections, and passions,) and my body, (the tabernacle of my soul,) be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May I take pleasure in abiding in thy presence, O God; in depending upon Thee; in leaving myself entirely to thy disposal, as a continual sacrifice to thy will.

Give me a victory over all my sins and imperfections; increase in me the grace of *faith, hope, and charity*, of *humility, meekness, patience*, and *resignation*, and all other Christian virtues; for Jesus Christ's sake.

Preserve me, gracious God, from *spiritual pride*; from ascribing any thing I have done, or can do, to myself, and robbing Thee of the glory of saving me from eternal ruin.

Take possession, O Jesus, of thy right in my soul, which thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood; and root out all self-righteousness, self-interest, and self-will; that thou mayest be my righteousness, and all in me.

Repentance.

Give me, O God, such a true sorrow for my sins, as shall enable me to embrace all the necessary means, how bitter soever, for rooting sin out of my soul.

Humility.

1 Pet. v. 5. *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*

I have all the reason in the world to be humble.

Without God I am nothing. Without his help and grace I can do nothing that is good. Without his word I know nothing. Of myself, I deserve nothing but punishment. Of my own, I have nothing but faults, imperfections, and sins, an inclination to evil, an aversion to good, unruly senses, ungovernable passions, unreasonable affections.

1 Cor. i. 30. O Lord Jesus Christ, who art made unto us of God, our *wisdom* by revealing him and his glorious perfections ;—our *righteousness*, by satisfying the justice of God in our nature ;—our *sanctification*, by procuring for us the Holy Ghost, and by restoring us, being sinners, to God's favour ;—our *redemption*, by redeeming us from death eternal. O Jesus, for these mighty favours, all love and glory be to Thee, with the Father and the Holy Ghost for ever. *Amen.*

The Way of an Happy Life.

Lay nothing too much to heart ;—desire nothing too eagerly—rejoice not excessively, nor grieve too much for disasters ;—be not violently bent on any design ; nor let any worldly cares hinder you from taking care of your soul ;—and remember, that it is necessary to be a Christian (that is, to govern one's-self by motives of Christianity) in the most common actions of civil life.

Col. iii. 17. *Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him.*

He that would not fall into temptation, must have a presence of mind, a watchful eye over himself ; he must have great things in view,--

distinguish betwixt time and eternity ; or else he will follow what passion, not what reason and religion suggest.

Christian Perfection.

Whosoever aspires after, (being so united to God, as to be one spirit with him,) must resolve to do all things with this sole view, TO PLEASE GOD. This I purpose, this I forbear, this I undertake, this I do, this I suffer in obediece to the will of God. This should be our express purpose, at all times, when we have time to make it ; and should be often renewed, lest our own will come to be the ruler of our actions. If I am careful to do this, I shall always have my end, whether I succeed, or be disappointed, being convinced it is God's will.

Rom. xvi. 14. *Put ye on the Lord Jesus, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Grant, O Lord, that " I may keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest by any means I should be a cast-away."*

" Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another. Be pitiful, be courteous : not rendering evil for evil, nor railing for railing but contrariwise blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil, and do good. Let him seek peace, and ensue it."†

Give me, O Lord, a wise, a sober, a serious, a religious heart.

* 1 Cor. ix. 27.

† 1 Pet. iii. 8, 9, &c.

Preserve me from evil counsels, and rash enterprises. O make thy way plain before my face.

Support me this day under all the difficulties I shall meet with.

I offer myself to thee, O God, this day, to do in me, and with me, as to Thee seems most meet.

Vouchsafe me, gracious God, the spirit of adoption, whereby I may cry *Abba, Father*, and apply to Thee, through Jesus Christ, not as an angry judge, but as to a merciful and loving father.

Remember, that the life of man is only to be valued for its usefulness.

John xv. 12. *This is my commandment, that ye love one another.*

O Thou, who hast given me this command and pattern, give me a sincere desire of following, and grace and power to do it.

James v. 15. *And the prayer of faith shall save the sick; and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

O Lord of life and death! have mercy upon all those who are visited with sickness; sanctify this thy fatherly correction, that they may search their ways, and see whence this visitation cometh. Have mercy upon all that are appointed to die, and grant that they omit nothing that is necessary to make their peace with Thee, and that they may be delivered from death eternal. And God grant that we may apply our hearts to that holy and heavenly wisdom, while we live here, which may in the end bring us to life everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

NOON.

1 Tim. ii. 1. *I exhort, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men.*

Acts xvii. 26. *For we are all of one blood.* And Charity, that more excellent way, is a tender affection for the whole creation of God.

O God, almighty and merciful, let thy fatherly kindness be upon all whom thou hast made. Hear the prayers of all that call upon Thee ; open the eyes of them that never pray for themselves ; pity the sighs of such as are in misery ; deal mercifully with them that are in darkness ; and increase the number of the graces of such as fear and serve Thee daily. Preserve this land from the misfortunes of war ;—thy church from all dangerous errors ;—this people from forgetting Thee, their Lord and benefactor. Be gracious to all those countries that are made desolate by the sword, famine, pestilence, or persecution. Bless all persons and places to which thy providence has made me a debtor ; all who have been instrumental to my good by their assistance, advice, or example ; and make me in my turn useful to others. Let none of those that desire my prayers want thy mercy ; but defend, and comfort, and conduct them through, to their lives' end.

“In every thing give thanks ; for this is the will of God, in Christ Jesus, concerning you.”

Cause us, O God, to profit by all the visitations of thy grace and mercy.

“It becometh well the just to be thankful.”

O Lord and Father, I am not worthy of the

least of all thy mercies, which thou hast showed thy servant, neither can I render due thanks and praise for them ; but, O Lord, accept of this my sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

For all the known, and for all the unobserved favours, deliverances, visitations, opportunities of doing good, chastisements, and graces of thy Holy Spirit, vouchsafed to me, I bless thy good providence ; beseeching thee to pardon my ingratitude, that I have passed so many days and years without observing, and without acknowledging, thy great goodness to thy unworthy servant.

For when I soberly consider my dependence upon Thee, for my life, welfare, health of body, peace of mind, grace, comfort, and salvation, I ought to be very thankful.

Glory be to God, my Creator ; glory be to Jesus, my Redeemer ; glory be to the Holy Ghost, my Sanctifier, my Guide, and Comforter : all love, all glory, be to God most high. *Amen.*

Let us never ascribe any thing to ourselves, but all to the grace of God, and render to him all the glory of his works.

Preserve me, O God, from the insensibility of those who receive thy favours without being affected with them, and from the ingratitude of those who look upon them as a debt.

Psal. xc. 1, 2. It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord ; and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High ! To show forth thy loving kindness in the morning : and thy faithfulness every night.

Many and great have been the favours and

blessings which Thou hast bestowed on this nation; for which, O Lord, in conjunction with those who praise Thee for them, and in the stead of those who forget to praise Thee, I bless and praise thy holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Our Father which art in Heaven.

Acts xvii. 28. *In Thee we live, and move, and have our being.*

Grant that we may love Thee with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength.

Blessed be God, who dealeth with us with the tenderness of a father.

O that we may remember that our Father and our inheritance is in heaven!

I commit myself, and all that belongs to me, to thy fatherly care and love.

Verily, whatever ye ask the Father in my name he will give to you.* This is the great support and comfort of sinners. Hear us, for thy Son's sake; for as sinners we have no right to ask any favour.

What manner of love is it, that we should be called the sons of God!†

Hallowed be thy name.

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honour, and power, and glory, for Thou hast created all things.”

“In this is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit.”

*John xvi. 23.

†1 John iii. 1.

May thy children have a great regard for every thing that belongs to Thee.

May I never dishonour Thee, O Heavenly Father, by word or deed.

May I glorify Thee daily by a good life. Fill my heart with a great concern and zeal for thy glory.

“Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord.”

“They that honour me I will also honour.”

How little have I done to promote thy glory! God be merciful unto me.

Thy kingdom come.

May all the kingdoms of the world obey thy laws, and submit to thy providence, and become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ.

Bless the pious endeavours of all those who strive to propagate the gospel of thy kingdom.

Vouchsafe to reign in my heart; and let not Satan ever have dominion over me.

Fit us, O God, for the coming of thy kingdom. May I submit and rejoice to be governed by Thee.

O that thy Holy Spirit may direct and rule my heart; subdue in me all pride and covetousness, hatred, malice, envy, lust, and all uncleanness, and whatever shall offend Thee.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

1. Thess. iv. 3. *This is the will of God, even our sanctification.*

Thou hast sent us into the world, not to do our own will, but thine.

O subject my will to thine.

May thy name be honoured by the good lives of Christians.

O that I may have respect unto all thy commands.

May thy will, revealed to us in thy holy word, be the rule of my will, of my desires, my words, life, and actions.

Give us this day our daily bread.

John vi. 27. *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.*

Lord, give us evermore this bread. Give us the necessaries of life ; but above all, the bread that nourisheth to eternal life.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

Luke vi. 37. *Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.*

Grant, O Heavenly Father, that I may close with this merciful condition of pardon.

Thou hast been all mercy to me, O God, grant that I may be so to all others.

Blessed be the Lord, who has put our salvation into our own hands. May thy grace, O Father, give me an heart ever ready to forgive.

And lead us not into temptation.

1 Cor. x. 13. *Let him that thinketh he standeth (firm) take heed lest he fall.*

Let not any confidence in ourselves provoke Thee, O God, to leave us to ourselves.

2 Pet. ii. 9. *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.*

Thou, O Father, knowest my infirmities, and the power of my enemies ; be not wanting to me in the hour of temptation.

Matt. xxvi. 41. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.*

Make me mindful of my weakness, that I may be more watchful and importune for grace.

Fortify my soul against the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, for Jesus Christ's sake.

But deliver us from evil.

1 Pet. v. 8. *Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*

Grant, O Heavenly Father, that this adversary may never find me off my guard, or from under thy protection.

In all my saving trials, give me grace and power to overcome to thy glory.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever, Amen.

To Thee, to Thee alone, and to thy Son, and Holy Spirit, be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

EVENING.

Psal. cxli. 2. *Let my prayer be set forth in thy sight, as the incense; and let the lifting up of my hands be as an evening sacrifice.*

THAT it hath pleased God to add another day to the years of my life ; that none of his judgments, to which for my sins I am liable, have fallen upon

me ; that by his grace he hath kept me from all scandalous sins, and from the dangers of an evil world ; that he has given me occasions of doing good, and grace to make use of them ; that he hath supplied me and my family with the necessities of this life, and with means of attaining a better :—Accept, O God, of my unfeigned thanks for these, and for all thy mercies from day to day bestowed upon me. Add this to all my favours, I beseech Thee, that I may never forget to be thankful.

Possess my heart with such a deep sense of my obligations to and dependence upon Thee for life, and health, and grace, and salvation, that religion may be my delight, as well as my duty.

But that I may serve Thee with a quiet mind, forgive me the things whereof my conscience is afraid, and avert the judgments which I have justly deserved. Remember not the offences of my youth ; and in mercy blot out those of my riper years. Pardon my sins of the day past, and of my life past, and grant that they may never rise up in judgment against me. *Amen.*

1 John ii. 1. *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.*

O most powerful advocate, I put my cause into thy hands, let thy blood and merits plead for me : and by thy mighty intercession, procure for me a full discharge of all my sins.

John v. 14. *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*

Lord the frailty of man without Thee cannot

but fall. In all temptations, therefore, I beseech Thee to succour me, that no sin may ever get the dominion over me.

Psal. xci. 1. Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

May the Almighty God take me, my family, my relations, my friends, my benefactors, and my enemies, under his gracious protection; give his holy angels charge concerning us; preserve us from the prince and powers of darkness, and from the dangers of the night; and keep us in perpetual peace and safety: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hear me, O God, not according to my weak understanding, but according to the full importance of that Holy Prayer, which Jesus Christ has taught us, and which I presume to offer:—

Our Father which art in heaven, &c.

—

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

God will be glorified in the salvation of souls.

If the Almighty God were not my Father, I might expect vengeance instead of mercy.

May I show by my life that God is my father!

This earth is not the inheritance of the children of God.

Blessed be God, who dealeth not with us with the authority of a lord over his servants, but with the tenderness of a father over his children.

Thy kingdom come.

I own Thee for my King : do Thou make and own me for thy faithful subject. Enlarge thy kingdom, for the honour of thy great name. May I preserve thy kingdom within me, the government of thy Spirit. Bring me into subjection to thyself, by thy grace.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

That thou mayest have a church on earth as obedient to thy will as that is in heaven.

O Heavenly Father, subdue in me whatever is contrary to thy holy will. Grant that I may ever study to know thy will, that I may know how to please Thee.

Thy will, O God, is the perfection of justice ! let me never prescribe to Thee what thou oughtest to give me. What Thou willest, we may be sure, is best for us ; we cannot be sure of what we will for ourselves. Harken not to the corrupt desires of my heart, but to the voice of thy own mercy.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Yes, my God, I will have recourse to Thee daily ; for on Thee I depend daily for life, and breath, and grace, and all things.

Give me a true understanding and love for thy Word, the bread which nourisheth to eternal life.

For Thou, O Lord, hast taught us, not to seek that bread which perisheth, but that which endureth to eternal life.

*And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them
that trespass against us.*

May I ever show mercy to men, that I may receive it from Thee, my God.

Do I value my soul, and think this too hard a condition?

Thou art all mercy to me; grant that I may be all-merciful to my brethren, for thy sake, O Father.

*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from
evil.*

For thou knowest our infirmities, and the power and malice of our enemies.

Thou knowest how to deliver the godly out of temptation.

Grant, O God, that I may never run into those temptations, which in my prayers I desire to avoid!

Vouchsafe me the gift of perseverance, on which my eternal happiness depends.

Lord, never permit my trials to be above my strength.

O Holy Spirit of Grace, be not wanting to me in the hour of temptation. And, in all temptations, give us power to resist and overcome. Leave us not in the power of evil spirits to ruin us. Support us under all our saving trials and troubles.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Let thy fatherly compassion grant what the Son of thy love has encouraged us to pray for.

By thy Almighty power, make good whatever is defective in me.

EXAMINATION.

Eccles. xviii. 20. *Before judgment, examine thyself: and in the day of visitation thou shalt find mercy.*

Discover to me, O Thou Searcher of hearts, whatever is amiss in me, whether in life or principle.

DEATH.

From sudden, from unprepared death, good Lord, deliver me, my family, and all that desire my prayers. May we never be surprised in sin; and may thy mercy supply whatever shall be wanting in our preparation for death.

For myself, with the submission of a penitent sinner, under the righteous sentence of death passed upon all mankind, I beg that I may so live, as that I may with joy resign my life to Thee, O Father, trusting in thy mercy and goodness, and promises in Jesus Christ, at the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. *Amen.*

Ephes. iv. 6. *Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.*

Lord, grant, that I may lie down to sleep with

the same charitable dispositions with which I desire and hope to die.

I beseech Thee for all that are my enemies, not for judgment and vengeance, but for mercy, for the remission of their sins, and for their eternal happiness.

Psal. xiii. 3. *Lighten my eyes, O Lord, that I sleep not in death.*

Deliver me from the terrors of the night, and from the pestilence that walketh in darkness.

Let my sleep be free from sin ; preserve me, O Lord, from evil dreams, and evil spirits.

Into thy hands I commend myself, my spirit, my soul, and body, O Lord, thou God of truth.

Grant that I may remember Thee upon my bed.

Psal. iv. 9. *I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest ; for it is Thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety.*

May the Saviour and Guardian of my soul take me under his protection this night and evermore.

SUNDAY MEDITATIONS.

PRAYERS, THANKSGIVINGS, &c.

A Daily Form of Thanksgiving.

O ALMIGHTY God, and most merciful Father, who, day after day, dost minister to sinful man infinite occasions of praising Thee, accept of my unfeigned thanks for all the blessings I have and every day receive from thy good providence.

That of thine own mere goodness, and without any merit of mine, or of my forefathers, Thou hast given me a being from honest and religious parents, and in such a part of the world where the Christian religion is purely taught, and thy Sacraments duly administered.

That Thou didst endue me with reason and perfect senses ; and to make these more comfortable to me, didst give me a sound and healthful body.

That Thou gavest me an early knowledge of Thee, my Creator and Redeemer.

That Thou hast preserved me ever since my birth, and hast vouchsafed me health and liberty, and a competency of means to support me.

That Thou hast redeemed me by thy Son, and given me a share in his merits ; sanctified me by thy Holy Spirit ; and has heaped many favours upon me.

That Thou hast given me honest friends to admonish, to counsel, to encourage and to support me, by their interest and advice.

That Thou hast been my refuge in tribulation, and my defence in all adversities ; delivering me from dangers, infamy, and troubles. For all known or unobserved deliverances, and for the guard thy holy angels keep over me, I praise thy good providence.

When I went astray, Thou didst bring me back ; when I was sad, Thou didst comfort me ; When I offended Thee, Thou didst forbear and gently correct me, and didst long expect my repentance ; and when, for the grievousness of

my sins, I was ready to despair, 'Thou didst keep me from utter ruin; 'Thou hast delivered me from the snares and assaults of the devil; 'Thou hast not only preserved my soul, but my body, from destruction, when sickness and infirmities took hold of me.

O Lord and Father, I cannot render due thanks and praise for all these mercies bestowed upon me : Such as I have I give 'Thee ; and humbly beseech 'Thee to accept of this my daily sacrifice of thanksgiving.

Pardon, O God, all my former ingratitude ; and that I have passed so many days without observing, without admiring, without acknowledging and confessing, thy wonderful goodness to the most unworthy of thy servants.

For (now I soberly consider my dependence upon 'Thee) as there is no hour of my life that I do not enjoy thy favours, and taste of thy goodness, so (if my frailty would permit) I would spend no part of my life without remembering 'Thee.

Praise the Lord, then, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his Holy name.

Glory be to 'Thee, O Lord, my Creator. Glory be to 'Thee, O Jesus my Redeemer. Glory be to the Holy Ghost, my Sanctifier, my Guide, and Comforter.

All love, all glory, be to the high and undivided Trinity, whose works are inseparable, and whose dominion endureth world without end. *Amen.*

When I seriously consider, great God, my dependence upon thy Providence, and that the favours and mercies I have received are infinitely

more in number than the acknowledgments I have made, I am justly ashamed of my ingratitude, and afraid lest my unthankfulness should provoke Thee to hinder the current of thy blessings from descending upon me.

Forgive, O merciful Father, my past negligences, and give me grace for the time to come to observe and to value thy kindness, as becomes one who has received so much more than he deserves.

Preserve in my soul, O God, such a constant and clear sense of my obligations to Thee, that upon the receipt of every favour, I may immediately turn my eyes to Him from whom cometh my salvation. That my manifold blessings may fix such lasting impressions upon my soul, that I may always praise Thee faithfully here on earth, until it shall please Thee, of thy unbounded mercy, to call me nearer the place of thy heavenly habitation, to praise my Lord and deliverer to all eternity.

Providence.

God has more ways of providing for us, of helping us, than we can possibly imagine ; it is infidelity to desire to confine him to our ways and methods.

Matt. viii. 25. Lord, save us, we perish.

Nothing can better express our own inability, and our whole dependence upon God : two sure conditions of obtaining help.

Since thy mercy, O God, is ever ready to help all that call upon Thee in time of distress, let thy goodness answer my wants.

Keep me under the protection of thy good providence, and make me to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy name, through Jesus Christ.

The more destitute we are of human aid, the more ought we to trust to that providence which God is pleased to exert in extreme necessity.

O God, give me grace never to condemn thy providence ; let me adore the wisdom of thy conduct, the holiness of thy ways, and the power of thy grace.

How many sins should we commit, if God did not vouchsafe to oppose our corrupt will ! Blessed be his holy name, for not leaving me to my own choices.

Psal. xc. 12. *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

Birth-day.

Blessed be God for my creation and birth ; for giving me a being from honest parents fearing God, and in a Christian and Protestant country ;—for giving me perfect members and senses, a sound reason, and an healthful constitution—for the means of grace, the assistances of the Holy Spirit, and for the hopes of glory ;—for all the known or unobserved favours, providences, and deliverances, by which my life hath hitherto been preserved ;—most humbly beseeching Thee, my God and Father, to pardon my neglect or abuse of any of thy favours, and that I have so very much forgotten Thee, in whom I live, and move and have my being.

Good Lord, forgive me the great waste of my precious time,—the many days and years of health, and the many opportunities of doing good, which I have lost ; and give me grace, that for the time to come I may be truly wise, that I may consider my latter end, and work out my salvation with fear and trembling, ever remembering *that the night cometh when no man can work* ; and that the day of my death may be better to me than the day of my birth.

O gracious God, grant that before Thou takest from me that breath which Thou gavest me, I may truly repent of the errors of my life past ; that my sins may be forgiven, and my pardon sealed in heaven ; so that I may have a place of rest in Paradise with thy faithful servants, till the general resurrection ; when the good Lord vouchsafe me a better and an everlasting life, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

New-Year's Day.

Blessed be God, who has brought me safe to the beginning of another year.

Blessed be God, that I am of the number of those who have time and space for repentance yet given them.

My God, make me truly sensible of this mercy, and give me grace to consider often how short and how uncertain my time is ; that there is one year more of a short life passed over my head ;—and that I am so much nearer eternity, that I may in good earnest think of another life,

and be so prepared for it, as that death may not overtake me unawares.

Lord, pardon all my misspent time, and make me more diligent and careful to redeem it for the time to come, and when I come to the end of my days, I may look back with comfort on the days that are past.

Grant that I may begin this new year with new resolutions of serving Thee more faithfully;—and if through infidelity or negligence, I forget these good purposes, the good Lord awaken in me a sense of my danger.

My heart is in thy hands, O God, as well as my time; O make me wise unto salvation; that I may consider in this my day the things that belong unto my peace; and that I may pass this, and all the years I have yet to live, in the comfortable hope of a blessed eternity, for the Lord Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

Lord's-day.

Amos viii. 4 *When will the Sabbath be gone, that we may sell wheat.*

Deliver us, gracious God, from this sin of covetousness,—from being weary of thy Sabbaths, which are ordained to preserve in our hearts the knowledge of Thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ.

O that we may desire and rejoice in the return of this day, and serve Thee faithfully on it; and that we may enjoy an everlasting Sabbath with thy saints, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

O that I may be glad, when they say unto me, Come, let us go to the house of God!

Prayer for all Mankind.

1 Tim. ii. 1. *I exhort, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men.*

O God, almighty and merciful, let thy fatherly goodness be upon all that Thou hast made.

Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics; and grant that none may deprive themselves of that happiness which Jesus Christ has purchased by his death.

Bless the pious endeavours of all those that strive to propagate the Gospel of Christ; and may its saving truths be received in all the world!

Preserve thy Church in the midst of the dangers that surround it: purge it from all corruptions, and heal its divisions, that all Christian people may unite and love as becomes the disciples of Christ.

Grant that all bishops and pastors may be careful to observe the sacred rites committed to their trust: That godly Discipline may be restored and countenanced:

That Christians may not content themselves with bare shadows of religion and piety, but endeavour after that holiness without which no man can see the Lord:

That such as are in authority may govern with truth and justice; and that those whose duty it is to obey, may do it for conscience sake.

Let all that sincerely seek the truth, be led into it by the Holy Spirit; and to all such as are destitute of necessary instruction, vouchsafe a greater measure of thy grace.

Support and comfort all that labour under trials and afflictions, all that suffer wrongfully : and by thy mighty grace succour all those that are tempted.

Give unto all sinners a true sense of their unhappy state, and grace and strength to break their bonds.

Visit with thy fatherly comforts, all such as are now in their last sickness, that they omit nothing that is necessary to make their peace with Thee.

Be gracious to all those countries that are made desolate by the sword, famine, pestilence, or persecution. And sanctify the miseries of this life, to the everlasting benefit of all that suffer.

Preserve this land from the miseries of war ; this church from persecution, and from all wild and dangerous errors ; and this people from forgetting Thee, their Lord and Benefactor.

Avert the judgments which we have justly deserved ; and mercifully prevent the ruin that threatens us ; and grant that we may be ever prepared for what thy Providence shall bring forth.

Bless all persons and places to which thy Providence has made me a debtor ; all who have been instrumental to my good, by their assistance, advice or example ; and make me in return useful to others.

Let none of those who cannot pray for themselves, and desire my prayers, want thy mercy ; but defend, and comfort, and conduct them through this dangerous world, that we may meet in paradise, to praise our God for ever and ever.

Amen.

Enlighten the minds and pardon the sin of all that err through simplicity.

Let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but guide Thou the just.

Relieve and comfort all that are troubled in mind or conscience ;—all that are in danger of falling into despair ;—all that are in dangerous error :—all that are in prison, in slavery, or under persecution for a righteous cause ;—all that are in any distress whatever, that all may improve under their sufferings.

Have mercy upon and reclaim all that are engaged in sinful courses, in youthful lusts, in unchristian quarrels, and in unrighteous lawsuits.

Direct all that are in doubt, all that seek the truth.

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all, have mercy upon all whom thou hast made and redeemed. *Amen.*

MONDAY MEDITATIONS.

Resignation.

Luke xxii. 42. *Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.*

O God, who takest delight in helping the afflicted, help a soul too often distressed with an inward rebellion against thy just appointments.

Who am I, that I should make exceptions against the will of God, infinitely *great, wise, and good!*

I know not the things that are for my own good.

My most earnest desires, if granted may prove my ruin.

The things I complain of and fear, may be the effects of the greatest mercy.

The disappointments I meet with may be absolutely necessary for my eternal welfare.

I do therefore protest against the sin and madness of desiring to have *my will* done, and not the *will of God*.

Grant, gracious Father, that I may never dispute the reasonableness of thy will, but ever close with it, as the best that can happen.

Prepare me always for what thy providence shall bring forth.

Let me never *murmur*, be *dejected*, or *impatient*, under any of the troubles of this life ; but ever find rest and comfort in *this*, THIS IS THE WILL OF MY FATHER, AND OF MY GOD : grant this for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen*.

To the glory of God, and justification of his infinite goodness, I do here acknowledge, that in all the dispensations of providence which have befallen me *to this* day, however uneasy to flesh and blood, I have, notwithstanding, experienced the kindness of a father for his child ; and am convinced, that it would have been much worse for me had I had my own choices.

O God, grant that for the time to come I may yield a cheerful obedience to all thy appointments. *Amen*.

Corrupt nature cannot comprehend that afflictions are the effects of the divine love. It must

be thy grace O Lover of Souls, which must work in me this conviction, which I beseech Thee to vouchsafe me.

Never set a greater value upon this world than it deserves.

If a man be not eager or positive in his desires, he will more readily embrace the appointments of Providence.

If we place our hopes, or our dependence, upon the *power*, the *wisdom*, the *counsel*, or the *interest*, we have in man, and not in God only, we shall surely be disappointed.

Job xiii. 15. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

O my crucified King and Saviour, let my submission to whatever afflictions shall befall me, for thy sake, or by thy appointment, be to me a pledge and an assurance of my fidelity to Thee, and conformity to thy sufferings.

It is a favour to be punished and to suffer in this life, when a man makes a good use of his sufferings. But to suffer by constraint, is to suffer without comfort and without benefit.

Our union and conformity with the will of God ought to be instead of all consolation.

Grant, O God, that I may always accept of the punishment of my sins with resignation to thy good pleasure.

Remember me, O Lord, in the day of trouble; keep me from all excess of fear, concern, and sadness.

Grant me an humble and resigned heart, that with perfect content I may ever acquiesce in

all the methods of thy grace, that I may never frustrate the designs of thy mercy, by unreasonable fears, by sloth, or self-love. *Amen.*

Think often of God, and of his attributes, his mercy, compassion, fidelity, fatherly care, goodness, protection. Dwell on these thoughts till they produce such a well-grounded confidence as will support us under all difficulties, and assure us, that he cannot possibly forsake those that depend on him.

When God deprives us of any thing that is most dear to us,—health, ease, conveniences of life, friends, wife, children, &c.—we should immediately say, *This is God's will*; I am by him commanded to part with so much; let me not therefore murmur or be dejected, for then it would appear that I did love that thing more than God's will.

When God thus visits us, let us immediately look inwards; and lest our sins should be the occasion, let us take care that we seriously repent and endeavour to make our peace with God; and then he will either deliver or support us, and will convince us, that we suffer in justice for our faults; or for our trial, and to humble us; for God's glory, and to sanctify us.

1 Pet. v. 5. *Be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.*

Give me grace, O God, to study, to love, to adore, and to imitate that humility, which thy blessed Son hath taught us both by his word and by his most holy example.

Business.

Ephes. v. 17. *Understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

To engage in any business of importance without knowing this, and taking counsel of God, may cost us dear.

Isaiah xxx. 1. *Wo to them that take counsel, but not of me, saith the Lord.*

But then, let a man take heed, that when he goes to inquire of the Lord, he does not set up idols in his own heart, lest God answer him according to his idols.

We are to pray for the direction of God's Spirit, upon all great occasions ; especially, we are humbly to depend on his direction, and cheerfully to expect it, which he will manifest, either by some plain event of his providence, or by suggesting such reasons as ought to determine the will to a wise choice.

But to follow the inclinations of the will without reason, only because we find ourselves strongly inclined to this or that, is a very dangerous way, and may engage us in very dangerous practices.

Master. Servant.

Death, in a very little time, may make the master and the servant equal. Let us anticipate this equality, by treating our servants with compassion ; having respect to Christ in the person of our servant, to Christ,—who took upon him the form of a servant for our sakes.

TUESDAY MEDITATIONS.

Trouble, Persecution, Afflictions, &c.

Psal. 1. 15. Call upon me in the time of trouble, so will I hear thee, and thou shalt praise me.

O God, who seest all our weaknesses, and the troubles we labour under, have regard unto the prayers of thy servant, who stands in need of thy *comfort, thy direction, and thy help.*

Grant that I may suffer like a Christian, and not grieve like an unbeliever ;—that I may receive troubles as a punishment due to my past offences,—as an exercise of my faith, and patience, and humility,—and as a trial of my obedience ;—and that I may improve all my afflictions, to the good of my soul, and thy glory.

Thou alone knowest what is best for us : Let me never dispute thy wisdom or thy goodness.

Direct my reason, subdue my passions, put a stop to my roving thoughts and fears, and let me have the comfort of thy promise, and of thy protection, both now and ever, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Heb. xii. 7. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons ; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ? But if ye are without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons.

Micah vii. 9. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.

If I am despised or slighted, I ought to consider it as a favour, since this is a mark of God's

children ; and therefore I ought to thank him for it, and not be angry with those whom he makes his instruments to subdue and mortify my pride.

1 Pet. iv. 13. *Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are made partakers of the sufferings of Christ ; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy,—viz. because your reward will be proportionable to your sufferings.*

Matt. v. 11, 12. *Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad ; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

The mystery of the cross is to be learned under the Cross.

Matt. x. 28, 29, 30. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. The very hairs of your head are all numbered.*

1 Pet. v. 6, 7. *Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, [under great afflictions which he suffers to befall you,] that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.*

Matt. vi. 10. *Thy will be done.*

It is just, Great God, it should be so ; for who shall govern the world but he that made it? And yet we poor creatures repine, when any

thing crosses our hopes or designs. What strange unthoughtfulness ! what presumption is this ! And it is thy great mercy that any of us are sensible of this folly, and become willing to be governed by Thee.

With all my heart and soul, O God, I thank Thee, that in all the changes and chances of this mortal life, I can look up to Thee, and cheerfully resign my will to thine.

It is the desire of my soul, and my humble petition, that I may always be ready and willing to submit to thy providence, that thou mayest order what thou judgest to be most convenient for me.

I have trusted Thee, O Father, with myself ; my soul is in thy hand, which I verily believe Thou wilt preserve to eternal happiness ; my body, and all that belongs to it, are of much less value. I do, therefore, with as great security and satisfaction, trust all I have to Thee ; hoping thou wilt preserve me from all things hurtful, and lead me to all things profitable to my salvation.

I will love Thee O God ; being satisfied that all things, however strange and irksome they appear, shall work together for good to those that do so.

I know in whom I have believed ; I have a Saviour at thy right hand, full of kindness, full of care, full of power ; he has prayed for me, that this faith fail me not ; and by this faith I am persuaded, that neither tribulation, nor anguish, nor persecution, nor famine, nor nakedness, nor

peril, nor sword, nor death which I may fear, nor life which I may hope for, nor things present which I feel, nor things to come which I may apprehend, shall ever prevail so far over me, as to make me not to resign my will entirely to Thee.

In an humble, quiet, and dutiful submission, let me faithfully run the race that is set before me, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, despised the shame, endured the cross, and is now seated at the right hand of God ; to whom I most humbly beseech Thee to bring me in thy good time ; and for whatever shall fall out in the meanwhile, *Thy will be done. Amen.*

Look unto Jesus.

He was despised and rejected of men ;—his life was sought for by Herod ;—He was tempted by Satan ;—hated by the world which he came to save ;—set at nought by his own people ;—called a deceiver, and a dealer with the devil ;—was driven from place to place, and had not where to lay his head ;—betrayed by one disciple, and forsaken by all the rest ;—falsely accused, spit upon, and scourged ;—set at nought by Herod and his men of war ;—given up by Pilate to the will of his enemies ;—and a murderer preferred before him ;—was condemned to a most cruel and shameful death ;—crucified between two thieves ;—reviled in the midst of his torments ;—had gall and vinegar given him to drink ; suffered a most

bitter death, submitting with patience to the will of his Father.

O Jesu, who now sittest at the right hand of God, to succour all who suffer in a righteous way: be Thou my Advocate for grace, that, in all my sufferings, I may follow thy example, and run with patience the race that is set before me. *Amen.*

Take all things that befall you as coming from God's providence, for your particular profit. And though they are evil in themselves, yet as he *permits*, or does not think fit to *hinder* them, they may be referred to him.

God no sooner discovers in your heart an ardent desire of well-doing, and of submitting to his will, but he *prepares* for you occasions of trying your virtue; and therefore, confident of his love, receive cheerfully a medicine prepared by a physician that cannot be mistaken, and cannot give you any thing but what will be for your good.—See Eccles. chap. ii.

Lord, prepare my heart, that no afflictions may ever so surprise, as to overbear me.

Dispose me at all times to a readiness to suffer what thy providence shall order or permit.

It is the same cup which Jesus Christ drank of; it is he sends it. He sees it absolutely necessary that I must be first partaker of his sufferings, and then of his glory.

Matt. x. 22. *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that shall endure to the end shall be saved.*

It is indeed greivous to nature to be thus

treated ; but when it is for thy name's sake, O Jesus, and for the sake of thy truth, and for being true to Thee ; how lovely is this hatred, and how advantageous, when salvation is the reward !

Matt. x. 24 *The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord.*

He who keeps this saying in his heart, will never complain of what he suffers, nor seek for any other way to save himself but by humiliation and the Cross.

Suffering.

O Lord, grant that whenever I suffer, it may be for being faithful to Thee, and without drawing it unseasonably upon myself.

We are in God's hands ; we often take ourselves out of his hands, by trusting to the help and protection of men, more than that of God.

God can render none miserable but those whom he finds sinners. Let us apply this to ourselves when in affliction, but not unto others, or to their personal faults.

Rev. iii. 19. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten : be zealous therefore, and repent.*

Blessed be God, who vouchsafes, by salutary chastisements, to awaken us when we fall asleep through sloth and lukewarmness.

Grant, O God, that I may never murmur at thy appointments, nor be exasperated at the ministers of thy providence.

In Thee, O Jesus, we find matter of consolation in every affliction that can possibly befall us.

All visitations are from God. He is not de-

lighted with the miseries of his poor creatures ; afflictions are therefore designed for our good. He will either show us the reason of his visitation, or make us reap the fruits of it.

People that may be well disposed, may yet live under the power of some evil custom, which is displeasing to God ;—a man may have been guilty of some great sin which he has yet never truly repented of, or been truly humbled for. 'This was the case of the sons of Jacob ;—they had attempted the life of, and afterwards sold, their brother, and endangered the life of their aged father ; under which guilt they passed their life well enough for many years, till God visited them ; and then they thought of their sin, confessed, and repented.

God, by afflictions, often fits us for greater degrees of grace which he is going to bestow.

Though I suffer yet I am well, because I am what God would have me to be.

Lord do not permit my trials to be above my strength ; and do 'Thou vouchsafe to be my strength and comfort in the time of trial.

Give me grace to take in good part whatever shall befall me ; and let my heart acknowledge it to be the Lord's doing, and to come from thy providence, and not by chance.

God makes use of afflictions—sometimes by way of prevention ; *lest I should be exalted*, said St. Paul ;*—To reform them ; *before I was afflicted I went astray* ;†—To perfect them ; patience, courage, submission to the will of God,

* 2 Cor. xii. &c.

† Psalm cxix.

are graces not so much as understood by people who meet with no adversaries ; *we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God ;** —To prove men, and show them for examples ; if a man had no enemies, how could he show his charity in forgiving them ?

John xi. 5. Afflictions are no marks of God's displeasure. *Jesus loved Mary and Lazarus,* yet they were both afflicted.

Punishment is due to sin. We must be punished here or hereafter ;—it is the cause of all afflictions, and designed by our gracious God to bring us to repentance.

Prosperity is a most dangerous state :—we fancy it is owing to our merit, and it is followed with pride, neglect of duty, fearlessness.

It is happy for us when God counts us worthy to suffer for his name's sake.

Afflictions, undergone with resignation, are the great test of our love of God ; when we love him, then he chastens us. May God sanctify all our afflictions to us all.

May I receive every thing from thy hand with patience and with joy.

Remember me, O God, in the day of trouble. Secure me, by thy grace, from all excess of *fear, concern* and *sadness*.

Let the afflictions I meet with be in some measure serviceable towards the appeasing of thy wrath. Let them prove the happy occasion of forwarding my conversion and salvation.

* Acts xiv. 22.

Temptation.

We are exposed to temptation all our days. Men are never more dangerously tempted, than when they think themselves secure from temptation.—This is a proof of the power the devil has over them. We tempt God when we expose ourselves unnecessarily to dangers, through a false confidence of his assistance.

Despair. Hope.

Grant, O God, that, amidst all the discouragements, difficulties, dangers, distress, and darkness of this mortal life, I may depend upon thy mercy, and on this build my hopes, as on a sure foundation.

Let thine infinite mercy in Christ Jesus deliver me from despair, both now and at the hour of death.

Resignation.

Grant that I may receive the punishment of my sins with patience and resignation.

Injuries. Persecution.

Give me, O God, an heart to consider, that man could have no power against me, unless it were given from above.

Enemies.

A Christian should not discover that he has enemies any other way than by doing more good to them than to others. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst give him drink.* He will therefore be careful not to loose such occasions.

O Jesu ! whose charity all the malice of thy

bitterest enemies could not overcome, shed abroad in my heart that most excellent gift of charity ; the very bond of peace, and of all virtues.

Eccles. viii. 7. Rejoice not over thy greatest enemy being dead ; but remember that we die all.

Our enemies are our benefactors, procuring for us a new right to heaven.

I pray God convert all those who hate us without a cause.

I beseech Thee for my enemies, not for vengeance but for mercy ; that thou wouldst change their hearts by thy grace, or restrain their malice by thy power.

In time of war.

O Sovereign Lord ! who for our sins art justly displeased, I prostrate myself before Thee, confessing my own sin and the sin of this people ; acknowledging the justice of any scourge which Thou shalt think fit to bring upon us ; and trembling to think how much I may have contributed towards it.

Thou hast already spoken to us, both by thy judgments and mercies, both by the scarcity and plenty of bread, and we have not regarded it. Thou hast taken away the lives of many, very many, in their very sins, by which numerous widows and fatherless children have been left miserable.

The sins of *licentiousness* and *drunkenness*, of *swearing*, *lying*, and *perjury* ; of *litigiousness*, *injustice*, and *defrauding the public* ; are made light of.

The sins of *impiety*, of *profaneness* ; of *despising the means of grace and salvation*, are too common amongst us.

What shall we say to prevail with God to avert the judgments which these sins deserve ?

God be merciful to us, and put a stop to this torrent of wickedness, put thy fear into all our hearts, that we may return to Thee ; that we may repent, and bring forth fruit meet for repentance ; and that iniquity may not be our ruin.

May the dread of thy now threatened judgments deter us from evil ;—may thy goodness and patience lead us to repentance ;—weaken the power of Satan ; take from among us the spirit of slumber, of ignorance, and inconsideration.

Let every one of us see and feel the plague of his own heart, and say, *what have I done to bring these evils upon us?* So that bringing forth fruits answerable to amendment of life, we may escape the judgment now hanging over us ; and above all, thy judgment against sinners in the world to come. And this I beg for Jesus Christ his sake.—*Amen*,

Judgment day.

Grant, O Lord, that I may be of the number of those that shall find mercy at that day.

Zaccheus.

The good Lord grant that I may give a proof of the sincerity of my conversion by a change of life.

WEDNESDAY MEDITATIONS.

Covetousness. Fastings. Difficulties. Self-denial.

Matt. iv. 9, 10, *All these things will I give thee. —Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

GREAT and glorious God who alone art worthy of our love and service, cure me of, and preserve me from, the sin and vanity of admiring this world.

Give me grace to renounce all covetous desires, all love of riches and pleasures;—to desire only what is necessary, and to be content with what Thou, O Lord, thinkest so.

Not to be troubled at the loss or want of any thing besides thy favour :

That no business, no pleasures, may divert me from the thoughts of the world to come :

That I may cheerfully part with all these things, when thou requirest it of me.

And that I may be ever prepared to do so, dispose me to a temperance in all things, and to lay up my treasure in heaven for Jesus Christ's sake.
Amen.

Luke vi. 24. *Wo unto you that are rich; for ye have received your consolation.*

A man must have but little faith, who can read these words, and yet love riches, and the pleasures they afford.

Lord grant that I may resist every temptation to the love of creatures ; lest they steal my heart from Thee, my God, whom I desire to love with all my soul.

I know that I must in a great measure renounce, all other objects of my affection, in order to love Thee with all my heart. Lord give me grace and strength to put this in practice.

1 John ii. 15. *Love not the world nor the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

Grant, O God, that I may never hope to reconcile two things so inconsistent as the love of Thee and the world.

Matt. v. 3. *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

To be poor in spirit—is to be disengaged from wealth, to look upon it as a burthen or a trust.

1 Tim. vi. 8. *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.*

And yet even the Christian world is not content without superfluities and excess. These disorders are not less criminal, because so common.

Give me, O God, the eyes of faith, that I may see the world just as it is ;---the vanity of its promises, the folly of its pleasures, the unprofitableness of its rewards, the multitude of its snares, and the dangers of its temptations.

Fasting.

Jesus Christ spared not his innocent flesh, but fasted ; the sinner cherisheth his continually, refusing it nothing.

Fasting is in some sense a punishment, a remedy for present temptations, and a preservative against future.

Psal. cii. 4. *My heart is smitten and withered like grass ; so that I forget to eat my bread.*

The humble and afflicted soul is not much concerned to please the appetite.

Luke vi. 25. *Wo unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger ;* that is, Ye whose daily meals are feasts, who make profession of a life of sensuality, who know not what it is to fast ; wo to such Christians !

If we judge ourselves with severity, we shall be judged with mercy.

In time of trouble.

Psal. xxxix. 11. *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth.*

O merciful God, who in thy wise providence dost so order even natural events, that they serve both for the good of the universe, and for the conviction of particular sinners, so that men shall have reason to acknowledge thy glorious attributes ;— I do with great sorrow of heart, but with all submission to thy good pleasure, confess thy mercy as well as justice to me in the *judgments, afflictions, sorrows of this day.*

I acknowledge thy voice, O merciful God ; I acknowledge my own transgressions, which have provoked Thee to speak to me after this manner and at this very time.

O Lord, give me true repentance for all the errors of my life, and particularly for that which was, in all probability, the occasion of this affliction.

Blessed be God, that my punishment was not as great as my crime.

Blessed be God, that he has given me time to repent of the sin that provoked him to deal with me after this manner.

Blessed be God, that when he spake to me once, yea twice, that I regarded it at last.

Good God of mercy, give me grace that I may not provoke Thee any more to repeat this word to me, but that I may faithfully perform those vows which are upon me. This I cannot do without thy gracious assistance, which I most humbly beseech Thee to vouchsafe me, for Jesus Christ's sake, who by his merits has purchased this grace for all that faithfully ask it of Thee ; for his sake, O merciful God, grant me this grace. *Amen.*

I do in all humility accept of the punishment of mine iniquities.

I will hold my peace, and not open my mouth, because it is thy doing and my deservings.

I know, O Lord. that it is good for me to be in trouble, or thou wouldst not suffer it to be so.

Let thy merciful kindness be my comfort according to thy promise to all that love and serve Thee.

Difficulties.

We are to pray for the particular direction of God's Holy Spirit upon all great occasions ; we are humbly to depend upon, and cheerfully to expect it.

In a lawsuit.

Convince me, O God, if I am under any mistake in this affair.

Direct, assist, and support me under all the difficulties I shall meet with.

Put an happy end, in thy good time, to this troublesome controversy.

Dispose the hearts of those with whom we have to do, to peace and justice.

Give me grace to rest satisfied with whatever shall be the issue, believing assuredly, that God can make good any loss I may sustain, or sanctify it to my eternal welfare.

Lord, in this, and in all other things I undertake, Thy will be done, and not mine.

O manifest thy will to me, preserve me from evil counsels, and from rash enterprises.

Faith.

Grant, O God, that I may with humility receive, and with perseverance hold fast, all those truths which Thou has revealed.

I thank Thee, O God, for thy Holy Word, and for that thou hast not left us, in the affair of eternity, to the uncertainty of our own reason and judgment.

Defend me against all delusions of error ; the snares of wit and learning ; the railleries of profane men ; and from deserting the truth. Grant, O God, that neither education, interest, prejudice, or passion, may ever hinder me from discerning the truth.

Open the eyes of all that are in error ; heal the wounds of the divided church ; that we may be one fold under one shepherd. *Amen.*

John xvi. 13. *The Holy Spirit shall guide you into all truth.*

O Holy Spirit, make me to understand, embrace, and love the truths of the gospel.

Give, O God, thy blessing unto thy word, that it may become effectual to my conversion and salvation, and to the salvation of all that read and hear it.

Give me grace to read thy Holy Word with reverence and respect, becoming the gracious manifestation of thy will to men ; submitting my understanding and will to thine.

Let thy gracious promises, O God, contained in thy word, quicken my obedience. Let thy dreadful threatenings and judgments upon sinners frighten me from sin, and oblige me to a speedy repentance, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Cause me, O God, to believe thy word, to obey thy commands, to fear thy judgments, and to hope in, and depend upon, thy gracious prom-

ises, contained in thy Holy Word, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Give me a full persuasion of those great truths which Thou hast revealed in thy Holy Word.

'The gospel will not be a means of salvation to him who reads, or hears it only, but to him who reads, loves, remembers, and practices it by a lively faith.

Cause me, O God, rightly to understand, and constantly to walk in, the way of thy commandments.

Grant us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting, for Jesus Christ's sake.

From hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word, good Lord, deliver us.

Give us grace to hear meekly thy word, to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of thy Spirit, to amend our lives according to thy Holy Word. *Amen.*

Self-denial.

Eccles. xix. 5. *He that resisteth pleasure crowneth his life.*

Vouchsafe me, gracious God, the graces of mortification and self-denial, that my affections and flesh being subdued unto the spirit, and my heart and all my members being mortified from all carnal and worldly lusts, I may ever obey thy blessed will, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

All mankind being under the sentence of death,

certain to be executed, and at an hour we know not of; a state of repentance and self-denial, of being dead and crucified to the world, is certainly the most suitable, the most becoming temper that we can be found in, when that sentence comes to be executed; that is, when we come to die:—Especially when we consider, that this short and uncertain time, allowed us betwixt the sentence and execution, will determine our condition for eternity.

If this be the case of fallen man, as most certainly it is, then thoughtless unremitting pleasure is the greatest indecency;—a fondness of the world, the greatest folly; and self indulgence, downright madness.

And consequently, the contrary to these, namely, a constant seriousness of temper, an universal care and exactness of life, and indifference for the world, self-denial, sobriety, and watchfulness, must be our greatest wisdom.

And this discovers to us the reason and the necessity of all the duties of Christianity, and of God's dealings with fallen man in this state of trial.

For instance —Jesus Christ commands us to *deny ourselves*, and to take up our cross daily, not because he can command what he pleases, (for he is infinite goodness, and can command nothing but what is good for his creatures,) but because the corruption of our nature requires that we should be forbidden every thing which should increase our disorder.

And because this disorder has spread itself

through all the powers of our souls and bodies, and inclines to evil continually, he requires that our self-denial should reach as far as our corruption.

He commands us, therefore, to deny our own wisdom, because we are really blind as to what concerns our own true good, and should infallibly ruin ourselves, if left to our own choices.

He commands us to deny our *appetites*, because intemperance would ruin us.

He forbids us to give way to our *passions*; because a thousand evils will follow, if we should do so.

He obliges us to keep a very strict watch over our hearts; because from thence proceed hypocrisy, covetousness, malice, and many other evils.

We are forbid to set our hearts upon the world, and every thing in it, because our eternal happiness depends upon our loving God with all our heart and soul.

We are obliged to love our neighbour, and our very enemies, and are forbid to hate, to contend with, to hurt, to go to law with him, because, this would exasperate our minds, and grieve the Holy Spirit of God by which we are sanctified; being against that charity which God delights in.

We are forbid all repining when God afflicts us, because, as sinners, suffering is due to us. And because our bodies have a very great influence over our souls, we are commanded to *fast*, and to be strictly temperate at all times,

and to deny ourselves the love of sensual pleasures and self-indulgence.

We are commanded to deny all the ways of folly, vanity, and false satisfactions, that we may be able to take satisfaction and pleasure in the ways of God.

In short ;—in whatever instances we are commanded to deny ourselves, it is because it is absolutely necessary, either to cure our corruption, or to qualify us for the grace of God, or to hinder us from grieving God's Holy Spirit, and forcing him to forsake us.

The more we deny ourselves, the freer we shall be from sin, and the more dear to God.

God appoints us to sufferings, that we may keep close to Him ; and that we may value the sufferings of his Son, which we should have but a low notion of, did not our own experience teach us what it is to suffer.

They that deny themselves will be sure to find their strength increased, their affections raised ; and their inward peace continually advanced.

1 Tim. vi. 8. *Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content.*

Let us not imagine that excess, luxury, and superfluity, and the love of pleasures, are less criminal, because they are so common.

Take up the cross.

This is designed as a peculiar favour to Christians, as indeed are all Christ's commands. Miseries are the unavoidable portion of fallen man. All the difference is, Christians suffering

in obedience to the will of God, it makes them easy ; unbelievers suffer the same things, but with an uneasy will and mind.

To follow our own will, our passion and our sense, is that which makes us miserable. It is for this reason, that we have a remedy for all our evils, that Jesus Christ obliges us to submit our will, our passions, &c. to God.

The good Christian is not one who has no inclination to sin, (for we have all the seed of sin in us ;) but who, being sensible of such inclinations, denieth them continually, and suffers them not to grow into evil actions.

Every day deny yourself some satisfaction ; your *eyes*, objects of mere curiosity ;—your *tongue*, every thing that may feed vanity, or vent enmity ;—the *palate*, dainties ;—the *ears*, flattery, and whatever corrupts the heart ;—the *body*, ease and luxury ;—bearing all the inconveniences of life, (for the love of God,) cold, hunger, restless nights, ill health, unwelcome news, the faults of servants, contempt, ingratitude of friends, malice of enemies, calumnies, our own failings, lowness of spirits, the struggle in overcoming our corruptions ; bearing all these with patience and resignation to the will of God. *Do all this as unto God, with the greatest privacy.*

All ways are indifferent to one who has heaven in his eye, as a traveler does not choose the pleasantest, but the shortest and safest way to his journey's end ; and that is, the way of the

cross, which Jesus Christ made choice of, and sanctified it to all his followers.

Matt. viii. 20. *The son of man has not where to lay his head.*

This should fill us with confusion, whenever we are overmuch concerned for the conveniences of life.

Our affections being very strongly inclined to sensible good, for the sake of which we are often tempted to evil, and fall into great disorders, we should resolve to sacrifice our will to reason, and reason to the will of God.

God does not require it of us, that we should not feel any uneasiness under the cross, but that we should strive to overcome it by his grace.

Virtues of an holy life.

Fervency in devotion ;—frequency in prayer ;—aspiring after the love of God continually ;—striving to get above the world and the body ; loving silence and solitude, as far as one's condition will permit ; humble and affable to all ;—patient in suffering affronts and contradictions ;—glad of occasions of doing good even to enemies ; doing the will of God, and promoting his honour to the utmost of one's power ;—resolving never to offend him willingly, for any temporal *pleasure, profit, or loss.* These are virtues highly pleasing to God.

Self-denial does not consist in fasting and other mortifications only, but in an *indifference*

for the world, its profits, pleasures, honours, and its other idols.

It is necessary that we deny ourselves in little and indifferent things, when reason and conscience, which is the voice of God, suggests it to us, as ever we hope to get the rule over our own will.

Say not, it is a trifle, and not fit to make a sacrifice of to God. He that will not sacrifice a little affection, will hardly offer a greater. It is not the thing, but the reason and manner of doing it; namely, for God's sake, and that I may accustom myself to obey his voice, that God regards, and rewards with greater degrees of grace.

The greater your self-denial, the firmer your faith, and more acceptable to God. The sincere devotion of the rich, the alms of the poor, the humility of the great, the faith of such whose condition is desperate, the contemning the world when one can command it at pleasure, continuing instant in prayer, even when we want the consolation we expected: These, and such-like instances of self-denial, God will greatly bless.

They who imagine that self-denial intrenches upon our liberty, do not know that it is this only that can make us free indeed, giving us the victory over ourselves, setting us free from the bondage of our corruption, enabling us to bear afflictions, (which will come one time or other,) to foresee them without amazement, enlightening the mind, sanctifying the will, and making us to

slight those baubles which others so eagerly contend for.

Mortification consists in such a sparing use of the creatures, as may deaden our love for them, and make us more indifferent in the enjoyment of them. This lessens the weight of concupiscence which carries us to evil, and so make the grace of God more effectual to turn the balance of the will.*

Carnal man cannot comprehend that God loves those whom he permits to suffer;—but faith teacheth us, that the cross is the gift of his love, the foundation of our hope, the mark of his children, and the title of an inheritance in heaven. But unless God sanctify it by his Spirit, it becomes an insupportable burthen, a subject of murmuring, and an occasion of sin.

He that loveth life (that is, is fond of it) for the sake of the pleasures and advantages it affords; will soon lose the love of heavenly things; the love of God, of his soul, and of the duty he owes to them: he hates it, who does not value it in comparison of eternal life, which he hopes for. A Christian gives proof of this by mortifying himself.

Those whom God loves, in order to an happy eternity, he weans from the pleasures of this present life.

Temperance consists in a sober use of all earthly, visible things, and in confining ourselves within the compass of what is necessary.

* Norris's Christian prudence, p. 300.

With God all things are possible.

The Almighty God enable me to conquer the temptation of riches, and to get above the allurements of this present life !

Christian self-denial is, to resist and crucify in ourselves the spirit and inclinations of Adam,—the flesh, its affections and lusts,—to die to our passions in order to follow the motions of the Spirit.

Fasting.

Necessary to bring our hearts to a penitent, holy, and devout temper ; and to perform the vows that are upon us.

By *fasting*, by *alms*, and by *prayers*, we dedicate our *bodies*, *goods*, and *souls*, to God in a particular manner.

THURSDAY MEDITATIONS.

Ephes. iv. 29. *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*

Ephes. v. 4. *Foolish talking, and jesting are not convenient.*

PRESERVE me, O God, from a vain conversation. Give me grace never to be ashamed or afraid to speak of Thee, and of thy law.

Give me a lively sense of the value of religion, and make it the delight of my heart ; that I may

speaking of it with judgment, seriousness, and affection, and at all seasonable times.

May that good Spirit, which appeared in the likeness of tongues of fire, warm my heart, and direct my thoughts.

Matth. xii. 34. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.—How can ye, being evil, speak good things?—By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*

Ps. cxli. 3. *Set a guard, O Lord, upon my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.*

Ps. xxxvii. 30. *The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.*

Hearts truly touched with the love of God, will communicate light and heat to each other, —will speak honourably of God, of his perfections, his justice, goodness, wisdom, and power, —the excellency of his laws, —the pleasantness of his service, —the instances of his love, —the rewards he has promised to his friends, and the punishments he has prepared for his enemies.

Matth. v. 16 *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

1 Thess. v. 11. *Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another.*

Heb. x. 24. *Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works.*

And let us join a good life to our religious con-

versation ; and never contradict our tongue by our deeds.

We always do good or harm to others by the manner of our conversation ; we either confirm them in sin, or awaken them to piety.

It is too true that some evil passion or other, and to gratify our corruption, is the aim of most conversations. We love to speak of past troubles ;—hatred and ill-will make us take pleasure in relating the evil actions of our enemies. We compare, with some degree of pride, the advantages we have over others. We recount, with too sensible a pleasure, the worldly happiness, we enjoy.—This strengthens our passions, and increases our corruption.—God grant that I may watch against a weakness, which has such evil consequences.

May I never hear, never repeat with pleasure, such things as may dishonour God, hurt my own character, or injure my neighbour.

James iv. 11. *Speak not evil one of another.*

Truly humility makes us see our own faults, without concerning ourselves with the faults of others.

Against anger.

Eccles. vii. 9. *Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry, for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*

O Lord, who art a God ready to pardon, slow to anger, and of great kindness, remove far from me all occasions and effects of causeless and immoderate anger ; all pride and prejudice, and

too much concern for the things of this world : all intemperate speeches and indecent passions.

Give me, O God, a mild, a peaceable, a meek, and an humble spirit, that remembering my own infirmities, I may bear with those of others :— That I may think lowly of myself, and not be angry when others think lowly of me ; that I may be patient towards all men ; gentle and easy to be entreated, that God, for Christ's sake, may be so towards me. *Amen.*

Ephes. iv. 26. *Be angry and sin not : Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.*

Prov. xix. 11. *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger.*

A soft answer turneth away strife.

Prov. xvi. 32. *He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty ; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.*

Rom. xii. 20. *Be kindly affectioned one to-wards another.*

Suppress the very beginnings of anger.

Do not use to indulge it even where there are real faults ; but try the gentle way, which may probably succeed better, and to be sure with more ease by far.

Seldom do people vex us on purpose, and yet prejudice very often makes us think that they do.

A sense of one's own integrity will make one pass by injuries more easily.

Be not too much concerned to tell the injuries you have received.

Accustom yourselves to silence, if you would learn to govern your tongue.

Deliver me, O God, from all violent and sinful passions, and give me grace to stand against them.

Matth. v. 4. *Blessed are the meek.*

Instruct me, Lord, in this Christian virtue ;
Thou who art the master and teacher of it.

For forgiveness of injuries.

Luke vi. 37. *Forgive and ye shall be forgiven.*

O God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, show mercy to thy servant in forcing my corrupt nature to be obedient to thy commands.

O God who hast made it my everlasting interest, as well as my duty, to forgive my neighbour whatever wrong he hath done me ; help me to overcome all the difficulties I have to struggle with, all pride, prejudice, and desire of rendering evil for evil, that I may not deprive my soul of that mercy which thy infinite goodness has offered to sinners.

James ii. 13. *He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shown no mercy.*

O blessed God, help me in this great concern, that I may never fall under thy wrath, for want of showing mercy to others ; but grant O blessed Jesus, that in this I may be thy disciple indeed.
Amen.

Slander.

Matth. xi. 19. *The son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.*

Whatever measure a good man takes, he will hardly escape the censures of the world ; the best way is, not to be concerned at them.

It is an instance of humility silently to bear the calumnies which are raised against us, when they relate to ourselves only ; but it is a duty of prudence and charity modestly to vindicate ourselves, when the honour of God and the church is concerned. Both Jesus Christ and John the Baptist were slandered : who then will complain that they cannot satisfy the world, and stop men's mouths ?

Psal. cxx. 2. *Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue.*

Uncharitableness.

Envy makes us see what will serve to accuse others, and not perceive what may justify them. A truly good man is always disposed to excuse what is evil in his brethern, as far as truth will suffer him.

FRIDAY MEDITATIONS.

Penitence.

Luke xviii. 3. *The publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.*

WHAT would become of *me*, if Thou O God, shouldst not have mercy upon me ?

When I seriously consider these dreadful truths,—*That all they are accursed who do err, and go astray from thy commandments,—That*

the unprofitable servant was cast into outer darkness ;—When I think of these things, I cannot but fear for myself, and tremble to think of the account I have to give.

Isaiah. lxvi. 2 *To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

Psal. xxxiv. 11. *The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart : and will save such as be of an humble spirit.*

Look upon me, gracious Lord, with an eye of mercy.

Psal. xxv. 2 *For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquities, for they are great.*

My only comfort is, they are not too great for thy mercy.

And the Lord Jesus our Advocate has assured us even with an oath, *That all sin shall be forgiven unto the sons of men.* That is, if with hearty repentance and true faith they turn unto God.

O most powerful advocate! I put my cause into thy hands ;—let it be unto thy servant according to this word ;—let thy blood and merits plead for my pardon ;—say unto me, as thou didst unto the penitent in thy gospel, *Thy sins are forgiven.* And grant that I may live to bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

Matt. vi. 14. *If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive your trespasses.*

Even the power to perform this most kind condition must be from thy grace, O Jesus !

And I trust thou wilt grant me this grace, because the very will to ask it is from Thee, and from thy will, which wills nothing in vain.

Perfect, therefore, O my Saviour, the work which Thou hast begun in me; and let me feel the effects of thy grace, in the constancy of my devotion,—in the care of my soul,—in the faithful discharge of my duty,—and in all such acts of righteousness, piety, and charity, by which I shall be judged at the last day.

John v. 14. *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*

Make me, O Lord, ever mindful of my infirmities and backslidings, that I may be more watchful and more importunate for grace, for the time to come.

Matt. v. 7. *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.*

Give me, O Lord, a true compassion for the wants and miseries of others, that thou mayest have compassion upon me.

Luke xvi. 10. *There is joy in the presence of God over one sinner that repenteth.*

Lord, increase the number of penitents, and the joys of heaven, in delivering me and all sinners from the power of the devil, and in vouchsafing us the grace of a true conversion.

Matt. v. 4. *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*

O Lord, grant that I may seek for comfort not in the things of this world, but by a sincere repentance for my sins, by which God is dishonoured, and his judgments hanging over my head.

Luke xix. 10. *The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

O comfortable words for lost sinners ; God himself seeks to save them. O thou, who sought me when I was astray, save me for thy mercy's sake, and preserve that which thou hast sought and found.

Matt. ix. 28. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

O Jesu, conduct and keep me to thyself, or I may surely miss the way.

Phil. ii. 12. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling ; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

It was not in myself, O God, to begin the work of my conversion ;—finish, I beseech Thee, that which Thou hast begun in me ;—may I close with thy grace, and persevere unto my life's end.

Micah vii. 18. *God retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.*

Ezra ix. 15. *O Lord God, behold, we are before thee in our trespasses ; we cannot stand before thee for this.*

Numb. xiv. 19. *Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of thy servant, according to the greatness of thy mercy.*

O say unto me, as thou didst unto Moses, *I have pardoned thee.*

Ezek. xviii. 22. *All his iniquities that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him.*

Lord be merciful unto us, for we have sinned in the midst of light, and even against light.

1 John i. 9. *If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

These are comfortable words to one whom the sight of his sins has cast into a dread of the judgments of God. Both *that* dread and the hatred of sin, and the dependence upon the promise of God, and the love that that produces in the soul, are owing entirely to the blood of Jesus Christ.

2 Sam. ix. 8. *What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?*

My only support is, that my sins have not put me out of the reach of that mercy which is infinite.

Who can understand his errors? O cleanse thou me from my secret faults.

O Lord be favourable unto me; pardon and deliver me from all my sins.

Grant that my sins may never rise up in judgment against me, nor bring shame and confusion of face upon me.

My soul truly waiteth still upon God, for of him cometh my salvation.

John vi. 20. *It is I, be not afraid.*

Lord Jesus, in all the troubles that shall befall me, speak these comfortable words to my soul, *It is I, be not afraid*; and then I shall be secure both from presumption and despair.

John viii. 24. *If ye believe not that I am he, (that is the Messiah, the Son of God,) ye shall die in your sins.*

O Jesus, the only refuge of sinners, does the world know what it is to die in sin?—I believe,

Lord, increase my faith, and deliver us all from the dreadful state of final impenitency.

— 51. *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.*

May I, O Jesus, love the truths of thy word ; make the gospel my delight ; and continue in the practice of them to my life's end.

— 51. *If a man keep my saying he shall never see death.*

O Jesus, Thou hast made known to us another death, besides that which separates the soul from the body. O may thy grace and mercy secure us from the bitter pains of eternal death.

Luke vii. 7. *Say the word, and my servant shall be healed.*

I acknowledge, O Jesu, the almighty power of thy grace to heal all the disorders of my soul ; O deal with me according to the multitude of thy mercies, and heal my soul of its sad disorders.

John iii. 24. *God is a spirit : and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

Give me, O Jesus, an inward disposition to holiness, an humble and contrite heart, a dependence on the will of God, an acknowledgment of his goodness, and a zeal for his glory ; to which all the ordinances of his law and gospel should lead us.

Good use of time.

Grant, O Lord, that, as I have but a short time to live, and an eternal interest depending, I may not squander away one moment in vanity, or in

that which will not profit me in the day of adversity.

Rom. xi. 16. *Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved.*

O God, the God of Abraham, look upon thine everlasting covenant; cause the captivity of Judah and of Israel to return. They were thy people; O be Thou their Saviour, that all who love Jerusalem, and mourn for her, may rejoice with her for Jesus Christ's sake, their Saviour and our's, *Amen.*

In time of public distractions.

O Sovereign Lord! I prostrate myself before Thee, confessing my own sin, and acknowledging the justice of any scourge which Thou shalt bring upon us; and trembling to think how much I may have contributed towards it;—beseeching Thee to have compassion on us, in these days of confusion.

O Lord, prevent the judgments that threaten us;—purge this nation from all such crimes as may be the cause of thy heavy displeasure against us,—from *licentiousness* and *drunkenness*;—from *swearing, lying, and perjury*;—from *sacrilege, injustice, fraud, disobedience, malice, and uncharitableness*. Take from us the spirit of *atheism, irreligion, and profaneness*; and in mercy rebuke and convert all such as give encouragement or countenance to any of these vices, which may provoke Thee to give us up to infidelity or destruction. O let thy anger be

turned away from us ;—give us not over unto the will of our adversaries, and unto such as strive to bring all things into confusion. Preserve this church in the midst of all dangers ; and restore unto us peace and unity ; and grant us grace to make a better use of these blessings for the time to come, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Isaiah lxii. 6. *Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers, keep not silence : give him no rest, till he establish and till he make Jerusalem (his Church) a praise on the earth.*

Thy kingdom come.—Though we are altogether unworthy of the good times Thou hast promised thy Church, yet we beseech Thee deprive us not of them.

O Lord, hear ; O Lord, forgive ; O Lord hear-ken, and do not defer these good days, for thine own sake, oh ! our God.

We hope a day is coming, when all the world will come and worship Thee, O God.—See Jer. xxxi.

Christ's patience.

What sorrows did he undergo, and with what patience did he suffer then ! Patient, when Judas unworthily betrayed him with a kiss,—patient, when Caiaphas despitefully used him ;—patient, when hurried from one place to another ;—patient when Herod with his men of war set him at naught ;—patient, when Pilate so unrighteously condemned him ;—patient, when scourged and crowned with thorns ;—patient, when his cross was laid upon him, when he was

reviled, reproached, scoffed at, and every way abused. Lord Jesus, grant me patience, after this example, to bear thy holy will in all things.

Christ's love and charity

Where shall we take our pattern, but from Thee?—Thou calledst thy followers thy friends. Thou didst stoop down to wash their feet, who were not worthy to untie thy shoe. Thou didst forgive and restore Peter, when he had abjured Thee. Thou didst vouchsafe to satisfy Thomas, who would not believe but upon his own terms. Thou didst forgive and pray for thy bloody persecutors. O thou Fountain and Pattern of Love, grant that I may love Thee above all things, and my neighbour as myself!

SATURDAY MEDITATIONS.

Preparation for death.

Deut. xxxii. 29. *O that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end.*

John ix. 4. *The night cometh, when no man can work.*

A VERY gracious intimation. Lord, grant that I may never forget it; and that *now, now* is the time, in which to provide for eternity.

What a wise man then, when he comes to die, would wish he had done, that he ought to do forthwith; for death is at hand, and the consequences of a surprise most dreadful. He will then wish, if he has not done it with all his soul,

First; That he had made a just and christian

settlement of his worldly concerns ; so as not to be distracted with the cares of this world, when all his thoughts should be upon another.

Secondly ; That he had made his peace with God by a timely repentance.

Thirdly ; That he hath faithfully discharged the duties of his calling.

Fourthly ; That he hath weaned his affections from things temporal, and loosened the ties which fasten us to the world.

Fifthly ; That he had crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts ; so that, being weary of this life, he might be more desirous of a better.

Sixthly ; That he had got such habits of patience and resignation to the will of God, during his health, as may render death, with all the train of miseries leading to it, less frightful and amazing.

Seventhly, and lastly ; That by a constant practice of devotion preparatory for death, he had learned what to pray for, what to hope for, what to depend on in his last sickness.

And this gracious Lord, is what I wish for, what I pray for, and what I purpose shall be the constant practice of my life. *Amen.*

2 Kings xx. 1. *Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live.*

May God, who has every way provided for me, and put it into my power to be *just* to all men, *charitable* to the poor, *grateful* to my friends, *kind* to my servants and a *benefactor* to the public : may he add this to all his favours, and grant that in making *my last will*, I may

faithfully discharge all these engagements ; and that for want of that, no curse may cleave to myself, or to any thing I shall leave behind me. *Amen.*

But, above all things, I beg of Thee, O God, to enable me to set my inward house, *my soul*, in order, before I die.

Give me true repentance for all the errors of my life past, and steadfast faith in Thy Son Jesus Christ : that my sins may be done away by thy mercy, and my pardon sealed in heaven.

Prov. xxvii. 13. *Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy.*

Behold, O God, a creature, liable every moment to death, prostrate before Thee, begging, for Jesus Christ's sake, that faith and repentance to which Thou hast promised mercy and pardon.

Discover to me, O Thou Searcher of Hearts, the charge that is against me ; that I may know, and confess, and bewail, and abhor, and forsake, and repent of all the evils I have been guilty of.

Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, most merciful Father, who desirest not the death of a sinner ; for thy son Jesus Christ's sake, forgive me all that is past.

And, O blessed Advocate, who art able to save them for ever who come unto God by Thee, seeing Thou ever livest to make intercession for us, I put my cause into thy hands : let thy *power* defend me ; thy *blood* and *merits* plead for me ; supply all the defects of my repentance ; procure for me a full discharge of all my sins before I die ; and by thy mighty grace, confirm and

strengthen me in all goodness during the remainder of my life, that my death may be a blessing to me, and that I may find mercy at the great day. *Amen.*

Ephes. iv. 24. *Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

This, O God, is what I desire and purpose, by thy grace, to do ; and do again renew the vows which I have so often made, and too often broken.

I renounce the devil and all his works ; the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, resolving, by thy grace, neither to follow nor be led by them.

And, O God assist me, that neither sloth nor corruption may ever make me lay aside or forget these resolutions ; but that I may live to Thee—be an instrument of thy glory, by serving Thee faithfully ; and that I may be found so doing when thou art pleased to call me hence, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

Col. iii. 2. *Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.*

And may almighty God, who alone can do it, effectually convince me of the vanity of all that is desirable in this present life, that I may not, like an unbeliever, look for happiness here.

Give me, O Lord, a perfect indifference for the world, its *profits, pleasures, honours, fame,* and all its *idols.*

Represent thyself unto me as my true happiness, that I may love Thee with all my heart and

soul, and strength ; so that when I am called out of this world, I may rejoice in hope of going to the paradise of God, where the souls of the faithful enjoy rest and felicity, in hopes of a blessed resurrection, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. *Amen.*

Luke ix. 23. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

Blessed Jesus who pleasedst not thyself, but tookest upon Thee the form of a servant, give me resolution to deny my inclinations ; --to subdue my corrupt affections, and to show the fruits of repentance ;—for misspending my time, by retirement ;—for the errors of my tongue, by silence ;—and for all the sins of my life, by a deep humiliation, patiently submitting to all the troubles with which Thou shalt think fit to exercise or punish me ; so that being effectually weaned from this world, and weary of its corruptions, I may long to repose myself in the grave, in hopes of a better life, through thy mercy and merits, O Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

1 Pet. iv. 8. *Charity covereth a multitude of sins.*

Possess my soul, O God, with a sincere love for Thee, and for all mankind.

Let no malice or ill-will abide in me. Give me grace to forgive all that have offended me ; and forgive my many offences against Thee, and against my neighbour.

Make me ever ready to give, and glad to dis-

tribute, that thy gifts, passing through my hands, may procure for me the prayers of the poor; and that I may lay up in store for myself a good foundation against the time to come, that I may attain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Thy will be done.

Fortify my soul blessed Jesus, with the same spirit of submission with which Thou underwent the death of the cross, that I may receive all events with resignation to the will of God;—that I may receive troubles, afflictions, disappointments, sickness, and death itself, without amazement; these being the appointment of thy justice for the punishment of sin, and of thy mercy for the salvation of sinners.

Let this be the constant practice of my life, to be pleased with all thy choices, that when sickness and death approach, I may be prepared to submit my will to the will of my Maker.

And O that, in the mean time, my heart may always go along with my lips in this petition,---
 THY WILL BE DONE. *Amen.*

Heb. ix. 27. *It is appointed unto men once to die; but after this the judgment.*

May the thoughts of death, and of what must follow, by the grace of God, mortify in me all carnal security, and fondness for this world, and all that is in it, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. And O that I may make my calling and election sure, that I may die in peace, and rest in the mansions of

glory, in hopes of a blessed resurrection and a favourable judgment at the great day.

And may the consideration of a judgment to come oblige me to examine, to try and to judge myself, that I may prevent a severe judgment of God by a true repentance, and lead a life answerable to amendment of life, and that I may find mercy at the great day.

John v. 28. *All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*

May that dreadful word oblige me to work out my salvation with fear and trembling, that, through the merits of Jesus Christ, I may escape that dreadful doom !

And may the hopes of heaven and happiness sweeten all the troubles of this mortal life !

O Lord Jesus, who hast redeemed us with thy precious blood, make me to be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

O let my name be found written in the Lamb's Book of Life at the great day !

I thank Thee, O Lord, for all the favours of my life, and especially for that Thou hast vouchsafed me *time* and a *will* to *think* of and *prepare* for *death*, while I am in my full strength, while I may redeem my misspent time, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

Let us consider *death* as a punishment, to which, as sinners, we are justly condemned.

My God, I humbly submit to it, and to thy *justice*; and trust in thy *mercy*, and *goodness*, and promises, both now, and at the hour of death.

Death is inevitable; the *time* uncertain; the *judgment*, which follows, without appeal; and followed by an *eternity* of *happiness* or *misery*.

Lord grant that I may consider this as I ought to do.

Let me remember that I shall come forth out of the grave, just as I go in; either the object of God's *mercy*, or of his *wrath*, to all *eternity*.

He lives to no purpose who is not glorifying God.

Our greatest hopes should lie beyond the grave.

No man must go to heaven when he dies, who has not sent his heart thither while he lives.

Our greatest security is to be derived from duty, and our only confidence from the mercy of God through Jesus Christ.

Sickness, if you consider it as painful to nature, and not as a favour from God, will be a torment to you. To make it really comfortable, believe it to be ordered by a loving Father, a wise Physician; that it is the effect of his mercy for our salvation; that being fastened to the cross, you become dearer to God, as being most like his own Son. God will loose you when it is best for you.

We often hinder our recovery by trusting to physic more than to God: means succeed just as far as God pleases;—if he send diseases as a remedy to cure the disorders of the soul, he only can cure them;—while you are chastened, you are

sure God loves you ;—you are not sure of that, when you are without chastisement.

A timely preparation for death frees us from the fear of death, and from all other fears.

A true Christian is neither *fond* of life, nor *weary* of it.

The sting of death is sin ; therefore, an holy life is the *only* cure for the fear of death. We ought to fear sin more than death, because death cannot hurt us but by sin.

Phil. i. 21. *To me to die is gain.*

O that I may be able to say this, when I come to die ; and so I shall if I live as becomes a Christian.

Holiness being a necessary qualification for *happiness*, it follows that the holiest man will be the happiest, (for there are certain degrees of glory,) therefore a Christian should lose no time to gain all the degrees of virtue and holiness he possibly can ; and he that does not do so, is in a fair way of not being happy at all.

It concerns us more than our life is worth, to know what will become of us when we die.

Who will pretend to say that he is not in a very few days to die ?

The only happiness of this life is to be secure of a blessed eternity.

Now is the time in which we are to choose *where* and *what* we are to be to all eternity ; there is, therefore, no time to be lost to make this choice.

No kind of death is to be feared by him who lives well.

If we consider death as the night of that day

which is given us to work in, in which to work out our salvation ; and that when the night is come, no man can work ; how frightful must death be to such as are not prepared for it ! And if we consider it as the beginning of eternity, it is still more dreadful. It is for this reason called the *King of Terrors* ; and the Psalmist, when he would express the worst of evils, saith, *The terrors of death are fallen upon me.*

Judges xiii. 23. *If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things.*

This is the comfort of all God's servants : if he gives them opportunities of renewing their vows, and a will to do them ;—if he accepts their alms and their good deeds, that is, gives them a heart to do such ;—if he touches their hearts with a sense of their unworthiness ;—if he chastens them with afflictions ;—if he visits them with his Holy Spirit, &c. ;—all these are reasons for a Christian to hope, that these graces are not in vain, but that God will crown them with pardon, favour, and happiness eternal.

Matt. xxv. 6. *And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.*

A terrible voice to all such as shall meet him, not as a bridegroom, but as an inexorable Judge.

Grant, O Lord, that I may not be of the number of those who dread thy coming, who cannot but with regret submit to the necessity of dying,

and who have neglected to prepare for death till the last hour.

Matt. xxv. 10. *And the door was shut.*

Death shuts the door. No more to be done. It is then too late to repent, to resolve, to promise, and to do any thing.

Matt. xxv. 13. *Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.*

A person, whose life is full of good works, whose heart is devoted to God, whose faith and hope are pure and sincere, will never be surprised by death.

Matt. xxvii. 50. *Jesus Christ yielded up the Ghost.* And so his death became a voluntary sacrifice. Let mine be so, O blessed Jesus ! Let thy death sanctify me ; and let my spirit be received with thine !

Rom v. 1. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Give me, O Lord, that desire and earnest longing, which I ought to have, for that happy moment which is to release me from this state of banishment, and translate me to a better place ; and grant that I may never lose the sight of that important moment.

Let me, O God, have my lot and portion with thy saints.

When we come to die, the great enemy of our souls will then attack us with all his stratagems. It is good, therefore, to be prepared.

If he attacks your faith, say with St. Paul, *I*

know whom I have believed ; and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

I believe in God the Father, who hath made me and all the world.

I believe in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind.

I believe in God, the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth me, and all the people of God.

I give Thee hearty thanks, O heavenly Father, that thou hast vouchsafed to call me to the knowledge of thy grace and faith in Thee. Confirm this faith in me evermore,—grant that I may die in this faith, and in the peace and communion of thy Holy Church ; and that I may be united to Jesus, the head of this Church, and to all his members, by a love that shall never end.
Amen.

John iii. 15. *Whosoever believeth in Jesus Christ shall not perish, but have eternal life.*

I believe :—Lord, increase my faith : and let it be unto thy servant according to this word.

Luke xxiii. 43. *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

O blessed Jesus ! support my spirit when I come to die, with this comfortable promise.—*This day shalt thou be in paradise.*

We indeed suffer justly the sentence of death.

O Thou, who didst nothing amiss, and yet didst suffer for me ; remember me, O Lord, now that Thou art in Thy kingdom.

What terror, what affliction, can equal that of a Christian, who has never thought of weaning

his heart from the world till he comes to die ; who can find nothing in this life, but what must render him unworthy of mercy ! But the greatest of all miseries would be to despair of mercy, and not to have recourse to it.

Need a person, who has received the sentence of death, be persuaded to prepare for death ? And is not this our case ?

Luke xii. 36. *And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord.*

He who waits for his master will always endeavour to be in that state in which he desires to be found.

A Christian should not look upon death with anxiety, but with the satisfaction of a good servant, who waits with impatience for his master's return, in hopes of being approved of.

Luke xii. 40. *Be ye ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*

And are not so many sudden deaths sufficient to convince us of the folly of assuring ourselves of one day ? Let every one of us, therefore, count himself of the number of those that are to be surprised by death ; this will make us watchful.

Luke xii. 43. *Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing ; that is, doing his duty.*

And then, miserable will he be, whom death surpriseth either doing *evil*, or doing *nothing*, or doing that which God does not require of him. Can one imagine, that the generality of Christians believe this truth ; suffer me not, O God, to fall into a forgetfulness of it.

We complain (saith Seneca) of the shortness of life ; he answers, *Vita, si scias uti, longa est*--Life is long, if you know how to use it. But then it is Christianity only can teach us how to use our life ; namely, *in working out our own salvation* : And we are sure it is long enough for *that*, because God has appointed it for that very end.

As Christianity alone can take from us the love of life, so it is this alone that can free us from the fear of death.

Eternity adds an infinite weight to all our actions, whether good or bad.

If we desire that our death should, like that of Jesus Christ, be a sacrifice of love and obedience, we must take care to make our life so too.

Acts ix. 39. *This woman was full of good works and alms-deeds ; and she died.*

Happy that soul which death finds rich, not in gold, furniture, learning, reputation, or barren purposes and desires, but in good works.

Acts. vii. 59. *And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*

O my God, enable me to live to Thee ; that when the hour of death shall come, I may thus with confidence offer up my spirit to Jesus Christ.

Rev. iii. 3. *Thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*

Is it not, then, the highest presumption to persuade ourselves that we have always time sufficient, when Jesus Christ himself declares that we have not one moment certain ?

It is purely for want of faith, that we tremble at the approach of our deliverer ; and which is to destroy in us the reign of sin, and instate us in that of glory.

Let us resign up ourselves to God, as to the manner in which it shall please him to determine our lives, praying only that it may be to his glory and our salvation.

What does it signify how this house of clay perisheth, which hinders the perfect renovation of the soul, and the sight of God ?

2 Cor. v. 1. *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

We know, we believe, we promise ourselves this, but we think too seldom of it, and we still make less use of what we know, in order to wean our hearts from this world.

Would we look upon our bodies as houses of clay just ready to fall, we should think of that eternal house, we should sigh after our native country, and be willing to leave a place of misery and banishment.

Remember that death is the punishment of sin ; we ought therefore to resign ourselves up to it in a Christian manner, looking upon ourselves as condemned to it in Adam.

He who has lived and looked on earth as in a place of banishment, will look upon death as a gracious deliverance from it.

Consider well, that life is given and continued

for no other end, but to glorify God in working out our own salvation.

A man goes with confidence to meet the bridegroom, when he has been faithful to him, and believes him to be his friend.

Heb. ii. 15. *And deliver them who through fear of death were all their life long subject to bondage.*

Bondage is the sentence of rebellious slaves ; ---we were condemned to it in Adam ; and being under this sentence of death and the Divine Justice, we ought to expect it with submission, and be always preparing for it. This is the only way to be secure, and from fearing death when it comes.

Gather us, O God, to the number of thine own, at what time and in what manner Thou pleasest ;—only let us be without reproach, and blameless ;—let faith, and love, and peace accompany our last periods.

We look upon a body without a soul with horror. We can see a body with a soul, which is like to die eternally, without concern.

Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? I thank God, (I am delivered,) through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Grant, O Lord, that though my outward man decay daily, yet that my inward man may grow and increase in piety and virtue unto the day of my death.

He that hath lived best will stand in need of mercy at the hour of death, and in the day of judgment ;—and he that hath liveth the worst, has not

sinned beyond the efficacy of the blood of Christ, provided his repentance be sincere.

My God ! let thy glory be magnified by saving a sinner , by redeeming a captive slave, by enlightening a heart overwhelmed in darkness, by changing a wicked heart, by pardoning innumerable transgressions, iniquities, and sins.

If my hopes were placed upon any thing but the infinite mercies of God, in Jesus Christ, which can never fail, I should utterly despair

Acts ii. 21. *Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.*

These, my God, are thine own words ;—give me leave to trust in them, to depend on them, both now and at the hour of death.

John xvii. 4. *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*

O Lord, the very best of men come infinitely short of this pattern ; how then shall I, an unprofitable servant, appear before my Lord and Judge !

Gen. iii. 15. *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.*

This, my God, is thy sure, thy eternal promise ; I believe it ; I trust in it ; I will hold me fast by it.

Luke xxii. 42. *Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.*

May I, O blessed Jesus, when my death approaches, breathe out my last with these words, and with the same spirit of submission.

Death of Friends.

Let us cast our eyes upon sin, which is the cause of death, and then we shall weep with reason.

Preserve in us a lively sense of the world to come.

And when I shall not be able to pray for myself, the good Lord favourably hear the prayers of his Church for me.

Grant that in the day of the general resurrection, I may then hear those joyful words of thy Son,—*Come, ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.*

Grant that I may have a perfect conquest over the world, sin, and death, through Christ, who by his death hath overcome him who hath the power of death.

Luke xxiii. 43. *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

O Jesus, who hadst compassion on this thief, even at the hour of death, have mercy upon me, who now repent of all my misdoings. Suffer not the gates of paradise to be shut against me when I die, *Thou hast opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.*

Restore my soul, at the great day, to life eternal.

Give me the patience of Job, the faith of Abraham, the courage of Peter, and the comfort of Paul, and a true submission to thy will.

Apply to my soul all the wholesome medicines of thy Son's passion, death, and resurrection, against the power of Satan, against all unreasonable fears and despair, and ease my fearful conscience.

Hear the prayers of thy Church for me, and for all in my condition, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Psa. lxxi. 9. Cast me not away in the time of age; forsake me not when my strength faileth me.

Grant, O Lord, that the end of my life may be truly christian; without sin, without shame, and if it so please Thee, without pain.

Psa. lxxiii. 26. My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

1 Sam. iii. 18. It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good.

Lord be merciful unto me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.

I confess my wickedness, and am sorry for my sin.

For thy name's sake, O Lord, be merciful unto my sin for it is great.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart, and will save such as are of an humble spirit.

Psa. xxxix. 8. And now, Lord, what is my hope; truly my hope is in Thee.

Psa. ciii. 14. Lord, thou knowest whereof we are made; that we are but dust.

Let my misery, my fear, my sorrow, move Thee to compassion.

Despise not, O Lord, the work of thine own hands.

I freely forgive all that have offended me.

O Thou, that never failest them that seek Thee, have pity on me.

Nevertheless, though I am sometimes afraid, yet put I my trust in Thee.

O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul.—
Gracious is the Lord, and righteous ; yea, our
God is merciful.

O go not far from me, for trouble is at hand,
and there is none to help me.

The sorrows of my heart are enlarged : O
bring Thou me out of my troubles.

O keep my soul, and deliver me ; let me not
be confounded, for I have put my trust in Thee.

Withdraw not thy mercy from me, O Lord ;
let thy loving kindness and thy truth always
preserve me.

O Lord, let it be thy pleasure to deliver me ;
make haste, O Lord, to help me.

Show thy servant the light of thy counte-
nance, and save me for thy mercy's sake.

O deliver me, for I am helpless and poor, and
my heart is wounded within me.

Wherefore hidest Thou thy face, and forgettest
our misery and trouble ?

My God ! save thy servant, who putteth his
trust in Thee.

Thou, O Lord art full of compassion and
mercy, long-suffering, plenteous in goodness and
in truth.

When I am in heaviness, I will think upon
God ; when my heart is vexed I will complain.

Will the Lord absent himself for ever ? Will
he be no more entreated ?

Hath God forgotten to be gracious ? And I
said, it is mine own infirmity ; but I will re-
member the years of the right hand of the most
High.

Luke xii. 33. *Sell all that ye have and give to the poor.* That is, renounce all the pleasures that wealth affords, rather than defraud the poor and distressed of their right :—It is utterly impossible to take delight in wealth, and love God with all the soul.

Matth. xxv. 40. *For as much (for as often) as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me*

As often:—Who then would miss any occasion ? *The least*:—Who then would despise any object ? *To me*:—So that in serving the poor, we serve Jesus Christ. O comfortable declaration !

Mark ix. 41. *Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ :—verily, (with an oath he assures us,) he shall not lose his reward.*

This should always, if possible, be our intention : This *poor, oppressed, miserable* man belongs to Christ. This would wonderfully enhance the value of our good deeds before God.

Alms.

1 Cor. xiii. 3. *And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*

If external acts of charity do not proceed from charity, that is, from a love of God, and of our neighbour for his sake, they are as nothing in the sight of God. My God, pour into my heart

the most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtue.

Gal. vi. 10. *Let us do good unto all men.*

He who seeks for Jesus Christ in the poor, in order to relieve and assist *him*, will not be too solicitous to find any other merit in them than that of Jesus Christ.

For our earthly things, O Lord, give us heavenly ; for temporal, eternal.

Luke iii. 11. *He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none.*

That is, let him that hath plenty, and to spare, of the necessities of life, let him give to him that wants.

The proportion of charity appointed by God himself to his own people, for the relief of the poor, was every year a thirtieth part of all their income, or a tenth every third year.

This was the Jews' proportion. He that came short of this was a breaker of the law, and without repentance and restitution, had no hopes of pardon.

The Christian's proportion ought to be greater, as his hopes and reward will be greater.

We should in all our charities direct our eyes towards Christ and his members ; it is this which heightens the smallest gifts. Men reward what is done on human motives ; God, such as are done for his sake.

He that for his good actions expects the applause of men, runs the hazard of losing the reward of God.

The poor are, as it were, the receivers of the

rights and dues belonging unto God ; we must have a care of defrauding them.

Luke xi. 41. *But rather give alms of such things as you have, (or as you are able,) and all things are clean to you.* That is, proportion your alms to your estate, lest God proportion your estate to your alms.

It is a necessary Christian duty, (whatever men think of it,) to part with our worldly enjoyments for the sake of Christ.

The very best of men are only instruments in God's hands to receive and to give what God bestows upon them. And this they should do, without any desire of glory or self-interest.

Let us make light of money and riches, and send it before us into the heavenly treasures, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt ; but where it will be kept, to our eternal advantage, under the custody of God himself.

Thou, O Lord, hast been all mercy to me ; grant that I may be all mercy to others for Christ's sake.

Remember to give to those that are ashamed to ask ; and do not forget your poor relations, lest you be worse than an infidel.

Rom. xii. 18. *He that sheweth mercy, let him do it with cheerfulness.*

The good Lord preserve me from vanity, and from seeking applause for my charity.

Not unto me, but unto Thee, O God, be the thanks, and praise, and glory.

The merits of the poor are not to be the rule

of our charity. God himself maketh the sun to shine upon the evil and the good.

If we would but moderate our vanity, we should always have enough for charity.

Send thy blessing upon my substance, and continue to me a willing mind to help such as have need according to my ability.

Good advice, and devout petitions, should accompany our charity.

O God, who knowest the necessities of all thy creatures, give thy poor the spiritual things they stand in need of.

Support thy poor members, O Jesu, under all their difficulties, and sanctify their bodily wants to the salvation of their souls.

Lord, grant that they may bear their poor estate with patience and resignation, and that we may one day meet in the paradise of God.

Jesus Christ is continually humbled in his members ; some are poor, in prison, sick, naked, hungry, &c. Let me, O Lord, see and help Thee in all these objects.

A man that has faith will be glad to discharge himself of some part of the burthen of temporal goods, in order to secure those that are eternal ; and to be in some measure the preserver of his brethern.

Psa. cxii. 5. *A good (a charitable) man will guide his affairs with discretion ;* that is, he will cut off and retrench all needless expenses in apparel, diet, diversions, &c. that he may give to him that needeth.

Let your alms be in secret as much as may be.

Charity; or the love of God and our neighbour.

It is but the first essay of charity to give alms.

Who ever shows mercy to men, will certainly receive mercy from God.

1 John iii. 15. *Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.*

A man has already killed him in his heart, whose life is grievous to him, and at whose death he would rejoice.

1 John iii. 14. *He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.*

Can we believe that it is God that saith this, and delay one moment to be reconciled?

It is not enough to love our brethern; we must love them on a principle of faith, in the name, for the sake, and as members of Jesus Chrst.

Luke vi. 37. *Forgive, and it shall be forgiven you*

Give me, O my God, an heart full of Christian meekness and charity, that I may willingly forget the evil I have received, and be always disposed to do good to others.

We love our neighbour after a christian manner, when we love him for God's sake; and for God's sake do him good.

THE LITANY.

O God the Father of Heaven; have mercy upon me, keep and defend me.

O God the Son, Redeemer of the world ; have mercy upon me, save and deliver me.

O God the Holy Ghost ; have mercy upon me, strengthen and comfort me.

Remember not, Lord, mine offences, nor the offences of my forefathers ; neither take Thou vengeance of our sins : Spare us, good Lord, spare thy people whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever.

From thy wrath and heavy indignation ; from the guilt and burthen of my sins ; from the dreadful sentence of the last judgment ;

Good Lord, deliver me.

From the sting and terrors of conscience ; from impatience, distrust, and despair ; from extremity of sickness and pain which may withdraw my mind from God ;

Good Lord, deliver me.

From the bitter pangs of eternal death ; from the gates of hell ; from the powers of darkness ; and from the illusions of Satan ;

Good Lord, deliver me.

By thy manifold and great mercies ; by thy manifold and great merits ; by thine agony and bloody sweat ; by thy bitter cross and passion ; by thy mighty resurrection ; by thy glorious ascension and most acceptable intercession ; and by the graces of the Holy Ghost ;

Good Lord, deliver me.

For the glory of thy name ; for thy loving mercy and truth's sake ;

Good Lord, deliver me.

In my last and greatest need ; in the hour of death ; and in the day of judgment ;

Good Lord, deliver me.

As Thou hast delivered all thy saints and servants which called upon Thee in their extremity ;

Good Lord, deliver me ;—and receive my soul for thy mercy's sake.

Be merciful unto me, and forgive me all my sins, which, by the malice of the devil, or by my own frailty, I have at any time of my life committed against Thee.

Lay not to my charge what in the lust of the flesh, the pride of life or vanity, I have committed against Thee.

Lay not to my charge what, by an angry spirit, by vain and idle words, by foolish jesting, I have committed against Thee.

Make me partaker of all thy mercies and promises in Christ Jesus.

Vouchsafe my soul a place of rest in the Paradise of God, with all thy blessed saints ; and my body a part in the blessed resurrection.

O Lord God, Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world ;

Have mercy upon me.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world ;

Grant me thy peace.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of God ;

Have mercy upon me.

Have mercy upon me, and receive my prayer ;
even the prayer which Thou hast taught me ;

Our Father, which art in heaven, &c.

O Lord, deal not with me after my sins ; nei-
ther reward me after mine iniquities.

O God, merciful Father, that despisest not
the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desires of
such as be sorrowful ; mercifully assist my pray-
ers which I make before Thee, at such times es-
pecially as I am preparing for death and for eter-
nity. And, O Lord, graciously hear me, that
those evils, those illusions, and assaults which
my great enemy worketh against me, may be
brought to nought, and by the providence of thy
goodness they may be dispersed ; that thy ser-
vant, being delivered from all temptations, may
give thanks to Thee, with thy Holy Church to
all eternity. *Amen.*

Let us endeavour, by a timely repentance, to
prevent the reproaches which otherwise our con-
sciences will cast upon us at the hour of death.

The support of a penitent, at the hour of death.

John iii. 16. *God so loved the world, that he
gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believ-
eth in him should not perish, but have everlast-
ing life.*

1 John ii. 1. *We have an advocate with the
Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,—who came
into the world to save sinners,—who died for us*

when we were his enemies, that he might offer us unto God.

It is our Judge himself that hath assured us, that *all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men.*

Ejaculations.

TAKE from me all evil imaginations,—all impurity of thought,—all inclinations to lust,—all envy, pride and hypocrisy,—all falsehood, deceit, and an irregular life,—all covetousness, vain glory, and sloth,—all malice, anger, and wrath,—all remembrance of injuries,—every thing that is contrary to thy will, O most Holy God.

May I never hear with pleasure, nor ever repeat, such things as may dishonour God, or injure my neighbour, or my own character.

O give me light to see, an heart to close with, and power to do thy will, O God.

Love of God, &c.

Bless me, O God, with the love of Thee, and of my neighbour. Give me peace of conscience the command of my affections ; and for the rest, *Thy will be done.*

O King of Peace, give us thy peace, keep us in love and charity.

Make thyself, O God, the absolute master of my heart.

They that be whole need not a Physician. It belongs to Thee, O Sovereign Physician, to make us sensible of our maladies, and to make us go to Thee for help. O say unto my soul

this word of salvation, *Behold, thou art made whole.*

Without me ye can do nothing. Miserable, indeed, is he who pretends to walk without Thee. O give me light to see, an heart to close with, and a power to do thy will. From thy Spirit I hope to receive these graces.

John xii. 26. *If any man serve me, let him follow me; and him will my Father honour.*

Let me never flatter myself that I serve Thee, my Saviour, unless I follow thy example at the expense of every thing I love or fear besides. O keep my heart fixed upon that *honour* which God has prepared for those that follow Thee.

O divine spirit, render me worthy of thy presence and consolation.

Fill my heart with an holy dread of thy judgments.

Give me a true sense and knowledge of the danger and the evil of sin; and may I, with a prudent moderation only, be concerned for temporal things.

Jesus Christ is always in his temple, and near you, (if your soul be fit for him to dwell in;) to Him apply on all occasions.

As your *Master*, for grace to study, to love, and to follow his instructions. He requires nothing but what he first practised himself:

As your *Lord*, that you may love and serve him faithfully, and fulfil his commands:

As your *Pattern*, that you may follow his example, and imitate his virtues:

As your *Saviour*, that he may be your refuge

and confidence, your strength and support, your peace and consolation, your Saviour now and at the hour of death :

As your *King*, that he may give laws to your soul, and that you may surrender yourself to his commands ; and never rebel, or resist his authority :

As your *Shepherd*. Keep me in thy flock by thy almighty grace. I am one of the lost sheep which thou camest to seek. Take me under thy care, and restore me to thy fold. Increase thy flock for the honour of thy name.

Wilful sin.

Let me rather choose to die, than to sin against my conscience.

Penitent.

I am ashamed to come before Thee, but I must come or perish. I know that Thou art angry with me for my sins, but I know too that Thou pitiest me, or why do I yet live ? Make me full of sorrow for my sin, and full of hope of thy mercy and pardon. Look upon the infirmities of thy servant, and consider his weakness. Sensible of my own sad condition, weak and miserable, sinful and ignorant, liable to eternal death, I prostrate myself before Thee, imploring thy help and pardon.

Gracious God, never abandon me to the opposition I shall at any time make to thy grace.

Blessed be God that he has so often directed me, and not left me to the desires of my own heart.

Put a stop to the torrent of wickedness and profaneness, which carries all before it.

I confss my sins to Thee, O God ; do Thou hide them from all the world.

Eternity. Lord, imprint upon my heart a lively idea of eternity, that the sorrowful passages of this life, which are so uneasy and frightful to nature, may vanish, or be borne with patience.

Example. Pardon my sin, and forgive all such as have been misled by an evil example of mine.

Matt. v. 48. *Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

O divine repairer of our corrupt nature, may thy all-powerful grace make me as perfect as Thou hast commanded me to be !

Holiness.

O God, who hast called me to holiness, give me a firm faith in thy power through our Lord Jesus Christ, that by his assistance I may get the mastery over all my sins and corruptions ; that I may be redeemed from all iniquity ; that I may be holy, as he who has called me is holy. Possess my soul with an earnest desire of pleasing Thee, and with a fear of offending Thee.

Let me be ever ready to forgive injuries, and backward to offer any.

Give me, O Lord, faith and patience, that I may neither murmur at thy appointments, nor be angry against the instruments of thy justice.

Deliver me from the errors and vices of the age I live in ; from infidelity, wicked principles, from profaneness, heresies, and schism.

I most heartily thank Thee, O God for thy perpetual care of me, for all thy mercies bestowed upon me, for the blessings of nature and of grace.

Grant, O God, that I may never receive thy grace in vain, but that I may live like one who believes and hopes for the joys of heaven.

Let me ever be sorry for my sins ; thankful for thy blessings, fear thy judgments, love thy mercies, remember thy presence.

Give me an humble mind, a godly fear, and a quiet conscience. Weaken, O Lord, the power of Satan in this place, and the tyranny of his ministers.

In time of pestilence or danger.

Set thy saving mark upon our houses, and give order to the destroyer not to hurt us.

John xvi. 23. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.*

Upon this promise, blessed Lord, I depend ; beseeching Thee, O heavenly Father, for thy dear Son's sake, to give me the graces I most stand in need of.

After prayers.

Vouchsafe us those graces and blessings which Thou knowest to be needful for us, notwithstanding our great unworthiness.

Riches. Shut my heart, O Lord, against the love of worldly riches, lest I betray Thee, as Judas did.

May thy Holy Spirit, O God, fill my heart,

that it may appear in all my words and actions that I am governed by it.

Luke x. 33. *And when he saw him, he had compassion on him.*

O Jesus, the true Samaritan, look upon the wounds which sin hath caused in my soul, and have compassion on me.

May I always resign my will and my desires to him who knows what is good for us, better than we ourselves do.

Holy Scriptures.

Give me, O God, a sincere love for the truths of the gospel, a teachable heart, and an obedient will.

Perseverance. Finish, O my God, the works of mercy and conversion, which Thou hast begun in me.

Save, O Lord Jesus, a soul which Thou hast redeemed by thy blood.

There is no merit in me, O God, to attract thy mercy and goodness, but only my great misery and blindness. May I make a suitable return by an holy life.

According to the greatness of thy goodness, and the multitude of thy mercies, look upon me.

Sanctify my soul and body with thy heavenly blessings, that they may be made thy holy habitation, and that nothing may be found in me, that may offend the eyes of thy majesty.

Protect and keep me in the midst of the dangers of this corrupt world ; and by thy light and

grace direct me in the way to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ.

Morning. I laid me down and slept, and rose again, for the Lord sustained me. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Raise me up, O Lord, at the last day, to life and happiness everlasting.

Blessed be the Lord for his mercies renewed unto me every morning.

O that my eyes may ever be fixed upon the example that our blessed Lord hath left us, and that I may daily endeavour to follow him. Amen.

Night. May the Saviour and Guardian of my soul take me under his protection this night and evermore.

1 Cor. vii. 35. *Attend upon the Lord without distraction.*

O holy Spirit of grace, help my infirmities, that I may fix my thoughts upon my duty ; and that I may serve Thee with all my heart and mind.

That I may never give way to wandering thoughts, but watch against them continually.

Look upon me, O Lord, and pity me ; make me and let me be thine by the choice of my will.

Make me serious and thoughtful at all times, that I may not fail being so when I attend upon God.

Let not my heart, O God, be inclined to any evil thing. Keep me, O God, from every thing that may displease thee. O make me wise unto salvation.

Phil. iv. 13. *I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.*

O that I may never forfeit this power by presumption or want of faith.

John xx. 28. *Thomas said, My Lord, and my God.*

Thou art indeed, O Jesus, my Lord, for Thou hast redeemed me by thy precious blood : Thou art my God, for I am dedicated to Thee, and sanctified by thy Spirit.

Acts ii. 44. *And all that believed were together, and had all things common.*

May God grant, that as we are all members of the same body, have one and the same Father, the same Saviour, the same Spirit, and hope to meet in the same paradise ; that we may live in unity and godly love, and be charitable according to our ability.

The good Lord grant, that in the day of Christ I may rejoice that I have not run in vain, nor laboured in vain.

THE
LORD'S PRAYER EXPLAINED.

Our Father, which art in Heaven.

I BESEECH thee O heavenly Father, not for myself only, but for all thy children, that we may all live worthy of the relation which we bear to thee ; *that we may not sin, knowing that we are accounted thine* : nor wilfully offend so great, so good, so tender a Father : but that we may *love* thee, and *fear* thee, not as *slaves*, but as *children* : that we may put our whole trust in thee, and depend upon thine infinite *power, wisdom, goodness*, and *promise to take* care of us ; that we may leave it to thee to choose what is best for us ; and bear with *patience* and *resignation* all thy fatherly corrections : and that we may serve thee with comfort and pleasure all our days, in hopes of the inheritance which thou hast promised thy obedient children.

Hallowed be thy Name.

THOU art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power ; for thou hast created all things, and all thy works praise thee. Fill our hearts, O God, with a zeal for thy glory, that we may do thee honour, by leading holy lives, and by paying a great regard for every thing that belongs to thee ; thy *name*, thy *day*,

thy house, thine ordinances, and thy ministers; and that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father which is heaven.

Thy Kingdom come.

ENLARGE thy kingdom, O God, and deliver the world from the dominion and tyranny of *Satan*, that the kingdoms of the earth may become the kingdoms of Jesus Christ. Hasten the time which thy Spirit hath foretold, *when all nations whom thou hast made shall worship thee and glorify thy name*. Bless the good endeavours of those that strive to propagate the Gospel of thy kingdom: and prepare the hearts of all men to receive it. May all such as own thee for their King, become thy faithful subjects!—Vouchsafe to reign in our hearts, and subdue our will entirely to thine: and prepare us by thy good Spirit for the kingdom of glory.

Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.

DISPOSE me, and all thy children, O Lord and Father, to submit cheerfully to whatever thy providence shall order for us: hearken not to the corrupt desires of our hearts; but to the voice of thine own wisdom, goodness and mercy. Give us a true knowledge of our duty, with an heart disposed to close with thy will, whenever it shall be made known to us, and to perform it with pleasure. Subdue in us whatever is contrary to thy holy will, that through thy grace we may at last become perfect, as our heavenly pattern is.

Give us this Day our Daily Bread.

WE look up unto, and depend upon thee, O heavenly Father, for all the *necessaries* and *conveniences* of this present life. And may our *bodily wants* engage us to go daily to the throne of grace, for the wants of our souls! Let thy blessing go along with our honest endeavours, and keep us from all unjust ways of bettering our condition. Give us grace to impart to such as are in want, of what thou shalt give us more than our daily bread; and with all thy other favours, give us, we beseech thee the blessing of a *thankful* and *contented* mind.

And forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

FORGIVE us those sins, O heavenly Father, which separate us from Thee: forgive us every day of our lives; for every day we stand in need of pardon: give me, and all Christians, a *forgiving temper*, that we may fulfil this condition of our pardon. Thou art good and merciful in forgiving us: grant we may be so to others; remembering our own infirmities. And may we all live in the same *charitable temper*, in which we *hope and desire to die*.

And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil.

O God and Father, who hatest iniquity, and knowest our infirmities, leave us not to the *malice* and *power* of the evil one, the devil, to deal

with us as he pleaseth;—nor to *ourselves*, and to our own corrupt *hearts* and *lusts*, lest we rashly run into temptation. Keep us out of the way of temptations, and under the protection of thy good Spirit : suffer us not to be surprised by them, nor tempted above what we are able to bear. Give us grace to resist them, and to watch and pray daily, that we enter not into temptation.

For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory for ever and ever. Amen.

THE whole creation is thine, and under thy government. Thine is the *power*: thou canst do whatsoever we pray for. Thou canst cause thy *name* to be sanctified in all the earth, and set up thy kingdom in all the world, and in our hearts :—thou canst cause *thy will to be done on earth as it is in heaven*: and incline us all to submit to it. Thou canst give all things needful both for our *souls* and for our *bodies*. Thou and thou alone, canst *forgive* us our sins, and dispose us to forgive one another : Thou canst secure us in the day of temptation, and deliver us from the power of the devil. To Thee, to Thee alone, be glory to all eternity.

SHORT
MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS
FOR

Families and Particular Persons.

Morning Prayer for a Family.

Let some one of the Family that can read, say devoutly what followeth, the rest attending.

THE Lord hath brought us safe to the beginning of this day ; let us therefore give thanks for this and for all his mercies.

Let us pray that we may live in the fear of God ; and continue in love and charity with our neighbours : That his Holy Spirit may direct and rule our hearts, teaching us what we ought to do and what to avoid :

That the grace of God may ever be with us to support us in all danger, and carry us through all temptations :

That the Lord may bless all our honest endeavours, and make us content with what his providence shall order for us :

And that we may continue his faithful servants this day, and unto our lives' end.

For all which blessings let us devoutly pray.

Then all devoutly kneeling let one say,

O God, by whom the whole world is governed and preserved, we give thee humble thanks for thy fatherly care over us, beseeching thee to make us truly sensible of thy mercies, and thankful for them.

Give us grace that we may walk as in thy sight, making a conscience of our ways ; and, fearing to offend thee, may never fall into the sins we have repented of.

Enable us to resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil ; to *follow* the motions of thy good Spirit ; to be *serious* and *holy* in our lives ; *true* and *just* in our dealings ; *watchful* over our thoughts, words, and actions ; *diligent* in our business ; and *temperate in all things*.

May thy blessing be upon our persons—upon our labours,—upon our substance,—and upon all that belong to us.

Give us grace, that we may honestly improve all the talents which thou has committed to our trust : and that no worldly business, no worldly pleasures, may divert us from the thoughts of the life to come.

Make us sensible and thankful for all thy favours and mindful of the wants of others.

By thy mighty power defend us in all the assaults of our enemies ; and grant that this day we fall into no sin ; neither run into any kind of danger ; but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that which is righteous in thy sight.

May our gracious God give us what is needful for us, and grace not to abuse his favours ; and withal give us contented minds !

Give us in this world the knowledge of his truth, and in the world to come life everlasting.
Amen.

Hear us, O God, not according to our weak understandings, but according to the full meaning of that *form of prayer* which Jesus Christ has taught us.

Our Father which art in heaven ; hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.
Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

On Sunday Morning, let the following Prayer be added to your daily Prayer.

O LORD, who hast consecrated this good day to thy service, give us grace so to observe it, that it may be the *beginning* of an happy week to us, and that none of thy judgments may fall upon us for profaning it. Fix in your hearts this great truth, that *here* we have *no abiding place*, that we may seriously and timely provide

for another life ; and grant that this great concern may make us very desirous to *learn* our duty ; and *to do* what thou requirest of us. And blessed be God, that we have *Churches* to go to ; that we have *time* to serve our Creator ; that we have Pastors to teach us ! The Lord prosper their labours, and give us grace to profit by them ; that they and we may enjoy an everlasting Sabbath with thy saints in heaven, for Jesus Christ's sake !

Evening prayer for a family.

Let one standing, read, or say devoutly what followeth : the rest of the family attending.

By the favour of God we are come to the evening of this day : and we are so much nearer our latter end.

Let us seriously consider this, and pray God to fit us for the hour of death.

Let us with penitent hearts beseech him to pardon our sins ; and to deliver us from the evils which we have justly deserved.

Let us resolve to amend where we have done amiss, and pray God that his grace may ever be with us.

And that we may be safe under his protection, who alone can defend us from the power of darkness.

For all which blessings let us devoutly pray.

Then all devoutly kneeling, let one say,

O Lord, and heavenly Father, we acknowledge thy great goodness to us, in sparing us when

we deserve punishment; in *giving* us the necessities of this life; and in *setting* before us the happiness of a better.

The merciful God *pardon* our offences; *correct* and amend what is amiss in us; that as we grow in years, we may grow in grace; and the nearer we come to our latter end, we may be the better prepared for it!

In the midst of life we are in death.

Lord, grant that these thoughts may make us careful how we live, that we may escape the bitter pains of eternal death.

Take from us all *ignorance*, *hardness of heart*, and too much carefulness for the things of this life.

Make us an *household* fearing God, submitting ourselves to thy good pleasure, and putting our whole trust in thy mercy.

May God, whose kingdom ruleth over all, bless such as are put in authority, that they may govern with truth and justice; and that we, whose duty it is to obey, may do it for conscience sake!

Grant that true religion and piety may be secured and countenanced among us; and that *impiety*, *profaneness*, and *infidelity* may effectually be discouraged, that thy judgments may not fall upon this sinful nation.

Continue to us, and all the reformed Church, the means of grace and salvation. Cause that the saving truths of the Gospel may be received in all the world; and that *Christians* may not content themselves with *shadows of religion*, but endeavour after *that holiness*, without which no man must see the Lord.

Remember, gracious God, for good, all those that are over us in the *Lord*, who watch for our souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy. We commend unto thy tender compassion all that are in error, and sincerely seek the truth :—All such as are destitute of necessary means of instruction :—All that are engaged in sinful courses, that they may have grace and strength to break their bonds :—All that labour under trials and afflictions :—All sick and dying persons, that they may omit nothing that is necessary to make their peace with thee, before they die :—And also such as never pray for themselves, that they may see, before it be too late, the danger of living without God in the world. Vouchsafe unto us an interest in the prayers of thy holy Church throughout the world, which have been this day offered to the throne of grace.

Let thy blessing, O Lord, be with us :—Defend us from all perils and dangers of this night: and grant that when we depart this life, we may rest in peace, and in hope of a blessed resurrection through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

HEAR us, O merciful God, not according to our weak understanding, but according to the full meaning of that *form of prayer* which Jesus Christ has taught us.

Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

On Sunday Evening, *let the following Prayer be added to your daily Prayer.*

ALMIGHTY God, by whom all things were made and preserved, give us hearts to know, and grace to consider this, that we may cheerfully commit ourselves, and all that belongs to us, to thy merciful care; that we may ever look up to thee for what we want; be thankful for thy favours; never resist thy dealings with us, or neglect the means of grace which thy providence affords us. Blessed be God, who giveth us what is ever best for us: who keepeth us from dangers, and hath provided for us better than all our works can deserve! The good Lord make us mindful of our duty, that as we often hear how we ought to walk, and to please God, we may continue to do so unto our lives' end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

PRAYERS FOR PARTICULAR PERSONS, BOTH
MORNING AND EVENING.

In the morning.

Consider the danger of going into an evil world, and then you will never fail to pray for the blessing, protection, and grace of God, every morning of your life.

The prayer.

Psal. cxvi. *What shall I render unto the Lord, for his mercies renewed unto me every morning? — I will offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay my vows unto the Most High.*

And may God accept of my most hearty thanks for my preservation and refreshment, and for all the blessings of the night past, and of my life past!

Possess my soul, gracious God, with such a sense of this thy goodness, and of my dependence upon thee for *life, health prosperity, and comfort*, that it may be my delight, as it is my duty and interest, to serve and obey thee.

And that I may do this with a quiet mind, forgive me the sins of which my conscience is afraid: and avert the judgments which I have justly deserved.

Give me grace that I may continue in thy fear all the day long: and that I may live and act as having thee, O God, the constant witness of my conduct; and that it may be the purpose of my soul never to offend thee wilfully.

May thy restraining grace preserve me from the temptations of an evil world, from the frailty and corruption of my own nature, and from the evil principles and practices of the age we live in!

Possess my heart with a sincere love for thee, and for all mankind; and grant that I may have this comfortable and sure proof of thy love abiding in me, that I may study to please thee, and keep thy commandments.

Give me a tender compassion for the wants and miseries of my neighbour, that thou mayest have compassion upon me, O God.

In all my ways I do acknowledge thee. Do thou, O Lord, direct my paths, and teach me to guide my affairs, my designs, my words and actions, with charity, discretion, justice and piety.

Show me the way that I should walk in, and give me grace to follow the conduct of thy good Spirit, that I may do my duty, in that state of life in which thy providence has placed me.

Let me ever remember, *that the night cometh when no man can work*; and that now is the time in which to provide for eternity.

Grant, gracious God, that no worldly pleasure, no worldly business, may ever make me lose the sight of death, or forget the dangers that surround me.

Fill my heart with the dread of the punishments prepared for impenitent sinners, and my soul with a sense of the blessings which will be the sure reward of all them that love thee, and obey thy laws.

Hear me, O heavenly Father, not according to my imperfect petitions, but according to the full meaning of that holy prayer which thy beloved Son hath taught us.

Our Father, which art in heaven : hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation : But deliver us from evil : For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen.

PRAYERS FOR PARTICULAR PERSONS.

Evening prayer.

Every thoughtful person before he lieth down to sleep, will put himself under the protection of God, who giveth his angels charge concerning his elect, to preserve them from the powers of darkness, from the dangers of the night, and from all sad accidents.

THAT it hath pleased God to add another day to the years of my life, and that he hath kept me from the dangers of an evil world ;—For these, and for all his mercies from day to day bestowed upon me, I bless his good and gracious providence, most earnestly beseeching him to pardon my offences of the day past, and to grant that they may never rise up in judgment against me.

Lord, the frailty of man, without thee, cannot but fall ; in all temptations therefore I beseech thee to succour me, that no sin may ever get the dominion over me.

Give me a salutary dread of the corruption of my own heart. Make me truly sensible of the end of sin, and mindful of my own infirmities and backslidings.

Vouchsafe unto all sinners a true sense of their unhappy state, a fear of thy judgments, and grace and strength to break their bonds.

Enlighten my soul with saving truth : correct me in mercy, and reduce me when I go astray. Make me ever mindful of my latter end, and fix

in my heart a lively sense of the happiness and misery of the world to come.

May the thoughts of death mortify in me all pride and covetousness, and a love for this world: and may my firm belief of a judgment to come, make me ever careful to please thee, my Lord and Judge, that I may find mercy at that day !

Grant that I may lie down in sleep with the same charitable and forgiving temper in which I desire and hope to die.

And may the Almighty God take me, and all that belongs to me, under his gracious and powerful protection! May he give his angels charge concerning us, and keep us in perpetual peace and safety, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

St. John xvi 23. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

In thy name, O Jesus, and in the full meaning of the words which thou hast taught us, I pray God for thy sake, to hear me and to give me what is most convenient for me.

Our Father, which art in heaven : hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A

SHORT INTRODUCTION

FOR THE

TRUE UNDERSTANDING

OF THE

LORD'S SUPPER.

BY THE REV. THOMAS WILSON, D. D.

LORD BISHOP OF SODOR AND MAN.



A SHORT INTRODUCTION, &c.



SECTION I.

THERE are two holy Ordinances or *Sacraments*, appointed by Jesus Christ, as most especial means of obtaining grace and salvation : which no christian who hopes to be saved, must wilfully neglect—These are, BAPTISM, and the LORD'S SUPPER.

It must be supposed that you have already been made partaker of one of these two Sacraments;—*viz.* That of BAPTISM, by which you were admitted into the congregation of Christ's flock,—were restored to the favour of God,—and had the *Holy Spirit* communicated to you, for a principle of a new and spiritual life ; in order to awaken you, and to direct and assist that natural reason with which God has endued all mankind.

But forasmuch as you have done many things contrary to the promise made in your name, when you were baptised—and will stand in need of greater degrees of *grace* and *assistance*, to enable you to resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to do your duty in that state of life unto which the providence of God shall call you ; You are therefore now called upon to be partaker of the other Sacrament,—That of the LORD'S SUPPER : by which, upon your sin-

cere repentance, you may obtain the pardon of all your past sins, and such other graces as you stand in need of, to bring you to eternal life and happiness.

Take care, therefore, that you understand what you are called to as well as you are able ; and God expects no more.

For if you go to the *Lord's Supper* without considering the reason of that ordinance, and the very great concern you have in it—without seeing the necessity and blessing of a *Redeemer*, you will go with indifference, and return without such benefit, as you might otherwise hope for.

To prevent this, you should seriously consider what account the Holy Scriptures have given us of the condition we are in, both with respect to this life, and the life which is to come.

That is—That we are by nature sinners ; and that as such, God cannot take pleasure in us : that if we die before we are restored to his favour, we shall be separated from Him, and miserable for ever.

This will lead you to inquire, how the nature of man came to be thus disordered, and prone to evil ; for you must not imagine, that God, who is infinitely good, created man in such a state of corruption, as you now see and *feel him* to be ; but that he must have fallen into this wretched condition, since he came out of the hands of his Creator.

And so the Scripture informs us—In the third *chapter of Genesis*, we have the following account of the state of man, before, and after, the Fall:

That *Adam* and *Eve*, from whom sprang all mankind, *were created in the image of God* ; that is holy and innocent; having a *perfect knowledge of their duty, a command of their will and affections*, and a *power*, through the grace of God, *to do what they saw fit to be done*

In this condition they were placed in *Paradise*, in a *state of trial*, with a promise of immortal life and happiness, if they should continue to *fear, to love, to honour and obey* their Creator ; as also with an express warning, of the dreadful consequence of their disobedience.

Notwithstanding which warning, they, through the temptation of the devil, transgressed the commands of God ; and, by doing so, they did not only forfeit all right to the promise of eternal life and happiness, but also contracted such a *blindness in the understanding*, such a *disorder in their will and affections*, as all their posterity feel to their sorrow ; and became subject to sin, and the punishment of sin, which is misery and death.

Concerning the *nature and greatness* of this sin, we are to judge of it by the greatness of the punishment inflicted upon them, and their posterity.—*For God being infinitely just and holy could not inflict a punishment greater than their sins deserved.*

Now this was the occasion of that *universal corruption and wickedness* which you see and hear of in the world, and which you cannot but in some measure feel in your own nature;—For, as the Scriptures inform us, Gen. v. 3. *Adam*

begat his children in his own likeness ; that is, with such a depraved nature as his was then become.

And now consider into what a sad condition these unhappy offenders had brought themselves; and *remember that this is your own condition, and the condition of all their posterity*

The law of nature and reason was in full force, and could not possibly be dispensed with.—At the same time they found, by sad experience, that, as *St. Paul* describes the fallen state of man, *there was a law in their members warring against the law of their mind ; so that the good which they would, they did not ; but the evil that they would not, that they did.* Rom. vii.

There could not sure be a condition more deplorable than this :—To live only to contract evil habits ; and by doing so,—to increase their guilt,—to displease their Creator,—and to leave an offspring as miserable as themselves.

This, therefore, gave occasion to God to manifest another of his most glorious perfections, that is, his infinite *goodness* and *mercy*.

For God foreseeing this lamentable condition into which they had fallen by departing from their obedience, his *goodness* had provided such a remedy, as that neither they nor any of their posterity should on account of *their* fall, be eternally miserable, except through their own fault.

He, therefore, in consideration of a *Redeemer*, one of the seed of the woman, who should make full satisfaction to the divine justice for the transgression, and who should *bruise the head*,

or break the *power*, of that *serpent* (the devil) which tempted them to sin ;—in consideration of this promised seed, God entered into a *new covenant* with them, by way of remedy for what was past, and could not be undone.

We have reason to believe that this *covenant* was more fully explained to *Adam* than is set down in this short account given us by *Moses*, and as it is more fully explained in the Gospel : and which was to this purpose ;—*That on condition of their sincere repentance and sincere obedience afterwards, they should be restored to the favour of God ; and after death, to that life and happiness, which in their state of innocence was promised to them without tasting of death ;* which favour they had forfeited by their disobedience.

And when we consider that our *first parents*, now become sinners, stood in need of an *atonement*, without which, while under the displeasure of God, their very lives must be a burthen ; and it being decreed by God, as it afterwards appeared, *that without shedding of blood there was to be no remission of sin*, i. e. without the death of the sinner, or of some one in his stead ; we do therefore conclude, that at this time, God, did appoint *sacrifices*, or sin-offerings, to make an atonement for the soul, and to foreshow the *sacrifice* of Jesus Christ (which we now commemorate) until he should be offered in behalf of them, and their posterity.

And this appears from what follows in the next chapter of *Genesis*, where we find *Abel* by

faith (that is, believing and depending upon this ordinance of God, for the remission of sins, until the promised Redeemer should come ; we find him) offering a *sacrifice* which was acceptable to God, that is, a *sin-offering*, which his brother not doing was rejected.

But here take notice, and remember, that these *sacrifices* could not take away sin, but only through obedience to the ordinance of God, and through faith in the promised seed.

They were, indeed, very instructive and proper to lead sinners to repentance, and amendment of life, when they saw, that their sins could not be forgiven, *but by the death of an innocent creature*, bleeding and dying before their eyes, to make an atonement for sin.

And *as all good men*, before the coming of Christ, did most religiously keep up the remembrance of the promised seed, and obtained the pardon of their sins, and acceptance with God, *upon offering sacrifices through faith in a Redeemer, which was to come ;*--so all *Christians* since the coming of that *Redeemer*, are obliged, as they hope for pardon and favour from God, to keep up the remembrance of God's great mercy, in sending us a *Redeemer*, and of what that *Redeemer* has done to save us ; and this in the manner which he himself hath ordained.

Now, that you may be more sensible of, and thankful to God for this his infinite loving-kindness, and that you may be fully convinced of the necessity and blessing of a Redeemer, you ought

to know and consider, that our *Saviour* and *Redeemer* came not *until man had been tried in all conditions*,--IN a STATE OF INNOCENCE--UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF HIS OWN REASON--and UNDER THE LAW GIVEN BY MOSES. All which methods of Providence, through the perverse will of man, had been rendered ineffectual for the amendment of the world.--Notwithstanding which, such was the goodness of God, that he sent, after all, *his own beloved Son*, to take our nature upon him, and to assure mankind of the tender love which he had for his poor creatures, which were ruining themselves, without perceiving the danger they were in.

This was the *promised seed*;--promised to *Adam*, as *he* that should break the serpent's head, or power of the devil :--promised to *Abraham* as *he in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed*;--promised to the people of *Israel*, as *that prophet* whom they should hear and obey at their peril :--Lastly, promised to *David* as *one whose kingdom should have no end*. And indeed it was with *this promise*, that God supported the spirits of all who feared him, and were in fear for themselves, until the fulness of the time for his appearance should come.

And now this *promised Redeemer* being come, he first showed by his own example, recorded in the Gospel, how men must live so as to please God. And the law of nature, as well as the law of *Moses*, having through sin been much obscured and perverted, he explained them, and

gave us such other laws and rules as were absolutely necessary—to mend our nature—to restore us to the image of God—to keep us from backsliding, and—to fit us for heaven and happiness.

And because in the decrees of God, as was before observed, *without shedding of blood there could be no remission of sin*; and it being impossible that the *blood* or *life* of any other creature, or of any mortal man, could take away the guilt and punishment due to sin; our gracious God, both to give to mankind the greatest token of his love, and at the same time to show how great his hatred to sin is, by the greatness of the punishments it required, *He sent his own Son to be the propitiation for our sins*; that is, to make satisfaction to his justice, and to take off the just displeasure which he had declared against sinners.

And his son (blessed for ever be his goodness) knowing how dreadfully sad the condition would be of all such, who should live and die under the displeasure of God, and what inconceivable happiness they would deprive themselves of; he therefore, moved with compassion for so great a calamity, undertook to obtain their pardon.

In order to this, he clothed himself with our flesh, that, as *man*, *He* might suffer what our sins had deserved; and, as he was the *Son of God*, he might make a full and suitable satisfaction to the divine justice, offering himself a *sacrifice* for the sins of the whole world: and for the joy of delivering so many millions of souls from misery, he endured *the death of the cross*, and all

the afflictions leading to it which we find recorded in the Gospel.

And, by this worthy *sacrifice*, all mankind are restored to the favour of God, and put into a way and state of salvation ; God having, for his Son's sake, promised to pardon all such as shall repent and forsake their sins, and *bring forth fruit meet for repentance* ; as also to give his Holy Spirit to all such as shall sincerely desire him :—And lastly, to make them eternally happy after death, if during this short state of trial, which is designed to mend our corrupt and disordered nature, they endeavoured to observe the rules which he has given them, and which are absolutely necessary to make them capable of heaven and happiness.

Stop here a while—and adore the infinite goodness of God, who did not overlook lost mankind, but sent his Son to redeem us.

He might in strict justice have required men to have lived up to the law of *nature* and *reason* given in the state of innocence, on pain of being for ever separated from his presence ; but instead of that, he has been graciously pleased to accept of our sincere though imperfect obedience, and of our sincere repentance when we have done amiss, and return to our duty.

Consider this seriously :—And you cannot but express your thankfulness after some such manner as this :

The prayer.

BLESSED be God for ever for this intance of

his love to fallen mankind, in committing the miserable case of his unhappy creatures to no less a person than his own Son!—We are not worthy of all the mercies which thou hast showed thy servants.—Grant, O God, that this wonderful love may not be lost upon me; but that knowing my sad condition by nature, I may be truly convinced of the necessity and blessing of a Redeemer; and that I may, with a heart full of gratitude, join with thy Church in giving our devoutest thanks to thee, and in keeping up the remembrance of what thy blessed Son has done and suffered for us; to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, praise, and thanksgiving, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

SECTION II.

The End and Institution of the LORD'S SUPPER.

ST. Paul concludes his first Epistle to the *Corinthians* with this remarkable direction;—*If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema, Maranathā*: that is, Let him be separated from your communion, as one under the displeasure of God, and, without a timely repentance, in no possibility of being saved: nothing being more greivous in the sight of God, than for a sinner to slight the greatest instance of his mercy that was ever offered to man, as well as the only means of his salvation.

To prevent this, and to hinder sinners from forgetting (which they are but too apt do) this

token of God's infinite love, and to fix the love of Jesus Christ more surely in our hearts and memory, he himself hath taken care, that his love and mercy should throughout all generations be remembred ; he did therefore ordain this Sacrament as a memorial of our redemption, and of his love for us ; as a pledge to assure us of it : and as an outward means and sign of testifying, as well as increasing our love to him.

The holy apostles of Christ, who were present when he first administered this Sacrament, give us the following account of its end and institution :

They signify to us in the first place, that *this Sacrament* was ordained by Christ the same night in which he was betrayed ; and after they had observed the *Passover*, which had been ordained to preserve the memory of their great deliverance from the bondage in *Egypt*, and which did prefigure, and was a prophecy of a much greater deliverance, which *Jesus Christ* was to be the author of, not only for them but for all mankind : and which *prophecy* was surprisingly fulfilled by that people, without knowing what they were doing, when they crucified Jesus Christ *the true Paschal Lamb*, the very *same* month, the very *same* day of the month, and the very *same* hour of the day, that the *Paschal Lamb* was first ordained to be sacrificed.

Now, after the *Paschal Supper*, as the Apostles relate it—*Jesus Christ took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take, eat : this is my body, which is*

given for you : this do in remembrance of me. He took also the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this : for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins : This do, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me : for as oft as ye shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, till he come.

In obedience therefore to this command of Jesus Christ, who has delivered us from a much greater bondage than that of *Egypt*,—the Christian Church keeps up the memory of *his love, his sacrifice, and his sufferings and death*, after this solemn manner.

First, as an acknowledgment, that our lives, and all that we eat or drink to preserve them, are owing to the bounty of God, we present upon *his table*, by the *hands* of his own minister, a portion of his creatures, the best we have for the support and comfort of our natural life, namely, *bread and wine*. After this the *bread* and *wine* are consecrated, the *bread* is broken, and the *wine* poured out, to represent the death of Christ, whose body was broken, and whose blood was shed for us.

Then the *minister of God*, as the *steward* of Christ's household, applies these blessings to every person, who receives this Sacrament, in this devout prayer :—*The body and blood of Christ, which were given and shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.*

And we may be assured of it, that this *Sacrament* will be to every worthy communicant, what the *tree of life* would have been unto *Adam* and *Eve* in *Paradise*;—and that *as they*, had they continued obedient, would have been in no danger of temporal death; even so *we*, while we feed on this bread, now endued with a life-giving spirit, and live as we ought to do, are in no danger of death eternal.

These being *pledges* to assure us, that as certainly as bread and wine do nourish our bodies, so do these seal to us all the benefits which *Jesus Christ* hath purchased for us, by his sacrifice and death.

And when any *Christian* does wilfully, and for want of faith, deprive himself of this spiritual food, he falls, as our *first parents* did, into a state purely natural, and destitute of the means of grace and salvation.

For the happiness of the world, and of every soul in it depends upon the sacrifice of *Christ*; of which we are bound to keep up the remembrance after this solemn manner.

That, whenever we pray for any favour or blessing, we may remember to do it *in his name*: That, whenever we are so unhappy as to have done any thing which may displease God, we may remember to pray to be forgiven *for Christ's sake*.

For God grants whatever we ask, and which he sees to be for our good, when we ask *in faith*, that is *in his Son's name*; and therefore the Church concludes all her prayers in these most prevailing words: *for Jesus Christ's sake*.

In one word, we do by this sacrament keep up a continual correspondence with our Lord in heaven, and hold communion with him, and with all the members of his body, which receive nourishment and growth from him, as the branches from the tree in which they are grafted, and from which, when they are separated, they can bear no fruit, and are only fit to be burned.

As every Christian is obliged, at the peril of his soul, to observe it, so the duty must be such, as every one, even the most unlearned, may understand, if it is not his own fault.

And so indeed it is ; for as an *Israelite Lev. i. 4*, under the law, being obliged to lay his *hand* upon the *head* of his sacrifice, confessing his sins, and laying them, as it were, *upon that creature*—as he did easily understand, that this was to show him, that death was the due reward of sin : that this ought to humble him before God, and to give him the greatest abhorrence of sin, which could not be pardoned but by the loss of the life of an innocent creature.

As this was plain to the meanest *Israelite*, even so the most unlearned Christian, when he considers, that our Lord Jesus Christ became a sacrifice for us, and that on him all our sins were laid,—on him who knew no sin ;—he will easily understand how sad our condition was, which required such a sacrifice:—that this therefore ought to humble us,—to lead us to repentance, to make us fearful of offending God,—and to abhor those sins which cost *Jesus Christ* his life, before God could be prevailed with to pardon them.

He will also easily understand, that the love of Christ, and the remembrance of his death, ought to be very dear to us ; and that the oftener we remember it in the manner he ordained, the more graces we shall receive from God ; the firmer will be our *faith*, the surer our *pardon*, and the more comfortable our *hopes* of meeting him, not as an *enemy*, but as a *friend*, at whose table we have been so often entertained.

And now, if you have considered what you have read with any degree of attention, you will pause awhile,—until you have expressed your gratitude for his mercy, after some such manner as this following :

The Prayer.

O Jesus, who hast loved us, and washed us from our sins, and purchased us by thine own blood,—and didst ordain this sacrament in order to secure us to thyself by a grateful remembrance of what thou hast done and suffered for us, make me truly sensible of thy love, and of our sad condition, which did require such a sacrifice.

May I always receive this pledge of thy love,—the offers of mercy, pardon, and grace, tendered to us in this holy ordinance, with a thankful heart, and in remembrance of thee, our great and best benefactor ; in remembrance of thy holy example,—of thy heavenly doctrine,—of thy laborious life,—of thy bitter passion and death,—of thy glorious resurrection,—of thy ascension into heaven,—and of thy coming again to judge the world !

And may I never forget the obligation thou hast laid upon us, to live as becomes thy disciples ; and to forsake every course of life contrary to thy Gospel : Cease not, O Lord, to love us ; and by the grace vouchsafed in this ordinance, cause us to love thee with all our hearts. *Amen.*

SECTION III.

How a Christian ought to prepare himself for this Sacrament.

As the above account of this holy ordinance is easy to be understood, even by the most unlearned Christian ; so the preparation required is such as will neither puzzle the understanding, nor burden the memory, nor take up too much of the time of those that are engaged in the most necessary employments of life.

The Church had regard to all her members, when she gave this short and plain direction to such as prepare to go to the Lord's Supper :

That they examine themselves,

Whether they repent them truly of their former sins ?

Whether they steadfastly purpose to lead a new life ?

Whether they have a lively faith in God's mercy, through Christ ?

Whether they have a thankful remembrance of his death ? And,

Whether they be in charity with all men ?

Now forasmuch as all Christians who are capable of examining themselves and their own consciences, are bound, as they hope for salvation through Christ, to go to this sacrament : and because young people are often at a loss how to examine themselves upon these several heads : here follow a few plain directions, which they that can read should read with care ; and they that cannot, if they have a true concern for themselves, will find some good Christian, who will be glad to read it to them, and do thereby a work which must be well-pleasing to God.

The FIRST HEAD on which you are to examine yourself is, concerning your Repentance.

By what you have already heard concerning *the fall of Man*, you understand how all men became subject and prone to sin ; and you cannot but feel it to be so by sad experience. We are assured also, and this by the Spirit of God, that without a sincere repentance no man must hope to be saved.

Now by repentance you are to understand a man's condemning himself for having done any thing displeasing to God :—either such things as God has forbidden, to keep us from ruining ourselves ; or by omitting such duties as he has commanded, in order to fit us for happiness when we *die*.

So that if either the *fear* of God's displeasure, or a *love* of him who has been so good to you, will weigh with you, you will most heartily con-

demn yourself for every thing you have done contrary to his will and command.

You will also beg him most earnestly to forgive you what is past ; and you will promise and resolve, through his grace and help, not wilfully to offend him again.

And, lastly, you will not forget to pray for his *grace* every day of your life ; without which your best resolutions will come to nothing.

This is *that repentance* concerning which you are required to *examine* yourself, before you go to the *Lord's Supper*.

Most people, it is true, are ready to own that they are sinners, and cry *Lord forgive us* ; and this too often without any great concern or purposes of amendment.

But this you will not think sufficient, when you seriously consider that the *end* and *punishment* of sin are not to be seen in this life.

If, therefore, you stand in any fear of the judgment of God, set yourself seriously to consider your past life ; see whether you have not lived, or do not now live, in any known *sin*, or *evil habit* ; of *lying*—for example : or *swearing*—or *drinking*—or *filthy talking* ;—of *uncleanness*—of *keeping loose and profane company*—of *following unwarrantable pleasures and diversions*, or—of *leading an idle, useless, sinful life*.

If this has been your case, resolve to break off all these, and all such like evil ways, which are displeasing to God ; condemn yourself for having so desperately broken the commands of one *who*

can destroy both body and soul in hell ; consider the vows that are upon you,—and despise not the goodness and forbearance of God, which is designed to lead you to repentance.

If you ask when you are to begin this necessary work, (if it is not already begun,) the answer is short : the very moment you ask the question ; —and this, because if you find an unwillingness in yourself to set about it now,—that unwillingness will every day increase : very probably you will never repent, unless God, by his judgments or by the sight of death, shows you your sad error, when it may be too late to be of any real use to you.

Now, if these considerations affect your heart, as sure they will do if you have any regard for your salvation, represent your desires to God in some such words as these following :

The Prayer.

BLESSED be God, who by his grace, and by the voice of his Church, hath called me to repentance ! Discover to me, O thou Searcher of hearts, the charge that is against me, that I may know, and confess, and forsake the sins I have fallen into.—Give me that true repentance, to which thou hast promised mercy and pardon, that I may amend where I have done amiss, and that iniquity may not be my ruin.—And, O blessed Advocate, who ever livest to make intercession for us, I put my cause into thy hands ; let thy blood and merits plead for me, and by thy mighty intercession procure for me the par-

don of my past offences.—That thou mayest say unto me, as thou didst unto the penitent in the gospel—*Thy sins are forgiven*; so that I may go with a quiet conscience to thy holy table.
Amen.

SECTION IV.

Concerning the purposes you are to make of leading a NEW, that is, a CHRISTIAN LIFE.

IN the first place, take especial notice, that God accepts of our *repentance on this condition only*, that we may afterwards glorify him by an holy Christian life.

And as he delivered the people of *Israel* from bondage, not that they might do what was right in their own eyes, but that, becoming an *holy nation*, they might be an honour to their deliverer—*Deut. xiv. 2.*—Even so Christ has redeemed us from the bondage of Sin and *Satan*, that he might redeem us from this present evil world, and purify unto himself *a people zealous of good works.*

And as the former perished, that is, all such as did not answer the end of their deliverance, so most surely shall we do, if we do not obey our Redeemer.

Your duty to God, your neighbour, and yourself, you have known from a child :—be assured of it, you will meet with temptations from the *devil*, the *world*, and your own *corrupt heart*, both to neglect and transgress the commands of God.

It will be absolutely necessary therefore, that you arm yourself betimes, both with *holy resolutions*, and with this *holy ordinance*, which you are preparing to go to, that you may be able, through the grace of God, to go on in the way of salvation.

Now your duty to God is, *To believe in him, to fear and to love him*, with all your heart and soul; forasmuch as you stand indebted to him for all you have, or value, or hope for, in this or the next life.

Do but consider how you would behave yourself, if you were but half so much obliged to any man on earth;---How dearly would you love him! How often would you think on him! How would you strive to please him! How would you be grieved if you should be so unhappy as to offend him! How soon and earnestly would you beg his pardon to be restored to his favour!

Now, if you thus love God, it will appear in such instances as these: you will have a very great regard *for every thing* that belongs to him:—you will not use his name to any idle or wicked purpose:—you will religiously observe the *day* consecrated to his honour and service:—you will carefully attend the *house* and *worship* of God:—and behave yourself with reverence and devotion while you are in his presence.—You will hear his word with attention, and have a great regard for his *ordinances*, and for the persons whom he hath appointed to administer them.

If you truly *fear* God, you will part with an

thing as dear as a *right hand*, or a *right eye*, rather than provoke *Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell*.

If you believe him to be the *fountain of all good*, you will pray to him daily. And if you put your whole trust in God, as it is your duty to do, you will endeavour to be pleased with all his dealings with you,—you will never *murmer* at the ways of his providence, nor suffer your heart to *fret against the Lord*. And especially you will never attempt to better or secure your condition by any evil ways : believing assuredly, that God can and will make you full amends in the next life, for what you want and suffer in this, in submission to his will.

Lastly, your duty is to be thankful to *God*. The way to be so is, to look upon every *mercy* you receive as the gift of God ; every *danger* you escape, as owing to his *care* and *providence* ; every *good thought*, every *good purpose*, every *occasion of doing good*, as the effect of his *good Spirit*.

Think, and *act*, and *purpose* thus ; and it will be as natural to thank God for all the dispensations of his providence, as it is for you to beg any blessing from him, which you stand in most need of.

Stop awhile, until you have considered these things, and until you have your senses of them in the following prayer :

The Prayer.

THIS is indeed the first and great command, to love *Thee, O God, with all our heart* : for on this

depends our salvation. But even this must be the gift of thy grace ; for this grace I now apply to thee, to make my love and fear of thee the governing principle of my whole life ; that I may always do what I believe will please thee ; that I may carefully avoid what I know will offend thee ; and that I may live as having thee the constant witness of my thoughts, words, and actions.

Give me a steadfast faith in thy word and promises ; a firm trust in thy power. Let the fear of thy justice keep me from presumption, and a sense of thy goodness from despair. Defend me from all those bewitching snares which destroy our love of thee : from worldly cares ; from sensual and sinful pleasures ; from evil company ; from foolish diversions : and from every thing that may make me forget, that thou alone art worthy to be feared and loved. Grant me these mercies for thy Son Jesus Christ his sake ; whose love and death we are going to commemorate.
Amen.

SECTION V.

Your duty to your Neighbour and Yourself.

THIS is the *second great command*, and will require the most solemn resolutions you can make before you go to the *Lord's Supper*.

Consider therefore whether you can sincerely resolve as follows :

I dare not, I will not be indifferent how I lead

my life. I know what God has commanded me, and I purpose sincerely to do it.

I will, in the first place, be obedient to the lawful commands of my superiors, and especially to those who watch for my soul. I do sincerely purpose in all my dealings to remember the command given me by my Saviour, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*: and therefore I will make a conscience of doing the least wrong to any man; or of using any deceit, fraud, or oppression; or of taking advantage of the ignorance, mistakes, or necessity of my neighbour: knowing assuredly, that he who wrongs his neighbour, does the greatest injury to himself. And if at any time I am convinced that I have done him any wrong, I will make him satisfaction as far as I am able; without being forced by law *To do unto others what I would they should do unto me*.

To this end, I will endeavour to live peaceably and charitably with all people; avoiding all malice and revenge, and evil-speaking, and contention, as much as possibly I can. And I will speak truth at all times, and especially when I am called to my *oath*, whether it be *for* or *against* any worldly interest.

AS TO THE DUTY I OWE TO MYSELF—I am convinced, that my first and great concern ought to be, *to take care of my own soul*.

I do therefore steadfastly purpose to lead a serious life, as one under the sentence of death ought to do; To be *sober, temperate, and chaste*; that when I die, I may be admitted into the

paradise of God, where no *unclean* thing must enter.

To this end, I resolve to keep a watch over myself, that I may avoid all such company, such pleasures, and diversions, as may make me lose the remembrance of death, and the account I must give.

I will endeavour to be content with my condition, not coveting what is another man's, neither envying the prosperity, nor taking pleasure in the *calamities* of my neighbour.

And forasmuch as a life of idleness and luxury is hateful to God, I will strive to do my duty in the state of life in which his providence has placed me ; not flattering myself that I do no evil, when I do no good in my generation ; lest the sentence upon the unfruitful tree be passed upon me,—*Cut it down why cumbereth it the ground?*

These duties I will endeavour to perform, as a proof of the love and reverence I bear to God, who is so good as to accept of my repentance, and a *sincere* though *imperfect* obedience.

And if through *weakness, temptation, or sudden surprise*, I shall be so unhappy as to forget any of these resolutions, and fall into sin, I will, as soon as I perceive it, beg God's pardon, and be more careful for the time to come.

Now if your conscience can witness for you that you piously purpose to live after this manner, you may safely go to the Lord's table, and the blessing of God will go along with you.

Go no further till you have considered those

purposes again ; for they are to be the purposes of your whole life, and of every day of your life.

And then address yourself to God, that through his gracious assistance, they may make the more lasting impression upon your mind.

The prayer.

GRACIOUS GOD, who hast given us precepts and an example to walk by, let the remembrance of them be always seasonably present with me. Give me grace to practice them conscientiously, to reverence my betters, and all that are in authority, and especially such as are ordained to pray for, and to bless us in thy name. Let my love for thee and for my neighbour, keep me from all acts of injustice, or injury, to his body or good name ; let me never wilfully vex or trouble him ; never covet what is his, or envy his prosperity. May I ever be ready to help and comfort all such as are in distress ; give me grace to be faithful in all things committed to my trust ; that I may never pervert truth and justice ; never propagate slander, or raise evil reports, nor ever tempt others to sin. Give me the spirit of temperance and chastity, and grant that I may never provoke thee by any instance of uncleanness to shut me out of heaven, where no unclean thing can enter. Give me grace so to order my conversation, that I may encourage others to live as becomes the Gospel of Jesus Christ ; for whose sake I beg to be heard. *Amen.*

SECTION VI.

The next thing you are to inquire into is, Whether you have A LIVELY FAITH IN GOD'S MERCY THROUGH CHRIST.

Now because so very much depends upon our having such a *faith*——the Holy Ghost has given us all the arguments,——all the assurance,——that our hearts can desire. *God so loved the world that he spared not his own Son, (saith the Apostle,) but gave him up for us all, Rom. viii. 32.*——Can there be a greater, a surer pledge of the love of God, for his poor creatures? ——He made him to be sin (that is, a sin-offering.) He delivered him to death in our stead ; ——Can we, after this, doubt of, or distrust the mercy of God ?

Observe the method St. Paul takes to confirm our faith, by giving us the strongest proofs of our acceptance with God. *God, said he, commended his love to us, in that while we were enemies, we were reconciled to him by the death of his Son—much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life—Rom. v. 10.*——What may we not, after this, hope for from God ?

In short Jesus Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law.—*Through him we have peace with God,—Rom. v. 1.* This is the only foundation of our faith, our hope, and confidence. He is our sacrifice, our mediator, our advocate ; the knowledge of which ought to remove all occasions of despair and fear from the displeasure of God.

Indeed if we should attempt to go to God, without an interest in Christ, we could hope for nothing but to be rejected :—but when we go to him as *redeemed* by his own Son---and represent to him, as we do *in this holy Sacrament*, what he has done and suffered for us, we approach him as entirely reconciled to us.

But then you must remember, that he gave himself for us, and hath redeemed us from the power of the devil for this end, that he may purify unto himself a people, consecrated to his service.—Consecrate, therefore, yourself to Jesus Christ, and with faithful *Abraham*, stagger not at the promises of God ; but go to this sacrament with a full assurance of faith, that God will pardon your sins, and give you all the graces you shall stand in need of.—Only remember, *that this faith itself* is the gift of God, and must be prayed for Christ's sake : which you may do after this manner.

The prayer.

I BESEECH thee, O God, by that love which moved thee to give thine own Son for lost mankind, give me a faith in thy promises for his sake, as firm as thy word, on which my faith is grounded : and let me never presume upon thy gracious promises, without sincerely [endeavouring to perform the conditions on which they were made, and without being zealous of good works, for which we were redeemed.—May the remembrance of our Saviour's love, and of thy great mercy, be ever seasonably present with me, to keep me

from despair !—And may my faith in thy promises support me in the hour of death !—May my Redeemer be my refuge, his blood and merits plead for me, that I may have my lot and portion with those whom he hath purchased with his most precious blood ! *Amen.*

SECTION VII.

*Whether you have a thankful Remembrance of Christ's Death :—*This is the next thing you are to inquire into.

Now this will always bear some proportion to the sense you have of the evil he has delivered you from, and the blessing he has by his death procured for you.

Consider, therefore, yourself as a *poor, sinful, lost, undone* creature, without a *Redeemer*.——Consider what that Redeemer has done for you:——What he did, and what he suffered, when he took upon himself to answer for the sins of men.

Consider that he was the Son of God ; that *He had done no wrong, neither was guile found in his mouth* ; notwithstanding this, being to answer for sinners, he was treated and punished as a sinner deserves to be : *He was despised ! set at nought ! Persecuted and rejected* by his own people, whom he came to redeem !

He was *betrayed* by his own disciple ; falsely *accused ! Unrighteously condemned ! Unmerci-*

fully *scourged* ;—Had a murderer preferred before him ! Was crucified as a *malefactor* : and in the very midst of his torments, was most inhumanly reviled.

Consider the reason of all this---It was not only to satisfy the justice of God for the sins of men, and procure their pardon upon their repentance and future obedience : but also to show mankind what treatment *sin* and *sinner*s, who have rebelled against their Maker, do deserve ; and to teach us, when God orders or permits us sinners to undergo such indignities and afflictions in this our state of trial, that we ought to take our cross patiently as our Redeemer did ; and be content, and even pleased, to fulfil the will of God in following his example *in his sufferings* in this life, that we may be partakers of his glory in the next.

In the next place, consider the blessing which Jesus Christ hath by his death obtained for us. He hath delivered us from the great power which the devil had over mankind, by procuring us grace to resist and overcome him. He hath prevailed with God—to overlook the untowardness of our nature ;—to pardon our greatest offences upon our true repentance ;—and being by his death reconciled to God, we have for his sake, free liberty to apply to him, as *children* to a *father*, for what we stand in need of.

He has also obtained for us the assistance of an Almighty Spirit, to enable us to know and to do what is necessary to fit us for heaven and

happiness : And he has prevailed with God that these shall be our certain portion, if we are not wanting to ourselves. In one word, Jesus Christ has entirely freed us from all fears of what may come hereafter, if it is not purely our own fault.

The most unlearned Christian may know what is required of him.

The greatest sinner may depend upon pardon on his repentance.

The weakest Christian may rely upon all necessary assistance : and the meanest Christian is sure not to be overlooked.

By all which you may perceive what *thanks* you owe to God for your great and good *Redeemer*, and for what he has done and suffered for you : which you will do well to express in some such manner as this :

The Prayer

GIVE me leave O God to mention before thee the death of thy Son, and the infinite blessings I have received thereby : add this to all thy favours, I beseech thee, that I may never forget these mercies ; never forget to be thankful for them ; but that I may preserve the remembrance of them in the manner which he hath ordained. I thank thee, O God, for that Word in which thou hast caused these thy mercies and his example to be recorded. Make me truly sensible of that love which brought him down from Heaven ; and how sad our condition was which required such a sacrifice. May I learn by his patience, humil-

ity, self-denial, and resignation, what virtues are most acceptable to thy divine Majesty ! And may I take him for my Lord and Master, and Teacher, and Example ; and dedicate myself to thee, and to thy service, for his sake ! *Amen.*

SECTION VIII.

The last Inquiry you are to make is, Whether you are in Charity with all the World ?

CONCERNING which, take especial notice, that the two great ends of this ordinance mentioned in Scripture are :

The first, To keep up the remembrance of Christ's Death till his coming again.

The second, To be a solemn token of our communion with Jesus Christ, and of our union and charity with all his family.

To this end he has ordained, that as all Christians high and low, rich and poor, shall make up one body, of which he is the Head ; and of one family, of which he is the Master :—So they should all eat at one table, of one bread as a sign of that *love, peace and friendship*, and *readiness* to help one another, as occasion shall require, and as members of the same body will naturally do.

And indeed your acceptance with God will very much depend upon your hearty good will for every Christian, and for all mankind.

Therefore you must take especial care, lest there be any person with whom you are not at

peace ; whom you cannot forgive, and pray for, and do him all the good that can in reason be expected from you : That you be disposed to make satisfaction to any person that has been injured by you, or who may have taken just offence at your words or actions, this being a duty which Jesus Christ himself has commanded, *Matt. v. 23.* And that you may be ready to *forgive* every person, who may have injured you, as you expect *forgiveness* of God : Remembering the dreadful sentence mentioned in *Matt. xviii. Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all thy debt : shouldst not thou have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee ? And the Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormenters.*

And lastly, you are to take care, that you love, *not in word only, but in deed, and in truth ;* that is, that you do good as well as give good words ; and relieve Jesus Christ in his poor members.

And believe it for a certain truth, that a charitable and forgiving temper is not so beneficial to any body as to him that hath it ; *it being more blessed to give than to receive ;* and to forgive than to insist upon satisfaction for injuries and wrongs done to us ; *Acts xx. 35.*

This being so necessary a grace, you will not fail to beg of God most earnestly to vouchsafe it to you.

The Prayer.

This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. Hear, O my soul,

what thy Saviour has commanded thee ; He who loved us, and gave himself an offering and a sacrifice to God for us.

May this thy love O Jesus, be the motive and pattern of my love and charity for all mankind ! Where this hath not been my practice, I implore thy gracious pardon ; and beseech thee to fortify my soul against all suggestions of *Satan*, or my corrupt nature and blind passions—That I may always be prepared to go to thine altar, with the same charitable dispositions with which I desire and hope to die.

Thou, O Jesus, madest thine enemies thy friends, by laying down thy life for them. Be thou my advocate with God for grace to follow thy heavenly charity and example, that *I may overcome evil with good* ; that I, and all the members of thy family, *may love as brethren* ; That we may always meet at thy table as sincere friends, and part with true love and affection, as becomes thy disciples. *Amen.*

SECTION IX.

By this time you see the reason of this institution ; the *necessity*, as well as the invaluable blessing, of observing it religiously ; and the manner of preparing yourself for it, as often as you have an opportunity.

And remember, that the oftener you look into the state of your soul, in order to go to this or-

dinance, the less trouble you will have to make your peace with God, when you come to die : and the less danger you will be in of falling into a state of sin and security, which has been the ruin of an infinite number of souls.

Besides this, you will have the greatest comfort in life, when you perceive that you are still growing in grace, and tending to that perfection which must fit you for heaven.

On the other hand, if you turn your back upon this ordinance, it must be because you will not be at the pains to understand your *duty*, your *interest*, and your *danger*.

You have not considered that there is no *pardon*, no *grace*, no *salvation* to be hoped for, but by pleading with God what his Son hath done, and suffered, and merited for us, and in the manner he has ordained.

And if you will consult your own conscience, it will tell you, that some of these are the true, though most wretched causes of your contempt of this command of your Saviour's.

Either you live in some known sin, or ungodly way of life, which you cannot resolve to forsake : Or you are not willing to renew your vows made in baptism : Or, which is generally the case, you have no real concern for your soul ; only you delude yourself with some faint purposes and hopes, that some time or other you will become a new man.

In the mean time you are guilty of a *sin too* like the *denying the Lord that bough tyou* : You

bring an evil report upon an ordinance of Christ, as if it were not worth observing ; You harden wicked people in their infidelity, and neglect of their salvation, by calling yourself a Christian, and living like an heathen, in the contempt of one of the greatest means of salvation You live in a state in which all your prayers, whether public or private, whether for yourself or for others, will be rejected.

In short, you provoke God every day more and more to withdraw his grace,—To leave you to your own corrupt way of living, till you have filled up the measure of your sins, and prepared for yourself a sentence not to be heard without trembling. *I tell you that none of these men that were bidden, shall taste of my supper.* The marriage-supper of the Lamb in heaven.

How great then must the sin of *those* be, who *neglect* to administer, and of *those who turn their backs*, upon this ordinance, upon which our salvation depends ! *It being the blood of Christ which must cleanse us from all sin.* 1 John, i. 7.

After all, this is not to encourage any person to go to the Lord's Supper without a *wedding-garment*, without a due regard to the duty. For a man may go so unworthily, as to receive *judgment* instead of a *blessing*. For example, *Such* as live in any known sin unrepented of : *Such* as are not sincerely resolved to live and to be governed by the known laws of the gospel ; *Such* as live at variance with their neighbours, without being willing to be reconciled ; *Such* as have

done wrong, and will not make satisfaction, as they are able ; Lastly, *Such as go out of mere custom*, without considering the *end* or *benefit* of the ordinance ; and return to their usual sinful liberties, as soon as the service is over.

All such ought to know, that they went unworthily ; and if they have any true concern for their souls, they will consider better, and lay themselves under stricter obligations, before they go again to the Lord's Supper.

But then, let them not, at the peril of their souls, deal deceitfully, and make this a pretence of neglecting to go to this ordinance for the future ; lest they provoke God *to leave them to themselves*, which is one of the greatest judgments that can befall them.

On the other hand, let not any well-meaning Christian be discouraged with fears of having gone unworthily to the Lord's Supper ; and so forbear, because they do not find all the *benefit* and *change* wrought in them, which they hoped for, but let them consider that a state of *holiness* and *perfection* is not to be expected at once, but by degrees ; and as we make good use of the graces which the Holy Spirit from time to time vouchsafes to us.

A good Christian not being one who has no inclination to sin, but *one* who through the grace of God, immediately checks and suffers not such inclination to grow into evil habits.

God, who knows our infirmities, will accept our *sincere endeavours*, though attended with

imperfections and *backslidings*, provided we condemn ourselves for them, and strive to mend.

And let us remember for our comfort that Jesus Christ himself pronounced all his disciples (*the traitor excepted*) to be *clean* that is *qualified* to receive this sacrament, which he was going to administer to them, although he knew them to be subject to very great *failings* and *infirmities*; which soon appeared, when they all forsook him, contrary to their solemn promises; but this they repented of and were forgiven by their compassionate Redeemer.

If therefore you love God, and your neighbour, *though not so fervently* as you could wish; If you have a real desire of being better than at present you find yourself to be; If the fruits of the Holy Spirit, though in a very low degree, do appear in your life; Lastly, if you do daily *pray* for God's grace that you may, in his good time, be what he would have you to be, and do not live in any known sin; by no means forbear to go to this ordinance, as often as you have an opportunity; and depend upon God's blessing and an increase of his graces.

The Prayer.

GRANT, O God, that I may never draw down thy judgments upon myself, either by turning my back upon this ordinance, or by going to it without thought and unworthily. May thy mercy pardon what is past, and give me grace for the time to come, to consecrate my life to thee,

and to embrace every occasion of remembering my Redeemer's love, and thereby securing thy favour, and my own salvation ! And if it be thy will, grant that I may always find such comfort and benefit in this ordinance, as may encourage me to observe it with joy unto my life's end.

Give me leave to recommend to thine infinite mercy the miserable condition of all such as neglect so great means of grace and salvation.—Awaken all Christian people into a sense of this duty ; Open their eyes, and correct their mistakes, that they may be convinced, that this is the only means of making their peace with thee, and of rendering their persons and their prayers acceptable to thy divine Majesty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

SECTION X.

EVERY well-disposed Christian, after he has thus far prepared himself for this Sacrament, will endeavour to keep the thoughts of his duty, and the blessing he hopes for, warm in his heart until the time of receiving.

Some of the *following Scriptures*, and meditations upon them, may, through God's grace, answer that end ; nor will they take up too much time, because some or more of them, as occasion offers, may be devoutly used in the midst of business.

And this method of devotion is here proposed, to lead Christians to make proper reflections upon other parts of Scripture which they read or hear.

Rev. iii. 17. *Thou sayest I am rich, and have need of nothing. And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*

This is a sad condition to which, as sinners, we are subject, and it is thy mercy, O God, that any of us are sensible of it. Preserve me, I beseech thee, from that blindness which would hinder me from seeing my own misery; and from that *pride* which would keep me from acknowledging it before thee, who alone canst help me. O give me a true sense of the maladies I labour under, and keep me for thy mercies' sake, and for the sake of Jesus my Redeemer.

Psalm li. 17. *The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart God will not despise.*

But most unfit is *mine* to be to God presented, until I have obtained his pardon for the many sins by which it has been defiled.

Jer. iii. 12. 13. *I am merciful, saith the Lord: and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God.*

I do acknowledge my sins unto thee, O God, and mine iniquities will I not hide; I do therefore implore thy pardon, and plead thy gracious promise, with full purpose of heart, never again to return to folly.

Jer. xvii. 9. *The heart is deceitful, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

I cannot, indeed, answer for my own heart;

but there is nothing, O Lord, impossible with thee ; in thee I do put my trust : let me never be put to confusion ; Keep it ever in my heart, what an *evil thing*, and *bitter*, it will be to *for-sake the Lord*.

1 John iii. 8. *He that committeth sin* (who abandons himself to live in known sin) *is of the devil* : is under his power and government.

Preserve me gracious God, from so fatal a blindness, to choose *Satan* for my *lord* and *governor*, instead of thy blessed *Son*, who laid down his life to redeem us from the dreadful tyranny of the devil.

1 John ii. 25. *This is the promise he hath promised us, even eternal life*.

How infinitely good is God, to give us so great encouragement to save ourselves from ruin ! Give me, I beseech thee, a firm faith in this promise, that no *fears* may terrify me, no *pleasures* may corrupt my heart. No *difficulties* may discourage me from serving thee.

Matt. xvi. 24. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me*.

O my Saviour ! who pleadest not thyself, but tookest upon thee the form of a servant : let me not profess to follow thee without endeavouring to follow the blessed steps of thy most holy life. Thy *patience*, *meekness*, and *humility* : Thy *great disregard* for the world, its *pleasures*, *profits*, and all its *idols* : Thy sensible concern for the miseries of men : Thy unweariedness in do-

ing good : Thy constancy in prayer, and resignation to the will of thy Father,—Let me part with any thing as dear as a *right hand*, or *right eye*, rather than not follow thee.

Matt. vi. 24. *No man can serve two masters. —You cannot serve God and mammon.*

May I never set up any *rival*, O God, with thee, in the possession of my heart ! May I never attempt to reconcile thy service with that world *which is enmity with thee!* Give me, I beseech thee, *the eyes of faith*, that I may see the world, what in truth it is,—The danger of its *riches*,—The folly of its *pleasures*,—The multitude of its *snare*s,—The power of its *temptations*. Its *deadly poison*, and certain danger of drawing my heart from the love of thee.

Matt. xxii. 37. 39. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,—and thy neighbour as thyself.*

O that the love of God may be the *commanding principle of my soul* : and that I may have this comfortable proof of his love abiding in me. that I study to please him, and to keep his commandments ; That my love to my neighbour may be such as God has commanded ; that I may *give and forgive*, and *love* as becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ !

1 John iii. 14. *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.*

What it is to love *my neighbor as myself*, thou O Lord, hast taught me in thy holy word ; Never to *wrong* or *deceive* him ; Never to

grieve him, or without a cause to create him trouble : Never to treat him with *contempt* and *scorn* ; Never to be pleased with his *misfortunes* and *faults* ; But to *rejoice* in his *happiness*, and help him in his *wants*. Give me, O Lord, this proof of my having passed from death unto life.

Gal. iii 13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.*—That is he was treated as one under the curse of the law, *Deut.* xxi. 23.

Blessed God, how great was our *misery* ! How great was thy *mercy* ! When nothing could save us from ruin, but the death of thy Son ! I see by this how hateful sin is to thee. Make it so to me, I beseech thee. May I never flatter myself that thy mercy will spare me, if I continue in sin, when thou sparedst not thine own Son when he put himself in the place of sinners ! May I never provoke thy justice ! May I never forget thy mercies and what thy Son has done for me !

'Tit. ii. 14. *He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity ; and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.*

Blessed be God that I am united to his people by *baptism* ! Grant that I may never disgrace thee, or my Christian profession, by an ungodly life. O thou who hast redeemed us from sin and death, cause me to understand, to value, and ever remember thy great love ; and to show that I do so, by a life *consecrated* to thy service.

2 Tim. ii. 12. *If we deny him, he will also deny us.*

How many deny thee, O Jesus, without *thought* and without *dread*! Do they know what they do, who lightly turn their backs upon this ordinance?—Who make a mock of sin, which cost thee thy life?—Who are ashamed of thee, and of thy Gospel, out of regard to men?—Who by their *un-christian* lives do renounce thy service? Do they consider what it is to be *denied by thee*?—That it is to have *no interest* in thy *death*, thy *merits*, and *mediation*?—Gracious God, deliver me from this dreadful *sin and judgment*!

Matt. xxvi. 35. Peter said, *Though I shall die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.*

Preserve me, gracious Lord, from a presumptuous opinion, and dependence on my own *strength*, without the aids of thy *grace*: Let me see, in this sad instance, my weakness without thy assistance, and my ruin without thy help.

Luke xxii. 61, 62. *And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the words of Christ; and went out and wept bitterly.*

O Jesus, look upon me with the same eye of compassion, whenever I shall do amiss, that I may see my fault, and forthwith return to my duty: Let this instance of thy mercy be our comfort, since so great and repeated a crime did not exclude this *penitent* from thy mercy: but let not this make us fearless of offending thee, lest we never repent.

Luke xxii. 3, 4, 5. *Then entered Satan into Judas, and he communed with the chief priests how he might betray him unto them:—And they covenanted to give him money, &c.*

If I should provoke thee, O God, by resisting thy Holy Spirit, to leave me to my own *natural corruption*, and to the power of *Satan*, I see in this wretched man what wickedness I am capable of. Lord God, abandon me not to my own choices. Shut my heart against that *covetousness*, which was the root of so great a sin. Keep me from *presumptuous sins*, lest they get dominion over me; and secure me under the conduct of thy Holy Spirit, for Jesus Christ's sake.

Deut. xvi. 16, 17. *They shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God, which he hath given thee.*

Shall I appear before thee, O God, worse than a Jew? Can I give any thing to the poor, but what I have received from thee? How can I say that I love thee much, if I give sparingly to them whom thou hast appointed in thy place to receive our alms? Give me an heart, O God, to give according to thy blessing upon me, and as I expect thy blessing upon myself and substance.

1 Pet. iv. 10. *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards.*

O God, thou hast taught us, that we are all but thy stewards:—Keep me, I beseech thee, from that great injustice of defrauding thy poor of their right:—give me grace to moderate all my vain desires and expenses, that I may have to give to them that need:—and that the measure of thy blessings to me may be the measure of my charity to others.

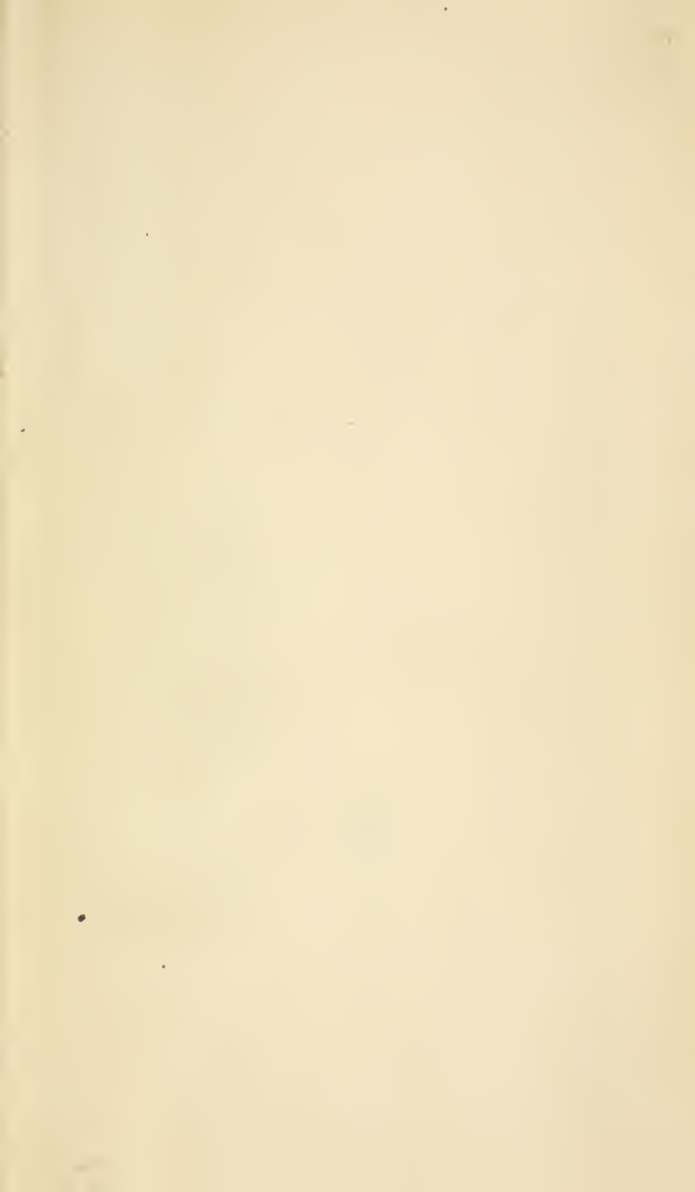
COLLECTS, THEIR TENDENCY.

Comfort of the Holy Ghost	-	1 Sunday after Ascension
Humiliation	- - -	Whitsunday
Direction of the Holy Ghost	-	19 after Trinity
Manifold gifts of the Holy Ghost	-	St. Barnabas
Means of grace ;—Hearing	-	St. Bartholomew, St. Luke
Reading	-	2 Sunday in Advent
Fasting	-	1 in Lent
		10 and 23 after Trinity
To convert us from sin	- -	1 in Advent, one after Easter
		St. Andrew, St. James,
		St. Matthew
Pardon of Sin, and Acceptance	{	12, 21, 24 after Trinity
with God - - -		Purification
		2 after Epiphany
To rescue us from Temptation	-	4 in Advent, 4 after Epiph.
		18 after Trinity
To enable us to do good	- -	5 after Easter
		1, 9, 11, 13, 17, 25 after Trinity
To bring us to glory	- - -	Epiphany, 6 after Epiphany
Regeneration	- - -	Christmas-Day
Charity	- - -	Quinquagesima
Mortification	- - -	Circumcision, Easter-Eve
Contrition	- - -	Ash-Wednesday
Sincerity	- - -	3 after Easter
Love of God and his Law	-	4 after Easter
		6 and 14 after Trinity
Heavenly Desires	- - -	Ascension
Faith right	- - -	Trinity Sunday
Faith firm	- - -	7 after Trinity
		St. Thomas, St. Mark
Imitation of Christ	- - -	6 Lent, 2 after Easter
Imitation of Saints	- - -	St. Stephen, St. Paul,
		St. Philip and Jacob,
		St. John Baptist,
		Innocents, All Saints
Guarding of Angels, and God's	{	2, 3, 4, 20 after Trinity
Providence - - -		St. Michael
Deliverance from Enemies	-	3 in Lent
Deliverance from Judgments	-	Sexagesima, Septuagesima
		4 in Lent
Support under Afflictions	-	3 and 4 after Epiphany
Defence from Evil and Supply	{	8, 15 after Trinity
of Good - - -		
For Jews, Turks, &c	- -	Good-Friday
That Ministers may be fit, dili-	{	St. Mathias, St. Peter
gent, and successful		3 Advent
That the people may be kept	{	1 Good-Friday, St. John
in Truth, Unity, and Peace		St. Simon and Jude
		5, 6, 12 after Trinity

THE END.







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