

A

PARENT'S
ADVICE TO HIS CHILD,
HOW TO LIVE WELL.

“In the estimation of many godliness is puritanism, and orthodoxy is repulsive moroseness, and the pure doctrine of the Apostles is fanatical and disgusting vulgarity.”—DR. CHALMERS.

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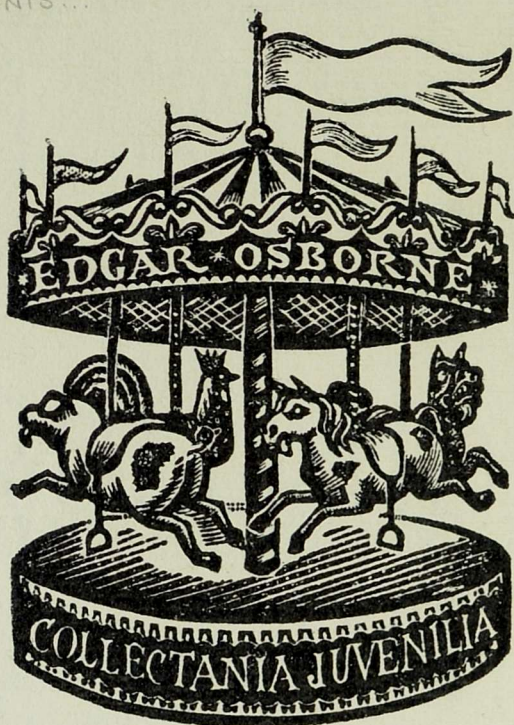
PRINTED AND SOLD BY WILLIAM BEMROSE;
AND BY L. B. SEELEY AND SON, LONDON.

1831.

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PRICE ONE SHILLING.

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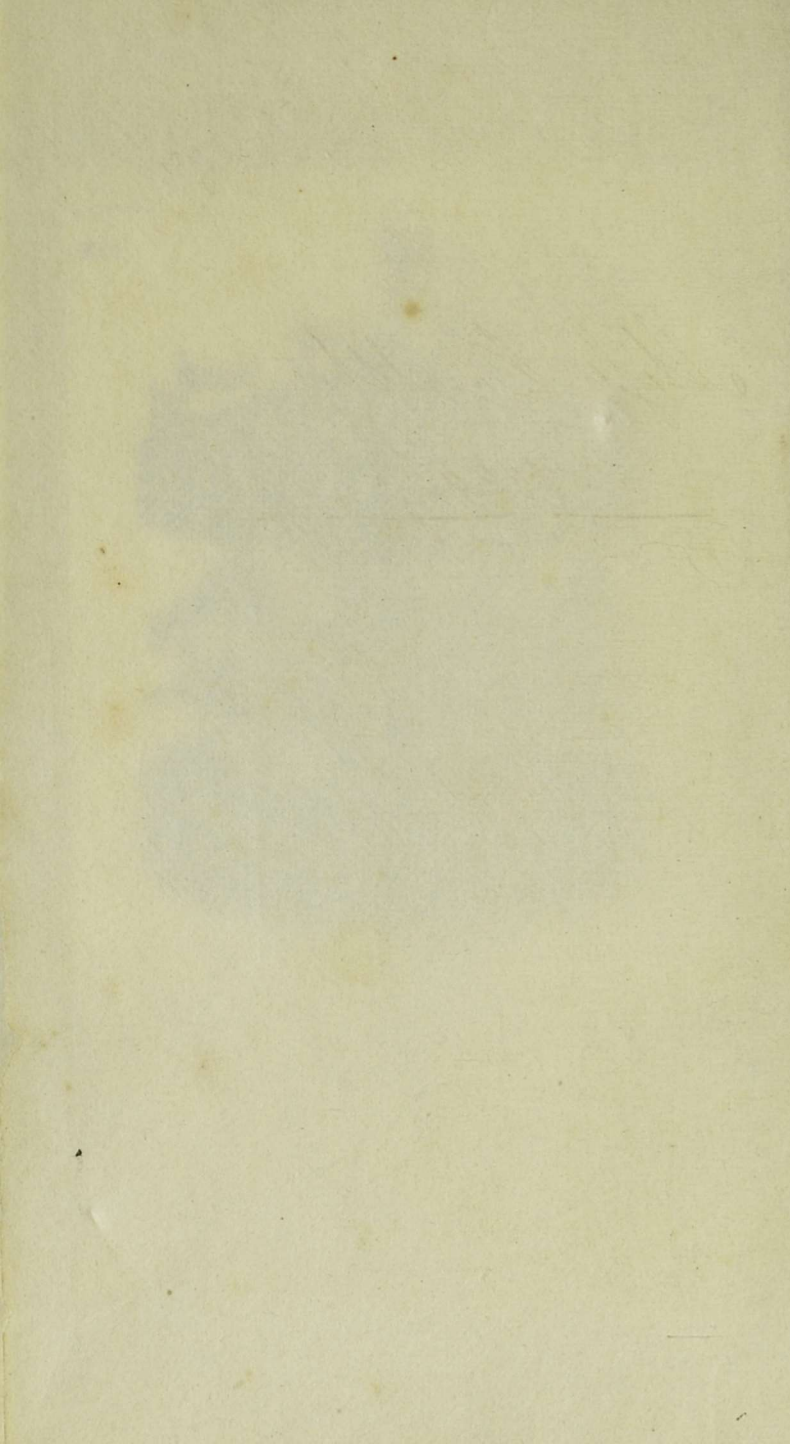
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THE EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE following Manual of Practical Piety was found, amongst other treatises of a similar description, in the Manor-House at Mickleover, in this County, in the year 1790. It is now published with the hope that it may prove as useful to others, as it has been beneficial to the Editor.

If it be thought, that works of this kind sufficiently abound already, the Editor's reply is, that this little treatise may subserve some purposes, which would not be accomplished by more modern publications, even if they should be intrinsically better; which, however, he has himself never met with. In the first place, it proves, that the doctrines and practice of 1660,—the period, about which it appears to have been written,—were in exact harmony with the new light, (as it is sneeringly designated) of the present day. In the next place, being discovered amongst the books, and MSS. of the late Robert Newton, of Norton, Esq., (some of which MSS. were in his own handwriting, and of his own composing; and contained the same doctrine, as this treatise comprehends,) it further shows, that the opinions of that intelligent and highly respected individual were in

accordance with the doctrine of the Church of England, though he himself was a rigid Presbyterian: from whence it may be inferred that the English Presbyterians up to a recent period, like the Scotch Presbyterians of the present day, differed from the members of the Established Church only in matters of Church-discipline, and Church-government, and were as distinct from Unitarians, as light from darkness. The material question, however, is after all, do the sentiments of this treatise accord with the language, and spirit of Scripture? Of this the reader will judge: let him only remember the commendation bestowed upon the Bereans, who, when they heard the word, "received it with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."—*Acts xvii. 11.*

May God vouchsafe his blessing to this little volume; enabling the Editor to commit it to the press with a single eye to His glory, and the reader to meditate upon its contents, and to store them up in his memory, so far as they shall be found consistent with the words of soberness and truth.

Leylands, Derby, 2nd July, 1831.

N.B.—The Author's Preface being torn away in part, and incomplete, is altogether withdrawn: and some other omissions occur, from similar accidents, in the main body of the treatise.

DEDICATION.

TO HENRIETTA NEWTON,

This new Edition of a Parent's Advice to his Child is dedicated: and was presented on her birth-day, 2nd July, 1831; a few weeks before her confirmation: in the hope, that the practical instruction, contained therein, might, at that solemn season, make a lasting impression on her mind, and assist her in the fulfilment of those obligations, which she was then about to take upon herself to perform.

MY DEAREST DAUGHTER,

My love and affection for you have ever been shown, as you well know, by an earnest desire to bring you up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, rather than in that outward adorning of the person, and embellishment of the mind, which so frequently consist with a total absence of the Christian character. Gracefulness of manner, and a highly cultivated understanding are qualities, not indeed to be undervalued, nor to be deemed inconsistent with the brightest Christian virtues: but they *are* to be reckoned subordinate, and infinitely inferior to that wisdom, which is from above. We are commanded to seek *first* the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and to trust to his unfailing promise, that all needful things shall be added unto us.—*Matt. vi. 33.*

Having now reached the age, at which you are required to take upon yourself the performance of your baptismal vows, I am anxious that you should understand the nature of that profession, which has heretofore been made for you, by your sponsors.

In this country all are Christians in name: but very little observation will suffice to show, that the great bulk of professing Christians, are Christians in name *ONLY*: contented with the outward forms of admission into Christ's Church: knowing little, and caring less about the inward and essential marks of being true and living branches of that vine, apart from which they can do nothing.—*John xv. 4, 5.*

Now as I trust that you have not so learnt Christ; nor are indifferent, whether he will own you as his disciple, I might, without further remarks, commend this little volume to your daily study and perusal, if I did not feel anxious to set concisely before you a clearer view than you can be expected, at your age, to possess of the grounds of your faith and hope, and the nature of your Christian calling.

You profess yourself to be a Christian. Have you ever duly weighed the extent and import of the term? To be *really* a Christian, you must become a member of Christ, by hearkening to his voice; following his steps; and being as closely united to him, as a branch to the parent-tree, or a limb to the human body. Our Saviour himself has furnished us with numerous tests, by which we may *know*, if we will, whether we *do* belong to him. He that said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father, but by me,"—*John xiv. 6*; the same has declared, "by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."—*xiii. 35*. "If ye love me, keep my Commandments."—*xiv. 15*.

“ He, that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him,”—verse 21. And herewith agrees the chosen disciple of Jesus, “ Love not, (he says,) the world, nor the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”—1 *John* ii. 15.

Look around you. Do you see the generality of people distinguished by these marks of discipleship? Do you find them engaged in endeavouring to promote the advantage, and happiness of each other? loving their neighbours as themselves, and studying how to forward their interests, as they would their own? Is selfishness seldom to be met with? is there little of evil-speaking, lying, or slandering? no supplanting of others? no deceit? no malicious pleasure in dashing the cup of joy from the lips of a favored rival? no listening to tales of defamation? no envyings? no jealousies? no heart-burnings? no animosities? Are not some absorbed in the pursuit of gain? some of pleasure? some the slaves of vanity, or ambition? some the victims of intemperance, or licentiousness? some ensnared with habits of indolence and uselessness; fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life; and led captive by Satan at his will?

Again, our Saviour says, “ He that believeth on me hath everlasting life,”—*John* vi. 14; wherewith agrees what St. Peter and St. Paul said to the trembling gaoler, when he inquired, “ Sirs, what must I do to be saved? and they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”—*Acts* xvi. 30, 31. You will

perhaps hear it objected, that if we are saved by grace through faith, (*Eph.* ii. 8,) nothing can be easier. Those who make that declaration are little acquainted with the nature of a true and living faith. It is the last thing to which the advancing Christian attains : the want of it in his disciples was continually complained of by our Saviour ; and the same deficiency will be observed even amongst devoted servants of God to this day. But whether this be true, or not, be not deterred from taking the simple words of Scripture as you find them : not indeed always according to the letter ; for that, you know, killeth, but according to the spirit, which giveth life. Bear, moreover, in mind, that such cavillers only repeat the objections, which were made to St. Paul himself ; to which he thought it sufficient to reply : “ Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? shall the thing formed say to Him, that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?”—*Rom.* ix. 20. If “ God’s ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts,” (as he has himself declared, *Isa.* lv. 8,) how is it that we expect to find his revealed will corresponding in all things with our imperfect apprehensions? so that when we meet with declarations in holy writ at variance with our preconceived opinions, we either venture to doubt their authenticity, or presumptuously reject them? Nothing can more strongly prove the pride of man, or more forcibly illustrate St. Paul’s declaration, *2 Cor.* ii. 14 ; “ The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are *foolishness* unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” Thus the natural, i. e.

the unconverted man, does not *receive* the things of the Spirit of God, *because* in such a state, they appear to him *foolish*. And it is further declared—not, that he *does not*, but—that he *cannot* know them, because he is not possessed of that discernment, which is needed to enable him to understand them. And this, you will observe, is specially true of the wisest, and most civilized, as well as the most ignorant and barbarous nations on the earth. Christ crucified was foolishness to the enlightened Greeks,—1 *Cor.* i. 23; as well as a stumbling-block to the Jews. And so it is at this day. Christ crucified is almost as unintelligible, and unvalued by *nominal* Christians, as by those, who have scarcely heard of his name.

A difficulty is sometimes started, and has been frequently and warmly discussed, which arises out of a discrepancy in terms between St. Paul and St. James. It is, however, quite clear, that the two inspired Apostles cannot be inconsistent with each other: and if we were more accustomed to compare Scripture with Scripture; and less disposed to deduce our opinions from detached passages, which may chance to fall in with the leanings of our own minds: if we were careful to construe one passage, so as not to militate against the plain, and obvious meaning of another; nor to aim at being wise above what is written; nor to attempt the impracticable task of reducing apostolic injunctions into a complete and finished system, we should escape from a load of scholastic disputation, as hurtful to spiritual and devotional feelings, as it is injurious to scriptural truth; and we should learn to practice more forbearance towards each other on

controversial questions. That there is a sense, in which these two Apostles use conflicting expressions, and yet mean the same thing, is plain from the circumstance, that both illustrate their positions, and enforce their reasonings by a reference to the same examples. St. Paul unequivocally declares that “a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.”—*Rom.* iii. 28. “That, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ,” chap. v. ver. 1. And hath not our Saviour himself declared, “He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.”—*John* vi. 47. Who then shall venture to question this oft-repeated truth? or how shall we presume to charge the doctrine of St. Paul with promoting licentiousness and laxity of morals? surely not, because the truth *has been* perverted: surely not, because St. James, finding that it *was* perverted, declares “that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only,” chap. ii. ver. 24; that “faith, *if it hath not works*, is dead, being alone,” chap. ii. 17. In other words, that such faith, as St. Paul speaks of, was a *living faith*; as assuredly bringing forth the fruit of good works, as a good tree brings forth good fruit. And this again agrees with our Saviour’s declarations: for He, who said, “He that believeth on me hath everlasting life,” also said, “not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that *doeth the will of my Father*, which is in heaven,—*Matt.* vii. 21; thereby showing how some misinterpreted his words, and so erred, not knowing the Scriptures. Remember, therefore, that, though we are justified by faith only, and though this, (as the article of our church

expresses it,) is a most comfortable doctrine, *when rightly understood*, it is, like other truths, liable to be wrested by evil-minded, and unstable persons to their destruction. We must not, however, lose sight of the truth, because it is sometimes so perverted.

You will now then, I trust, begin to see your calling. Christ is the rock, on which alone you can build. He is your only Saviour, to whom you must fly for succour; renouncing all that you can do, as the meritorious cause of your salvation, and throwing yourself on the covenant mercies of your God through Christ Jesus: yet doing his commands, and working out your salvation with fear and trembling, as if every thing depended upon your own good works. When the Spirit has convinced a man of sin, and unbelief, and has thereby driven him to Christ as his only refuge, then, and not till then, does such an one begin to see, “a huge distance between himself and the godly, whom he thought before outstripped him only in some unnecessary, proud, hateful preciseness.”

May the blessing of God succeed your endeavours to serve him in all sincerity, and godliness of living, through the mediation of Jesus, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. My heart's desire and prayer for you is, that you may be numbered amongst the redeemed of the Lord, and that your name may be found written in the book of life.

Your affectionate Father,

W. L. NEWTON.

Leylands, 2nd July, 1831.

A PARENT'S ADVICE, ETC.

CHAPTER I.

Of Covenanting with God in Christ.

1. IN the first place I do beseech you as a tender Father, and as you will answer the denial of so reasonable a request at the Tribunal of God, before the Sovereign Judge of men and angels, that you would seriously, entirely, and unreservedly make an oblation of yourself in covenant, a solemn dedication of all your faculties, both of soul and body, to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as your only God, Redeemer and Sanctifier, binding yourself thereby to forsake that malicious Trinity, the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Resign and make over yourself wholly and entirely to the Lord, to the obedience of him. Subscribe to all his laws, bid an utter defiance to all his enemies; outbrave all opposition, and triumph over all in the Lord.

2. Here let me remind you, that this is that which I solemnly covenanted in your behalf, at your baptism, and you being come to age are bound to perform, and make good, which if you should

not do, but recede from that engagement, I should tremble to think, how sad your case would be. Had you died in your childhood, then you had reaped the benefit of the covenant, according to the faith of your own parents, but now you must stand or fall by your own faith, and sincere consent thereunto, as the child while an infant is carried in the mother's or nurse's arms, but when grown up must stand upon its own legs.

3. I entreat you therefore, I warn you, as a father, do that first which must needs be done, and is of greatest importance, the most momentous concern, be sure that your soul be safe, and secure, as to its everlasting condition. Act *Mary's* part by looking after the one thing necessary: and therefore get to be in covenant with God in Christ by your hearty consent thereunto: for this is the true condition, and certain evidence of your interest in the covenant, your title to all the rich legacies thereof, as namely, to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as your reconciled God and Father, Redeemer and Sanctifier, and consequently to all the saving blessings and privileges, both of the Kingdom of Grace and Glory, which are all couched therein. In the covenant, God the Father consents, in the sight and presence of angels and glorified souls, to be our God, Jesus Christ to be our Saviour, and the Holy Ghost to be our Sanctifier, (in which compendious and immense grant, all things are comprised that you can ask or think.) If you then reciprocally consent and engage yourself to take God the Father to be your only God, the Son to be your Saviour, to save you from sin, as well as from

hell, and the Holy Ghost to be your Sanctifier, to make you by degrees perfectly holy, then the covenant is complete, your interest therein secure, and your title good to all the rich blessings laid up in this Ark of the Covenant, provided, your consent be such as doth blossom forth into the duties which you consent unto, and produce a renouncing of the world, the flesh, and the devil, which is involved and enwrapped therein: for you do not take God to be your God, if you take him only to receive his pay, and not to fight under his banner, against those his malicious enemies. You do not take him to be your God, unless you take him to be your *All*, and be ready to renounce and forsake all for him, and prefer him in your love and esteem, above all things, so as to let him turn the balance, and his interest, to weigh down the scales against all the world, and unless you set him alone in the throne, and in the highest chariot, to ride triumphantly in the soul over all enemies. How readily doth the wise merchant in the Gospel sell all for the pearl, that is more precious than rocks of rubies and mountains of diamonds. Thus it will be with you, if your Covenant consent be not weak and languid, but strong and well fixed. Indeed a small rub may turn aside a bowl, that hath but a weak bias, but if it hath a strong one it will recover, and get into its way again. See then that your consent be so strong and full, as may pass you under the bond of the Covenant, and carry you over to God and Christ against all opposition. But think it not enough that this Covenant be once made, it must be often renewed and followed with an answerable practice.

4. This is my first and grand advice ; yea, the very abridgment and sum of all your duty, this entering into, and keeping faithfully the baptismal Covenant is your very christianity and real godliness ; it is your building upon a rock ; your doing the one thing necessary, and your giving to God the things that are God's. It is a denying of yourself, taking up the cross, and following the Lord Jesus.

CHAPTER II.

Of Living the Life of Faith.

1. LIVE the life of Faith in a continual dependance upon God in Christ, for all things necessary especially for the Soul. Six Hundred and thirteen precepts have been observed to be in the Law of *Moses*, by some of the *Hebrew* Doctors, who had the leisure to number them, and they tell us that they are all wrapt up by the Prophet *Habakkuk* in that one short sentence ; *The just shall live by Faith*. Sure it is a very pregnant and comprehensive duty, for faith is an obediencial affiance, like a pair of compasses, one foot whereof, *viz.* affiance, being pitched upon the centre, which is God, the other goes round in a perfect circle of all holy duties. Faith surveys the whole land of promise, searches it out thoroughly, spies out all the rich treasures that lie in the golden mines of the promises, and finds suitable provision in every case, both for soul and for body, which it can fetch in time of need : and so it hath work enough daily for a constant

and continued employment, because every moment we are under some spiritual want.

2. As for temporal good things, live by faith in a holy dependance and indifference, resting contented with the will of God, whatsoever it be. A believer though the bill of fare be short, lives on the wise, powerful, and gracious providence of God, not doubting but he shall have enough to pay for his passage, through the sea of this world to heaven. How many live on God's providence in their maintenance, who never live on the providence in a gracious dependance, or by actings of Faith in a promise. Do not most persons live wholly by their friends, by their credit and interest in the world? but where is the man or woman that lives by faith?

3. Fetch in provision for your soul daily by actings of faith. Let faith make out to Christ for new supplies of spiritual strength, grace, and comfort in all your need: Faith is our purveyor, till we come to the Mount of God, and goes a gathering for us, till we come to that land, that flows with milk and honey. God is a rich mine of wisdom and grace, which can never be digged to the bottom, and hath inexhaustible treasures locked up in Christ, continually lying ready by him, only stays for Faith to come and fetch them. He is not pleased to give us a full supply of all at once, but crumbles out his mercies, and gives his blessings piece-meal, to teach us by faith to live upon him daily. *Manna* fell every morning. God could if he had pleased, have given them as much at once, as should have served them all the time, that they were to be in the Wilderness, but he would teach them by his daily gift, to depend

upon his Providence for it daily. Thus God is pleased to deliver out to his dear children every day a set allowance, it may be but a crumb of hidden *Manna*, a taste of his special love, when he could fill an Omer of it if he pleased, it may be he reaches forth to a believer, only some grapes of the heavenly *Canaan*, when he could throw clusters thereof into his lap. He could have so formed the new-born babe in Christ and have cast it into such a mould in the new birth, as that it should have been perfect in that instant as *Adam* was in the moment of creation ; but he will have this babe of grace to go by degrees from faith to faith, from strength to strength, till it come to full perfection. The king appointed a daily provision of his meat, and of the wine which he drank to certain of the children of *Israel*, Dan. xv. Thus doth the King of Heaven, he will not give all grace at once out of his store-house, nor let the pot of hidden *Manna* be in our keeping ; he doth not think fit we should have his royal wine of spiritual joy and comfort in our own cellars, to go to when we please, lest we should drink and forget ourselves, yea, and him too ; lest it should fume up and make our heads giddy, or our blood too rank, our spirits too high and proud : for it is no easy matter to carry the brim full cup of consolation steadily and equally ; though the soul have rich joy to day, yet it may have none to-morrow, unless he please to send a draught of this cordial wine from his own table. And why is all this, but to teach us to live by faith and wait continually upon him for new influences ? The wise Father keeps the stock in his own hands, and gives not all at once, to keep his Son in a dependance.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Life of Holiness.

LIVE the life of Holiness. This directly follows the life of faith: for all holiness springs from faith, and the more you live the life of faith, the more you will live the life of holiness. Now if you would live this holy life, you must do these five things:—

1. Get a principle of holiness; you cannot live a life of holiness, unless there be first a principle of holiness within. Can the body stir or move without a principle of life? how can there be actual holiness in the life, where there is not first habitual holiness in the heart?

2. Make holiness the very work of your life, or devote yourself to the work of holiness: he lives a student's life, or the life of a scholar, who devotes himself to his studies. You do then live a holy life, when you make holiness the very business of your life; when the course and tenor and main employments of your life is holiness, when you make a trade of it. Do you only perform holy duties by fits and starts? do you make stops and pauses? are you off and on, and act holily only occasionally? or in some certain good moods, or on some holy days? this is not to live a life of holiness. You must constantly employ yourself therein, and follow after it in the whole course of your life. And therefore let me now bespeak you in the words of a holy man, now with the Lord. *Let holiness sit in your lips and season all your speech with grace, let it dwell in your*

heart; let it be your companion in your closet, let it travel with you in your journey, let it lie down and rise up with you, let it close your eyes in the evening, and call you out of your bed in the morning.

3. Make holiness the main design and end of your life: then indeed you live the life of holiness, when holiness, which is the main design of christianity, is the great design of your life, when the very drift, purport, and intent of your life is to live to God.

4. Spend all the time of your life that you can redeem from other occasions in the duties of holiness, while others steal time from holy duties for their worldly business and pleasures, do you borrow all the time that you can from those things, yea from your sleep for holy duties.

5. Put forth your vital power, your life, your vigor and strength in exercises of holiness. Summon in all the powers of your soul, let none be wanting. Whatsoever your heart findeth to do in the work of religion, do it with all your might; ply your oars, hoist up your sails, put forward with all your power and strength, with might and main, in your course toward heaven. By thus doing you will certainly live the life of holiness.

It may be you may meet with some scoffs, amongst some *Ishmaels*, for such a holy life; but yet let not this discourage, or take you off from following the ways of holiness and uprightness. What if a lame man should laugh at your upright walking, would you therefore go lamely? But for your better encouragement I shall propound to you one motive.

Consider that unless you live the life of holiness, you can never live the life of glory: *unless you be*

tion, *But this eye sees thee.* If you did always keep within you fresh apprehensions of God as present, you would not admit a dishonourable thought of him in your heart, nor let an evil word have passage through the door of your lips.

3. Know for your encouragement, that if you thus live, as in God's awful presence, you shall enjoy very much his gracious presence here, and his glorious presence hereafter to all eternity.

CHAPTER V.

Of Living in Love to God and Christ.

1. LIVE in love to God and Jesus Christ, do all things out of a principle of love to God your Father and Jesus Christ the only Saviour. God must be loved as your ultimate end, the enjoyment of whom is the soul's everlasting blessedness and Christ as Mediator must be loved, as the only way whereby we are reconciled to God, and come to obtain that blessedness. If you live not in the love of God, how can you ever expect to live in his favour, or that he will either accept you, or your services? for it is this love that perfumes all our actions, and makes them a sweet odour unto God. Love to God is the very life and soul of all natural religion, and love to Christ is the Spirit and vital principle, that animates all evangelical duties, which are required by the New Covenant, and therefore no duty will be acceptable without it.

2. Look well to it, that your love to God and Christ be a singular, superlative, transcendent love,

a love that out-balanceth all other love whatsoever. It must be the highest degree, the very cream, flower, and top of your affection; I do not mean in respect of the passionateness of it (for your love to creatures may be more passionate) but in respect of the high estimation of him, adhering to him, and readiness to forego all for him, you must value the interest of God in Christ above your own, nothing must have more of your heart. Christ must be above self, and above every thing else in the heart; nothing else must be suffered to creep into the bed of love.

3. If there be any thing else that lies nearer the heart than Christ, the fountain of your spiritual life, it will hinder your union with him, and living in him. The least chip that falls betwixt the graft and the joint hinders its knitting to the stock, and maketh the graft to die. Let nothing then lie in the joint betwixt Christ and your heart, to prevent and hinder your happy and blessed union, and keep you from closing with him, embracing of him, and living in him.

4. There may be in an unregenerate person a true love to God and Christ, I mean such a true love, as is not dissembling love, but yet it fails in the degree; there is other love to self that peers above it and overtops it, and so damps this affection that it never flames out to God and Christ.

4. Now that you may get this superlative love to God and Christ wrought in you, you must take pains with your own heart, otherwise you will not bring it up to this high pitch. Strike the flint hard to bring out fire, and pray to Christ to blow up the

small sparks in the dead ashes, that they may grow into a flame of love.

5. Take also a prospect of those treasures of transcendent goodness, those heaps of infinite perfections, that are stored up in God, the immense ocean of love and sweetness, that fills every creek of being; and look not upon a naked Christ, but as invested with personal excellencies beyond compare, and so you will see how infinitely amiable he is in himself.

6. But further take a sweet view of the love of God in Christ, offering pardon and salvation to you with others, upon condition of believing, that so you may find your heart move reciprocally in love to God and Christ, and when once you find this in the heart, then you may conclude his special love to you, which will further increase your love to him. I do not say that your first love to God must be kindled by the flames of his special love to you, no, it is the prospect of his goodness in himself, and of his common love and mercy to sinners in tendering a Saviour, and not of his special saving love to you, as actually enjoyed by you, that is the incentive of your first love to him; for though you be bound to love God with a special love, yet you are not bound to love him as one that specially loveth you, until you be indeed so beloved by him; otherwise you were bound to believe a falsity, and to love God for that which is not. But if you once find the special saving love of God shining in your heart, working his grace in you, this will fire up your love to him, then you will be ready to say to yourself, what! shall there be a noon-day sun-shine of love and grace upon me, a poor clod of earth, and no reflexion of

a sun-beam? shall there be flamings forth from his breast towards me, a worthless worm, and not a spark in mine towards him? shall I not be most ungrateful if I do not offer up to him a flaming sacrifice.

CHAPTER VI.

Of Universal Obedience.

1. LIVE in universal obedience to the laws of God. This will follow upon that love to God now commended to you, as being the daughter of it. Hence that speech of our Saviour. *If ye love me, keep my Commandments.*—John xiv. 15. Imitate that good woman before mentioned, of whom it is said, *That she walked in all the Commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.*—Luke i. 6. It is required of poor weak women, *that they diligently follow every good work.*—1 Tim. v. 10. The sound and healthy christian refuseth no kind of work that God enjoins, be it ever so hard and difficult, whereas the unsound crazy hypocrite, like a man that hath some sore disease about him, will only set upon some easy work, some slight duties of religion, but as for the more hard and difficult ones, as wrestling with the old man, running the christian race, mortification, self-denial, and strict holiness, he passeth them over, here he makes a baulk in his obedience, like a husbandman that pulls aside his plough when he comes to a hard or stiff piece of ground. How many are there that will comply with those duties that are suitable

to their own mind, and their own ends, who in others are very backward and take their liberty? These are crooked sticks, that will not touch with God's measure, they will pick and choose, it may be they will not be wanton, but yet they will be proud, they will not be unjust dealers, but yet they will be hard hearted towards the poor; it may be they will be zealous in worship, but yet censorious and uncharitable. Such give to God bankrupt payment, a crown in the pound, part of his due.

2. Those that are thus scant and partial in their obedience, are guilty of the breach of the whole law: *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and offend in one point, is guilty of all.*—James ii. 10. Because there is the same authority in every command, in one as well as in another. One condition not observed forfeiteth the whole lease. O that this principle may be engraven in your heart, that unless you be throughout religious, your religion is vain!

3. In your obedience therefore take in the whole compass and latitude of religion, both first and second table, and as holy *David*, *have respect to all God's Commandments.*—Ps. cxix. 6. A gracious heart answers the law of God, as a copy doth the original, line for line, syllable for syllable, letter for letter, and would not willingly receive or admit any erratas; it is universally conformable to every word of God. If you have a gracious spirit, you will not make any exception, you will not defalcate, or cut off any known duty, you will not designedly clip off any part of God's coin, any piece of that service which hath God's stamp, and superscription on it.

CHAPTER VII.

Of Circumspect Walking.

1. “*SEE that ye walk circumspectly.*”—Eph. v. 15. It is not enough to walk in a good way, in an universal course of duties, as to the matter of them, but you must do it accurately and exactly in a right manner. It is necessary that there be an accurateness and circumspection observed in you, walking in the way to heaven. Mind then your way very well, make it your work and business to go on in the way, so as that you neither stumble in it, nor step awry into by-paths. Observe exactly the steps of our fore-runner the Lord Jesus Christ, and tread therein. Walk by this clue alone in this dark world, if you would neither go aside, nor go crookedly in the way. The mariner must know every point of his compass, otherwise he may endanger all. In your passage through the sea of this world, you must mind the word of God, and steer the ship of your soul by this compass exactly: you must mind this rule in all things that you do, you must pray by rule, read, hear, meditate, give alms, and examine yourself by rule; yea, you must eat, drink, sleep, dress, and recreate yourself, and do every thing in every part of your conversation exactly by rule.

2. Those that are for their latitude, for their vagaries and extravagancies, they will cry out against all this strictness and preciseness, as a being righteous over-much, and against all zeal, as too

feverish, and will tell you that to be thus strait laced cannot be good for the spiritual birth: but alas, these never knew what this Scripture meant, *walk circumspectly*, i. e. strictly or precisely. Does not God, who hath prescribed you this strictness, know what is best and most necessary for you? Let people think what they will, certainly without strictness they can never be saved. *The way to heaven is a strait gate, and there must be a striving to enter into it.*—Luke xiii. 24. You cannot climb to heaven with a little lazy and yawning devotion. It is very dangerous trifling in religion, and doing the work of God by halves. *Cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully*, or negligently.—*Jer. xlvi. 10.* If you may have too much godliness, then you may have too much of heaven and blessedness.

3. It requires a great deal of circumspection and care to walk aright in the way to heaven: you must be so exact here, as to avoid all occasions and appearance of evil.—*1 Thess. v. 22*, and to keep yourself unspotted from the world.—*James i. 27.* You must be so careful, as not to contract any stain, or spot upon your soul. Are we not all under the exact and curious eye of Omniscience, which marks all our steps, and ponders all our goings? had we not need therefore to walk circumspectly, and to abstain from all appearance of evil?

CHAPTER VIII.

Of Dying Daily.

1. **DIE** daily unto sin. This is an excellent way to live well. Mortify your corruptions; crucify sin

within you. That your soul may be in health, you must be in a continued course of physic all your life : for so long as you have this body of sin, this corrupt nature about you, you will still have matter to purge out.

2. Now that you may do this work of mortification thoroughly, you must strike at the whole body of sin, the whole corrupt frame of heart, commonly called original sin, which most persons so little look at, and so little confess to God, as if they had no cause to be humbled for it. The sharp knife of mortifying grace doth not only cut off some members or acts of sin, but endeavours to cut off the very body of sin, to take out the core, so that the ulcer may not break out again. You may restrain actual sins, but you never mortify them till corrupt nature within be subdued. Restraining actual sins alone, is but violently to keep the bladder under water, which will be mounting up again ; but let corrupt nature be wounded, and then you prick the bladder of sin, and so it will sink. Mortifying grace makes such a wound within, that the very life of corrupt nature runs out by degrees. If an imposthume breaks, there is an endeavour not only to bring up all the matter in it, but to get hold of the very bag also, otherwise the patient may die of it presently, or it may gather again. When you become sensible of sin and seriously convinced of it, the imposthume begins to break : Oh ! labour then to pluck up original sin, or corrupt nature, which is the very bag of the imposthume, that if possible it may not gather again. This is the very heart and root of sin. If the heart be wounded

and die, all the members die with it. If the root be grubbed up, all the branches wither.

3. Think not that your soul is in a healthy condition, till you find every sin dying in you. In true mortification every sin consumes and pines away: As in a hectic, there is a consumption not only of one member, but of all. The physic that Christ gives to make sin die in us, is not an elective, that purgeth out one humour only, but it is an universal medicine, that works on all. If you leave one sin, and have a heart hankering after another, you are but in *Benhadud's* condition, who recovered of one disease, but fell into another that proved mortal. It is the custom of some Indians to value themselves by the number of heads which they have cut off. If you would judge aright of yourself, see how many heads of sin you have cut off, whether you have so cut off the head of every sin, that it reign no more in you.

4. In your endeavour after the death of every sin, you must especially labour after the death and mortification of spiritual sins, which like a hectic, are most dangerous, because discovered with difficulty; these lie close in the heart unseen. Pride of heart, and self-love, (which is the very heart and quintessence of unregeneracy) as are an imposthume more dangerous, because so inward and undiscernible. When the imposthume is within the breast, you cannot think to cure it by laying a plaister to the skin; your application must here be made to the heart. Ignorant patients complain more of that disease which is most apparent, then they do of that which is most malignant.

CHAPTER IX.

Of Repentance.

EXERCISE daily repentance from dead works. I add this to the former Advice, because it is by Repentance unto life (as the Apostle calls it,—*Acts xi. 18.*) that sin is mortified and made to die: Now this repentance is a mourning after a godly manner, for sins past and resolving faithfully in the strength of Christ to forsake all sin hereafter. I say, it is a mourning after a godly manner; which hath these following properties in it:—

1. It is a great and bitter mourning; it is not an easy grief or a mourning of the eye only, but it is a mourning of the heart, which is the heart of mourning. It is not superficial tears, but the deep sorrow of the heart, that will wash away sin. I have read a story, that one of the questions which the Queen of *Sheba* propounded to King *Solomon* was this; She having brought before him a company of children, both males and females, all alike apparelled, demanded of him which were the boys, and which were the girls, which he thus decided; he caused them all to wash in a basin of water, and observed which rubbed more hard, and those he set aside for the boys; and those that washed more tenderly and softly, he determined to be the girls. Those that would wash away the filth of sin, must not, like those of that softer sex, do it easily and tenderly, but must exercise a masculine spirit, and rub hard (like those of the harder and rougher

sex) to scour the soul. It is not to be done by a slight repentance; there must be a great deal of pains taken to cleanse the heart from sin. And therefore repentance is generally mistaken, while it is thought to be nothing else, but a being sorry for sins committed, and wishing they had not been done. Such slight penitents can be sorry to-day, and sin again to-morrow, and yet think they have truly repented.

2. Mourning after a godly manner is a grief springing from the bowels of love to God: the stronger the stream is, the more there is of the fountain; and the stronger the sorrow for sin is, the more there is of God. A true penitent finds a principle within him, that carries him out to a mourning for sin: But an unregenerate man is rather forced upon it, by some extrinsic motives, as fear of hell, then carried to it out of the proper and peculiar inclination of his own heart.

3. It is such a sorrow as changes the heart and life; there is a sanctification of the inward man, and a reformation of the outward conversation going along with it. This sorrow for sin consumes the sin that bred it, as the worm doth the wood that bred it.

4. It is accompanied with an universal hatred of sin, an utter abhorrence of every iniquity. The dove (as they say) which hates the hawk, hates every feather of it. A true penitent so abhors sin, that he hates every plume and feather, every branch of it, he would have the very memory of *Amalek* blotted out; he hath a deadly hatred to the whole tribe of sin, the whole stock and kind, to every

member of that cursed family of sin; he hates the very occasions of sin, which are only the harbingers and spokesmen of it, and will give them no entertainment, but thrusts them out of doors: He so hates sin, that he longs to be rid of it. The Apostle cries out as one tied to a dead carcass, or tired with the chains of a grievous bondage; *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!*—Rom. vii. 24. He here cries out against the sinfulness of nature, and hates, and would be rid of that, as well as sinfulness of life. If you mourn only for actual sins, you only cleanse the streams, and let the spring continue muddy and noisome, which will soon send forth new streams of the same nature.

But further; repentance is not only a mourning for sins past, but a faithful resolution to forsake all for the future. I call it a faithful resolution, i. e. a resolution of Faith; for it is not an ordinary resolution that will prove one to be a true penitent; we have very revolting, slippery hearts, apt to return to sin, and therefore had need to take up strong and firm resolutions in the strength of Christ, to fortify our hearts against sin. Crazy timber in a building must be well cramped with iron bars to keep it from yielding: And broken bones had need of strong filleting to bind them together.

Take heed that you do not defer your repentance, or adjourn it to another day: It is very dangerous so to do: Therefore I desire you with all possible earnestness, for the love of God, and of your precious souls, set upon this duty presently. Do not say within yourself, I am young, and it is time enough

to do it hereafter. Remember death comes riding post, and though sometimes he change horses, first comes on one disease, and leaving that, after comes on another ; yet oftentimes he doth not change but, comes on one single horse, and takes away at the first sickness ; and then, as you will have but little time to repent, so little aptness or disposition thereunto, when sickness hath once arrested you. Oh how unfit will you then be to turn to God, when you can scarcely turn yourself in your bed ! Let me therefore give you the counsel that a Rabbin gave one of his scholars, *Repent a day before you die* ; and the scholar thereupon thinking, that he should have time enough, then he bade him repent to-day, for thou knowest not but thou mayest be dead to-morrow.

But is not this (it may be said) a hard painful life to be every day repenting ? No, when it is done every day it soon grows an easy work. The good housewife that scours her plate often, hath an easier task of it every day than other.

But is not this a sad and melancholy life for to be always mourning and repenting ? No, *tears of repentance*, saith holy *Bernard*, *are sweeter than all worldly joy*. Repentance is a most sweet grace, and hath much comfort in it. The day of expiation in the Old Law was a day of mourning yet the *Jubilee* was always to be proclaimed on that day. The day of mourning for sin is a day of expiation of sin, and God then proclaims a *Jubilee* to the soul in the pardon of it. But further to take off this objection, and to give a fuller answer thereunto, I shall add the next following Advice.

CHAPTER X.

Of making Religion a Delight.

MAKE religion your great delight and recreation. *Delight yourself in the Lord.*—Ps. xxxvii. 4. Or as the Apostle enjoins, *rejoice in the Lord alway, and again, I say rejoice.*—Phil. iv. 4.—1 Thess. v. 16 Take delight in God himself, in his infinite excellencies and perfections ; in his goodness, love, and mercy ; in his word and works ; in his commands, and in his promises ; in his ways, and in his heaven, which he hath prepared for souls. This, and my last advice for a daily mourning for sin, are no way inconsistent, but lovingly meet and kiss each other. *Chrysostom* observes that *David* the great mourner in *Israel*, was also the chief singer in *Israel*. As with one eye we look down to our sins, so we mourn ; but as with the other eye, i. e. the eye of faith, we look up to God, and his mercy pardoning sin upon repentance, so we rejoice. Godly sorrow makes pardoning mercy taste the sweeter, and causeth greater joy and delight in God. Music upon the water sounds louder, and is much sweeter than upon the land. Joy upon the waters of godly sorrow is most sweet and pleasant. *Chrysostom* calls sorrow for sin the mother of joy. I assure you God never commanded sorrow for sin barely for itself, but only in order unto joy.

2. God would not have any of his people lead sad drooping and melancholy lives, for thereby they

would dishonour their heavenly Father, and disparage his house-keeping, as if there were not bread enough in their Father's house, but rather a want of necessaries there. Yea, it would make the world ready to think that he were a hard master toward them, and Jesus Christ an unkind husband. If a wife be always sad, and sit puling and whining, will not every one be ready to say, that she hath a bad husband? This sackcloth doth not become the court of the King of Saints, nor beseem those that live within it. Spiritual cheerfulness is that which becomes religion, sets a gloss thereon, and makes it shine gloriously, and look most amiably in the eyes of the world, and may cause them to fall in love with it.

3. But whatsoever the world think of religion. it is not of a melancholy temper, but of a sanguine complexion. It may well say to them, call me no more *Marah*, i. e. bitterness; but call me *Naomi*, which signifies pleasantness; for it is of all others the most pleasant and delightful life, i. e. in respect of inward complacency and gladness, though not in respect of passionate joy or mirth. *All her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.*—Prov. iii. 17. Thus the way of religion is strewed with roses, with inward peace and tranquillity. Walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, are clasped and laid together.—*Acts ix. 31.* Christians have meat to eat that the world knows not of. *What means this music*, said the elder brother of the returning prodigal? There is the white stone, and the new name, that none know but they that

have it.—*Rev. ii. 17.* There is hidden manna for their souls to feast upon.

4. And indeed how can a believing soul that walks closely with God choose but rejoice, when it is always in the presence of God and Christ? *Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn while the bridegroom is with them?*—*Matt. ix. 15.* It is reported that our Saviour, when he was on the earth, had such a cheerful countenance, that the Jews that lived in his days, when they found themselves sad and melancholy, would say to one another, *Come let us go and look upon Mary's Son that we may be cheerful.* How true that is I know not; but this I am sure, that looking upon Jesus Christ by an eye of faith, will make a soul rejoice abundantly. *Though now you see him not, yet believing you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*—*1 Pet. i. 8.* Joy comes in by believing. Actings of faith will cause Jesus Christ to set abroad this royal wine of joy for you, which will never be a-tilt, but always run fresh while you act faith, to draw. A believing soul hath a bird in its own bosom, that makes most sweet and pleasant melody. Faith spies out God's love in all things, sees all providential dispensations come from God as a token of love, and so rejoiceth in all. When a wife receiveth but a small thing from her husband abroad, as a token of love, she rejoiceth more in it, than in forty times more which she had at home before. But most of all faith sees love of God shine forth in the gifts of grace, and privileges of heaven. Hath God given you the rich jewel of grace, a patent for heaven, a grant of the privileges

of his court, the right of adoption to the being a daughter of God? You have abundant cause to rejoice and triumph in him, and to glory in the God of your salvation.

5. You see what kind of joy and delight it is, that I have here commended to you : it is not an enthusiastic joy or delight, through irrational raptures, which reason can give no account of ; but it is a rational, solid complacency of the soul in God ; nor is it a mere sensual joy. It is not the joy of those merry ones of the age, that spend their life in vain and sinful pleasures, whose mirth is madness (as the wise man calls it.—Eccles. ii. 2.) Mad-men will laugh, and whoop, and halloo, as if they were full of joy ; but who knows not that their condition is very sad ? *In the midst of laughter the heart is sad, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.*—Prov. xiv. 13. Do not the jolliest sinners find a damp after all their mirth ; and alas ! their mirth will last but a while ; their feast will be soon over ; the cloth will be shortly drawn, the music shall cease to play at their doors, and then nothing shall be heard but lamentable out-cries, bitter wailing, and gnashing of the teeth for ever.

I have been the longer on this, that I might keep you from that prejudice against religion, which is in the hearts of most, as if it were a sad and a melancholy life ; as if the bitter herb of grace would poison the flower of all their mirth. And for the same reason, I shall add another advice akin to this.

CHAPTER XI.

Of Praise and Thankfulness to God.

1. LIVE a life of praise and thankfulness to God. This inclines the soul to a holy rejoicing in God. Let him have your admiring praises continually. O steep your thoughts in the love and mercies of God. Say often with yourself, O what hath God done for me! what great mercies hath he offered and tendered to my soul! what a mercy is it that I am alive! that he hath borne with me thus long! and waited for my repentance! what astonishing riches of love and free grace is it that I am on this side hell, and that there is an all-sufficient Saviour provided for me! I will therefore live to the praise of his glory, and bear witness to his transcendent excellency.

2. Give God both tongue and heart to praise him. Anatomists observe, that the tongue of man is tied to the heart by a double string. May not this intimate that God would have the tongue, as well as the heart, a stringed instrument of his praise? But yet he regards not the praises of the tongue at all, if you do not make melody in your heart unto him. What doth God require of you for all his mercies and loving-kindnesses, but only praise? Some hold their lands by paying the rent of a pepper-corn, or the like. We hold all that we have from God, who requires only that we should pay this poor quit-rent a pepper corn of thankfulness, which if we pay daily to him, he will

give in more mercies. Trumpeters delight to sound where they may have an echo, and God to give where he may have an echo of praise. God is much delighted with the praises of his people; he likes well a thankful frame of heart; and indeed the heart is never in a better frame, than when it is tuned into a thankful note.

3. Labour very much to get yourself moulded into this excellent frame of a thankful and praise-worthy spirit. Do you love and affect mirth and pleasure? let me then prevail with you to endeavour seriously to get this truth engraven as a principle in your breast, that you will never find more sweet delight, more ravishing joy, than when you are in a God-praising, and a Christ-admiring frame. *David's* mouth is filled as with marrow and fatness; i. e. with the most sweet and delicious pleasure when he praises the Lord.—Psalm. lxii. 5. Yea, this will be blessedness to you. *Blessed* (saith that holy Psalmist) *are they that dwell in thy house, for they will be still praising thee.*—Psalm. lxxxiv. 4.

4. And because you are unable by all your songs of thanks and praise to reach unto that height of praise, which the love and mercies of God call for from you, even a note above *Ela*, such a high note as would crack all your strings, all your faculties to get up unto; therefore call to Angels and Arch-Angels, and all the choir in the Cathedral of Heaven, to sing glory, honour and praise to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

CHAPTER XII.

Of Humility.

1. LEARN to live humbly before God. This will help very much to advance that praise and thankfulness that I have now been praising to you. The humble Canaanitish woman, how thankful would she be for a crumb, falling from the table of mercy?—*Matt.* xv. A drachm of mercy will then weigh very heavy with you, when you look upon yourself as the very dust of the balance.

2. The prophet *Micah*, chapter vi. 8, declaring what is good, and what the Lord requires of us, gives this instruction: *Walk humbly with thy God.* We put on our best robes when we are to be taken into familiar converse with great persons: and therefore that you may walk with the great God, and converse with him, be clothed with humility, as the Apostle Peter exhorts, 1 *Pet.* v. 5. This is a plain, but a very comely and neat suit of apparel. The Greek word that the Apostle useth in that place, seems to allude to the knots or ribbands that women tie about them for ornament. Humility is an excellent ribband, that doth not only adorn the soul, but ties all the graces together on a knot; it is the string of all those precious and goodly pearls, which if it break, they are all scattered. If you suffer pride to break this string, you lose all your virtues. When the low violet of humility withers, all your other flowers will die. Hence *Bernard*, who calls faith the mother, styles

humility the nurse of all graces. God will give all grace to the humble.—1 *Pet.* v. 5. The richest wine is laid up in the lowest cellars. The graces and comforts of the Spirit are not laid in the high and lofty heart. Without this garment of humility the soul is naked and thread-bare. It is a grace of the greatest worth, and yet it will cost you the least to keep it.

3. Show your humility by your sweet contentedness with that condition which the wisdom of God shall assign you ; show it by your being so far from over-valuing yourself, that you do entertain mean and low thoughts of yourself ; and let it also appear by your setting light by the esteem of others, and by patient bearing all their slights. It is hard indeed to be cut in this vein, and not to bleed very sore, if not deadly. Show your humility also by abandoning bravery or costliness of apparel for ostentation.

4. Now that you may become humble, and keep yourself so, study much the corruption of nature, and to know yourself: say often to yourself, O what a vile sinful nature have I ! how full of corruption, which makes my life full of sin ! how empty am I of all good ! in what a bankrupt condition is my poor soul ! And if you would in this case take a right and impartial view of yourself, there is one false glass which you must avoid, which is the *glass of self-love* ; this will represent all fair to you, and make you seem to yourself better than you are. This is it which makes our own pride, and vanity, and unbelief, and unholiness seem to be a little sin, a tolerable fault, and not to

deserve damnation. It will make every common grace appear to be saving grace, and a state of godliness; and every duty a true mark of regeneration.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of Meekness.

1. EXERCISE a meek spirit in all your converse in the world. Would you be richly adorned? the Apostle *Peter* will tell you how it may best be, and what is the best fashion; and that is, *the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.*—1 Pet. iii. 3, 4, 5. You may perhaps think that such a meek deportment would be a derogation from your credit; but see there, how God counts it an ornament, better than that of wearing of gold, or putting on of costly apparel; yea, such an ornament as is in his sight of great price. And it is the best fashion also; verse 5, *For so holy women of old adorned themselves.*

2. Gratify me your Father in this small request; never provoke others unto passion, neither be you by others provoked thereunto. But what, shall I be trampled upon? no: it will be your greatest glory and honour to pass by an affront. A cool spirit is an excellent spirit; according as it is in the marginal reading of Prov. xvii. 27. But shall I not then be accounted a fool? No: it will be your best wisdom: *For the wisdom which is from above is gentle, peaceable, easy to be intreated.*—Jam. iii. 17. A gracious meek spirit will put up with

many an affront, and never rage. Full vessels will bear many a knock and stroke, and yet make no noise. But if there be envying and strife in you, are you not carnal?—1 *Cor.* iii. 3. This wisdom comes not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.—*Jam.* iii. 15. These overflowings of the gall, are caused by corrupt and noxious humours within. Let me persuade you then to take this gentle medicine, this grace of meekness, which will stop those bitter overflowings, and effectually cure the burning fever of passion, which is caused thereby, and readily heal an angry sore. This cool spirit will either prevent sparks from kindling, or soon quench them. Meekness is a soft and gentle breath, a smooth and pleasant fan, that cools the passions. It is soft wool that breaks the force of cannon-shot, that damps the fiercest anger.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of Living in Love and Charity to all.

1. LIVE in love and charity to your neighbour. Be careful to get this grace engraven on your breast, and as it were moulded into your very nature. Live in this element of love; let the acting thereof be so natural and familiar to you, that he that runs may read this new commandment, which Christ left, of loving one another, written in you, as it were in letters of gold. Oh how main a part of religion and holiness lies in this duty of love? I do not know through all the New Testament any

one duty, so much inculcated and prest on, as this of love; no string so much beat upon, as if it made the best music, and sweetest harmony in christian religion.

2. You must love all, even the most wicked in the world, as having the natural image of God, or the marks of his perfection in the rational soul. *David* indeed professed his hatred of God's enemies, but it was (according to the ordinary gloss) of their sins, not of their persons. That effect of lightning in breaking the sword, and not bruising the scabbard, is accounted as one of Nature's great mysteries. But this heavenly flame of love and charity, seems much more mysterious and admirable in its operations, whilst it would by all means keep safe, and preserve the person of our vicious neighbour and enemy, when it hath a deadly hatred unto, and a desire to destroy his vices.

3. Though you love all, yet your best and choicest love must be to the saints, in whom the moral image of God, which consists in righteousness and true holiness (and is the special loadstone of love) doth shine and sparkle forth. The lines which are drawn from the circumference to the centre, all draw to it, and the nearer the centre, the nearer they are to one another. God is the centre of love, and the nearer we come to him, the nearer are we to one another in spiritual affection. There is a consanguinity of graces among the saints, and therefore the greatest love, as there is among persons of the same blood and kindred; they are all the children of God by faith,

4. Let this love put you upon being ready to do all the good you can, as you have opportunity, but especially to those that are of the household of faith. Let the errand on which *Jesse* sent *David* be your great business in the world: look how thy brethren fare. Consider the poor so as to relieve them. Deny yourself superfluities, that you may supply the poor with necessaries. The poor are God's wardrobe; you cannot hang up your raiment in a better place.

CHAPTER XV.

How to manage your converse in company.

1. LET that grace of love and charity commended to you in the former chapter, steer and influence you in your civil converse in all companies. Let it be as a bridle to your tongue, to restrain your speaking evil of others, and to curb all censuring. *Take him* (saith holy *Mr. Baxter*) *that speaks evil of another to you, to be Satan's messenger entreating you to hate your brother, or to abate your love.* Let me then warn and caution you, not to run upon Satan's errand, or to do his message. And consider that this speaking evil of others, is the great make-bait, the grand incendiary that raiseth up flames, kindles hatred and malice, and damps all love and affection. It is the sluice of dissention and discord, the great inlet of strife and animosities, of quarrels and contentions in all companies. And as for censuring of others, how familiar is it with those of your sex,

when they come together, to run division in the censures of other persons, either for their entertainments, their garb and dressing, their outward behaviour and gestures, or some such trifles? always finding fault, and often making (as coney do holes in the rocks) where they cannot find; therefore do you mind yourself only; look within yourself, within your own heart; in this respect keep at home like a good housewife; be much within doors, within your own bosom, to spy what fault there is, and go not abroad in uncharitable censures of others. In the twilight we can see to read without doors, when we cannot within: we cannot see the swellings in our own hearts, when we can easily spy small pimples in another; we can see the mote in another's eye, when we cannot the beam in our own.

2. Be watchful when you are in company, that you contract no harm thereby. The bee in the midst of the hive full of clinging stuff, yet keeps her wings untouched with it. Indeed vain company hath usually a very strong force to make us imitate their gestures, words, and actions; we usually learn our pronounciation, our *Shibboleth*, and our gestures and gait, by our company. You can scarcely come any where, but there is some white wall, or some black hood, so that you shall carry something away with you. But the greatest danger is from carnal friends and relations; these indeed are the great impediments in the way to heaven. Many in all probability had been holy and gracious persons, if they had better kindred, and lived where godliness had been encouraged, and good examples given thereunto. O it is a very

sad thing to be near to them, whose nearness will remove you further from God! Be therefore exceedingly careful, to keep your spiritual watch in your company; and labour so to live in the world, as not to partake of the corrupt and sinful humours of it: as mother pearls live in the sea, not taking one drop of salt water into their shells.

3. But yet as much as possible may be, avoid joining yourself with any acquaintance, except such by whom you may be made better. The royal Psalmist begins his first Psalm with the blessedness of that person, who hath not walked in the company of the ungodly. Diamonds will not cement with rubbish.

4. In all converse in any company, let some good words fall from you, that may tend to make them better. Let your lips (like the spouses in the *Canticles*) drop as the honey-comb; distil some sweetness, some savoury and wholesome words. A word spoken in season may through God's blessing tend to the eternal welfare of a soul. A good woman riding with her husband in a great thunder storm, which much affrighted him, and being asked by him what the reason was, why she was not at all afraid, returned this sweet and holy answer; *Because it is my Father's voice*. And this one seasonable word proved the occasion of his conversion to God.

5. Be sure to avoid all vain discourse and idle chat, which is the feminine malady; and let your words be few and well considered before you speak. Remember that astonishing speech, *That of every idle word, that you shall speak, you shall give an account thereof at the day of Judgment*.
Matt. xii. 36.

CHAPTER XVI.

How to manage Solitariness.

1. WHEN you are solitary and alone, take heed of the creeping in of vain thoughts, which are then most apt to swarm. Oh! it is incredible to think what a multitude of vain thoughts, run through the vain mind in an hour; perhaps, as many as there be sands in an hour-glass. O what a pity is it that this noble soul should be so idle, either doing nothing, or to so little purpose! it is an evil heart, that like jet, draws to itself nothing but straws. O how much is it to be lamented, that this golden mill of the soul, should spend itself in grinding chaff for its enemy, the great destroyer of mankind! *O wash thy heart from wickedness; how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?—* Jer. iv. 14.

2. Entertain some short discourses with God, or with yourself when you are alone. You never need complain of melancholy and solitariness in want of company, when you may make yourself company enough; for you may then hold discourse with God and your own soul. A child of God is never less alone, than when most alone, because he hath God usually with him, who is the best company. That good heathen philosopher *Epicetus*, could solace himself in his solitariness in banishment, with these thoughts, that divine colloquies and conferences were to be had every where with God. O learn to converse with God in your most solitary retirements. Say to God,

I will set thee always before me, Psal. xvi. 8.—Or you may profitably use some discourses with yourself, some divine soliloquies; you may call your soul aside to her withdrawing room; you may commune with your own heart in your chamber, as the Psalmist expresseth it; Psal. iv. 4. But not as the fool in the Gospel did, singing a secure lullaby to his soul; *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, eat, drink, and be merry*;—Luke xii. 19. But after the example of the devout Psalmist, singing a holy rest to his soul; *Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for God hath dealt bountifully with thee*; Psal. cxvi. 7. Or if you have a troubled spirit, then you may talk to yourself in a way of challenge, or chiding expostulation; *Why art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me?* As he did, *Ps. xlii. 5, 11.* where he rallies up his soul in that awakening inquiry. And if after you see reason to alter your note, and to give thanks for the scattering of that sad cloud by the sunshine of pardoning mercy and love, then you may set your affections in the same key, in which the same holy man's were in another soliloquy, saying with him; *Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name: who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases*; Ps. ciii. 1, 3.

3. This course will much improve you in piety and holiness; and this retirement will help you to the most excellent company, to the fellowship of God and Christ, who will dwell in you; and the innumerable company of angels and just men made perfect will be of the same society with you. She that is not permitted to speak in the church,

may thus preach to herself, in her own private chapel, to her great benefit. I mean that sacred chapel, which her devotion hath built in her own heart.

CHAPTER XVII.

How to Live in a Prosperous Condition.

1. LIVE above withering vanities, above all the smiles and blandishments of the world; let not your heart be glued to any creature-comforts; look on them all as withered flowers, as dead things; let your heart be crucified to the world, and the world to it, looking upon it as a dead carcase, that hath no beauty or loveliness in it. If you profess yourself a Christian, live at a higher rate than others. How unbecoming is it for a child of God to be puzzling herself about the world? A sense of the love of God would lift up your soul above the sweetest flowers and delights upon earth, in all which there will be found nothing but wormwood and gall in the latter end, nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit. It is only the rose of *Sharon* that is without prickles.

2. Proportion your duties according to your mercies; the greater receivings or incomes you have from God, the greater must your disbursements and laying out for him be. Your account must be according to the number and weight of your talents, Matt. xxv. The servant should proportion his work according to his wages. The tree brings forth fruit proportionable to the juice and nourishment that the root sucks from the earth, and to

the cost that is bestowed upon it. In the ceremonial law God required more costly sacrifices from the rich than from the poor: a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons would have been accepted from the poor, but not from the rich. God was displeased with *Hezekiah*, because he rendered not according to the benefits received; 2 Chron. xxiii. 25.

3. Improve all your prosperity and lawful pleasures to the furthering of your delight in God. If that a prosperous condition should afford you all the variety of objects, which might be most delectable to the several senses, use them only, as stirrups, or as the advantage of a higher ground, to raise up yourself by to the thoughts of heaven, and the delights thereof. Let your soul take occasion and advantage thence, to carry itself up to the delightful thoughts of God, the Giver of all these; as the bird from the tree takes the further flight: and so far as you can, make use of all your delight in creature-comforts to promote your delight in the Lord, and to drive away those black clouds of carnal fears and sadnesses of spirits, which are enemies to your spiritual joy and delight. Thus you will prove yourself a good chymical Christian, extracting a spiritual quintessence out of these earthly and drossy things; thus you turn dung and dross into gold and pearls, mean and contemptible matters into high and glorious things, and gain to yourself such an *elixir* as will refresh the soul, and fill it with cordial spirits. When you perceive and taste the sweetness and pleasantness of these outward mercies, think seriously, if these be so sweet and delightful,

how much more sweet is God himself, who put all that sweetness and pleasantness therein?

4. As you love your soul, let not your life be a life of pleasure and vanity. If the devil can but take you up with one pleasure one day, and another vanity another, till the hour-glass of your time be run out, he hath his end, and you are ruined for ever. Remember *Dives*, his life was a continual feast of pleasure, Luke xvi. 19, but death soon brought the voider, and the devil took away. O do not ride to hell upon the back of pleasure! Can any think to dance with the Devil all day, and to sup with Christ at night! Flatter not yourself with dreams of having a rest in carnal pleasures here, and everlasting rest hereafter also.

CHAPTER XVIII.

How to Manage an Afflicted Condition.

1. USE your best endeavours to get good by all the afflictions and crosses that shall befall you. I know indeed it may be with Christians as with meats; some are preserved in sugar, as cherries and plums, &c. others (as beef) are preserved in brine. But yet I think, you have more reason to fear the sweetness of a prosperous, rather than the sharp brine of an adverse condition. Bees are killed with honey, but quickened with vinegar. If you read your bible through, you shall find that few of God's children have gone through a prosperous condition, without being ensnared thereby,

and rarely find any but have been bettered by adversity. In the summer of prosperity it is well if you be not fly-blown. In the budding spring, and in the blooming summer, then pride and vanity, formality in religion, and satisfaction in creature-comforts will be apt to sprout forth and taint you : but the sharp winter of affliction will kill these vermin. Sharp and bitter things are cleansing, and clear the body from many noxious humours ; whereas sweet things, much used, do stuff up the passages of the body, and create many obstructions. It is a high character which is given of that noble person, that mirror of your sex, the lady *Jane Grey*, that she so managed an afflicted condition, that she made misery itself seem amiable, and the night-clothes of adversity did as much become her as her day-dressing. God's children are his jewels, his rich plate, which being scoured by afflictions, look brighter ; their souls are bleached and whitened in the waters of affliction. These are the sharp lemon that take off their mill-dews. Christians seldom come to be great scholars in the school of Christ without the rod of affliction. Learn to value afflictions as you do physic, not according to the taste and relish, but according to the profitable effects that it works. That is to be accounted a blessed fever that preserves the soul from everlasting burnings.

2. If you be not bettered by God's rod when he sends it, take heed lest he turn not his rod into a serpent, as *Moses'* rod was. Is it not to be thought a dangerous symptom of God's rejection, and that the Physician of our souls is leaving us, when afflictions, which usually are God's physic to purge

out our disease, do co-operate therewith, and so increase it? it is then to be feared that we shall hardly recover.

3. Improve all afflictions for your spiritual good by prayers, and actings of faith in a promise. 1. By prayer. *Is any afflicted? let him pray.* James v. 13. Afflictions may be said to be improved by prayer, these two ways: 1. By making them a motive to put yourself on prayer. The rod then doth the child good, when it brings his stubborn heart to his knees. God therefore lays his people on their backs, that he may make them to look up to heaven. Every cross is an unsanctified cross, that is not attended with prayer. 2. By using prayer as a means to help you against those sins, which are apt to accompany an afflicted condition, as impatience, discontent, &c. and to fetch in those graces which you have most need of therein, as faith, humility, repentance, contentment, joy, and submission to the will of God. Prayer will cause these precious fruits to grow on the cross, and so it will be sanctified to you.

2. Improve afflictions by actings of faith in the promises. Afflictions are sweetened to believers, they are steeped in honey, sanctified by the word of the promise, that they shall work together for good, Rom. viii. 28, and yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness, Heb. xii. 1.—The promise gives them a most delicious relish to faith. Faith can make a sovereign oil of these scorpions to heal the soul. Faith can turn water into wine, even the bitter waters of *Marah* into the wine of comfort.

CHAPTER XIX.

How to manage your Relative Condition.

1. BE earnest in prayer to the God of all grace, to furnish you with suitable grace for the relations you stand in. Hath God called you to be a wife? pray for the spirit of a wife. There is no relation that we enter into, but it calls for new duties from us. No relation but hath its peculiar temptations and sins, to which it is prone. Consider then what are your relation-temptations, and your relation-sins, and what are your relation-duties, and pray for strength against those particular temptations and sins, and for those particular duties. No duties are more momentous, and yet none less observed usually. It is a common fault to neglect our own work, and too much to complain of others neglecting theirs; and so like planets we eclipse one another. Many wives are apt to pick quarrels, because their husbands do not their duties, when themselves omit their own. And so many unnatural children complain of their parents for being so, when it is next door to an impossibility for a parent to be unnatural. O mind well your relation defects, and be very careful that religion may form and mould your demeanour towards all your relations whatsoever. This will be your excellency; thus will you be like a fixed star, shining in that proper orb, in that very sphere and station, where God hath fixed you, without eccentric motions.

2. If you would know how the case stands be-

twixt God and your soul, consider what you are in all your several relations, and how you manage them. Judge not yourself so much by your praying and hearing, and other duties of religion in your general calling as a Christian, as by the practice of your religion at home in your relations: observe especially how your religion works in your relative condition, and the temptations thereof. She is not a good woman, that is not a good wife, or not a good daughter.

3. Live in a free and cheerful submission and obedience to your husband: You have this command given in several places of Scripture. *Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as unto the Lord.* Eph. v. 22. Col. iii. 18. 1 Pet. iii. 1.— This submission includes both reverence and obedience to the husband, and this obedience must be showed both to his commands, his desires, his restraints, and his rebukes; nay, if his rebukes should turn to revilings, the wife may not revile again; for that would be to shoot with the devil in his own bow; but she may sweetly admonish him in things that she certainly knows to be sinful and hurtful. Your subjection doth not hinder you from provoking him to love and good works, as the apostle useth the phrase. Heb. x. 24. But yet even this provocation must be without passion: You may lovingly admonish him thereunto, but with a care, that in so doing, you provoke him not to wrath, lest you do like those, who take hot water to heat the stomach, and thereby inflame the liver. The wife in *Nathan's* parable is called a lamb; she must be a lamb for meekness. The apostle *Peter* having said, *Ye were as sheep going*

astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd of your souls.—1 Peter ii. 25. He immediately adds in the next words ; *Ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands.* Wives are Christ's sheep, and must not be the devil's shrews.

4. Is God calling you to be a mother (having formed a work in you unseen to any other eye but His, take great care, that you give up, and seriously devote and dedicate the fruit of your womb to God, to be his servants, so that all the children that God shall give you, may be (as *Bathsheba* called *Solomon*) children of your vows. And in the educating of them, see that you be continually instilling and dropping into them the milk of wholesome instructions, that so it may be said of you, as of *Solomon's* virtuous woman ; *her children rise up, and call her blessed.*—Prov. xxxi. 28. How careful have holy women been in these cases ? While *Monica* the mother of Saint *Austin* was with child with him, she did often devote him to the christian religion, and the service of the great God ; and afterwards in his education, she so affectionately sought the good of his soul, that he was called the child of her prayers and tears. It was *Timothy's* happiness that he had a good mother and a good grand-mother ; for so he learned the Scriptures from a child. And the mother of holy *Bernard*, as soon as her children were born, gave them up to the Lord Jesus, to be his servants : And no less careful was she of their instructions, as soon as they came to be capable thereof, and the success was happy, in that all of them became holy children of God. Children while young are most with the mother, and in her company, and usually have the

most love for her, and therefore are the most likely to take her instructions; therefore be you careful to improve that advantage. And begin betimes with them, so soon as you see the first buddings of reason. Gardeners begin to graft at the first rising of the sap in the spring, and when the bud of the stock first begins to swell and enlarge. The wax, while it is soft and tender, will easily take impression. Labour by all means to imprint upon the children that God shall give you, a stamp of holiness. *Philip* king of *Macedon* gave to one a piece of metal, without any stamp, who after returned it again to the king with his son *Alexander's* picture engraven on it, which very much pleased the king. You will receive your children from God unpolished, without any form; see that you return them back to him with his Son Christ's image on them, which is the image of holiness.

5. How sad an account have those mothers to give to God, who neglect giving of good instruction to their children betimes! What a terrible speech was that of a dying lady to her ungodly mother! *It is too late now to speak of God to me, I am going to hell before, and you will certainly follow after.*

CHAPTER XX.

How to Manage in Natural and Civil Actions Religiously.

1. MANAGE all your natural and civil actions by the rules of religion, making the very drift and scope of them all to be the pleasing and glorifying

of God. Let the needle in the compass of your soul, stand directly and steadily to this pole, God's glory ; and then you will steer your course aright. Mind this end, not only in acts of devotion, and the direct duties of religion, but in the course of your civil conversation.

2. And do not satisfy yourself with making God your end in the general course of your life, but mind this end actually and expressly in every solemn action of every day. If you eat or drink, do it not to gratify your carnal sense or appetite, but to preserve your health, that by your health and strength you may be better enabled to do God service. And so in all your domestic affairs, level your arrow at the same mark, aim at this chiefly and ultimately, the glory of God. Thus you will make both your natural and civil actions to slide into religion, and become parts of God's service. Thus you will serve God in your lying down, and in your rising up, in your eating, drinking, sleeping, visiting, journeying, and all other your lawful actions.

3. But I do not here bid you to mind this end actually in every ordinary action throughout the whole day, or in every bit of bread that you put in your mouth ; this cannot be done ; but yet you may do it in every solemn action of the day ; you may at every meal when you sit down actually and observedly mind this end, though not in every bit you eat. Or in a morning when you rise, you may have a resolved intention to do all that day in the name of God, and for his glory ; and you may by a ready unobserved act of a strong habit order all particulars that day to the same end, which you did

actually propound to yourself at first rising in the morning; and still all the day do propound to yourself in the general habitual disposition, frame, and purpose of the heart. Thus then, though the glory of God, and good of the soul, cannot be distinctly and actually intended in every single action of the day; yet a sincere habitual intention of God's glory, well fixed and riveted within, will be sufficient to steer and influence all the particulars of that day into that end. As a man that sets forward in a journey with a full intention to go to *London*, though he do not actually think of *London* in every step that he takes, yet by virtue of the first settled intention, every particular step is ordered to that end.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of Spending of Time.

1. NEVER do any thing merely to pass the time away. Neither make any visits, nor set upon any thing called recreation, barely on that account. Time is too precious a jewel, too valuable a treasure to study how to get rid of it, as some do of an old commodity that lies on their hands, that they cannot tell what to do with. God never gave us the least pittance or moment of good to trifle away, but that we might do something therein. What! can you have any time to pass away, when many would give all they were worth but to draw out their breath one hour longer? As a great lady that cried out on her death-bed, "*All too late, a world of wealth for an inch of time.*"

2. Avoid all such occasions whatsoever that wastes much time to no good purpose; as vain trickings and trimmings, tirings and dressings, too long needless visits, perusal of idle books, or treatises of vanity and folly, vain thoughts, fruitless discourse, unnecessary sleep, useless recreations, and idle games. But it may be asked, are not these things lawful? This one question sends many to hell, *may I not do this?* For we are most of us in danger by the use of lawful things, being here most apt to go beyond our bounds. There are more killed by wine than there are by poison. But why may not I do as most persons do, that are of my rank and quality? No: do not you set your watch by the town clock, but by the sun-dial of the Scripture, the true and perfect dial of the increated Sun. Make not your neighbours, but the Scriptures the rule of your life. If you eye what others do, and direct your course of life accordingly, you do steer by a planet, and not by the pole-star, and will never so come at the heavenly harbour, the port of eternal bliss and happiness. I do not advise you against necessary recreations for your health. But those that spend much time in playing, carding, dicing, or such kind of games, (against which I hope I need not much caution you,) do but nick-name it, when they call it recreation, and are like such, that have a nice stomach, who feed more on sauce than they do on meat.

3. Make every day a working-day for heaven, and every day a Sabbath from sin; I mean a resting day from it. Be every day working out your salvation with fear and trembling; your time

is short, and your work is great, and your salvation lies at stake, therefore fall hard to your work ; set on it with all your might, and hoard up all the time that possibly you can for it.

4. Remember often that immortality and eternity hangs upon the spending of your time, and according as you spend this, so it will be with you to all eternity, either for happiness or misery. I have read a story of a certain gentlewoman, who used to spend much time in playing at cards, and such games ; coming once from that pastime late in the night, and finding her waiting-maid reading a good book, cast her eyes over the maid's shoulder, and spoke words to this effect, *Thou poor melancholy soul, what ! always reading and spending thy time in this manner ! wilt thou take no comfort in thy life ?* But the gentlewoman being soon after got to bed, could take no rest, but lay groaning and sighing bitterly. The maid lying in the same room, and hearing it, desired to know the reason of it ; to whom her mistress replied : *I read this word, ETERNITY, in thy book, which hath so pierced my heart, that I believe I shall never sleep more until I have a better assurance of my eternity.*

Lastly, consider seriously that you must at the great Day of the Lord, give an account for all your time. It is said of *Ignatius*, that whensoever he heard a clock strike, he would say, *Here is now one hour more past, which I have to answer for.* O what a heart-affecting consideration is the loss of time, with the account to be given for it ? Holy *Mr. Baxter* tells us, he familiarly knew a most holy, grave, and Reverend Divine, who was so affected with the words of a godly woman, who at her

death did often and vehemently cry out, *O call time again! O call time again!* that the sense of it seemed to remain on his heart, and appear in his praying, preaching, and conversation to his death: O that the reading of her words here might have the like happy influence on your heart and conversation!

CHAPTER XXII.

Of the Order and Method of Duties every Week-day.

1. As soon as you are awake in the morning, lift up your heart in some good thought to God. Let your heart be raised up in thankfulness to God for the mercies of the former night, and by faithful reliance on him for his Providence over you that day following. Set forth in the morning in the name of God, resolving to do all things that day in that name, *Col. iii. 17*, and for his glory, and that you will so spend it for God. And likewise fortify and arm yourself against all the temptations that you foresee you are likely to meet with occasionally that day. And if any thought about any worldly concern shall present itself to you, striving to get first in, check it with the words of our Saviour in another case; *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father.* I have not yet raised up my heart to God. Thoughts will stand about your heart in a morning, as a company of clients about the door, and that which first enters hath usually most to do all that day. Satan will first crowd in, if possible, by some worldly or vain thought, to

get the first entrance in the morn; he is like a greedy and restless stomach-worm, that keeps a coyl to have his breakfast before his master be served. Therefore let it be your diligent care as soon as you awake, to fill your heart with some thoughts of God, which will be the best breakfast to keep out the wind of a temptation. And if you thus perfume the soul in the morning with such sweet odours, you will the better keep out ill scents all the day. Let your heart be as the sun-dial, that early receives the sun-beams, and goes along with it till the evening. Let it receive the beams of the Sun of Rightousness freely in the morning, and he will shine on it all the day. If you do not at first set out to a right point of the compass, you will make a bad voyage.

Ejaculations which may be used when you awake in or towards the Morning.

My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.—Psalm v. 3.

How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: When I awake, I am still with thee.—Psalm cxxxix. 17, 18.

My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning.—Psalm cxxx. 6. O when shall the day dawn, and the day star arise in my heart!

It is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed, because his compassions fail not; they are new every morning.—Lam. iii. 22, 23. Therefore my thanks shall never fail, but be new and fresh every morning also.

2. Let not your morning hours (which are the very flower and cream of time, the most precious of all the day for any work or duty) be spent in bed, or vainly out of bed. And while you are dressing, let some one (if you can conveniently) read to you, or else you may employ your time in thinking of the last sermon you heard, or some other good thoughts, as of the soul's wedding garment,—*Matt.* xxii. 11 ; or of the durable clothing, (*Ezek.* xxiii. 18,) in comparison of which all the best apparel is but a cobweb tiffany, a fine worthless nothing ; or you may use such ejaculations and meditations as these following :—

Ejaculations and Meditations which may be used while you are Dressing.

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

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

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

This garment is very neat, but how much more comely and glorious is the wedding garment of souls, the robe of Christ's righteousness, which is put on by faith !

Oh what a blessed time will that be when I shall be arrayed with the perfect beauty of holiness, with the white garments of perfect light and glory ! then shall be the marriage of the Lamb !

Am I not now garnishing a body which may in a few days turn to rottenness ? O why should this vile body be decked, as a dead body, stuck with flowers, and the precious soul be neglected !

3. When you have got your clothes on, then solemnly retire unto your closet for devotion, if no other necessary business call you unto something else before, which may often happen when you have a family; which when you have, then, if occasion be, first settle affairs therein, for the forenoon work, and then having sounded a retreat in your heart to temporal affairs, you may after retire into your closet with more freedom from domestic cares, and without fear of interruption; whereas, if you went to your private devotion before, you would be forced to cut it shorter, and curtail that duty.

4. Manage your domestic affairs with prudence and diligence; but not with solicitous eagerness and vexing care. *Solomon's* virtuous woman, looketh well to the affairs of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.—*Prov.* xxxi. 27. *A wise woman buildeth her house*,—*Prov.* xiv. 2; she studies in every business how to set every thing in order, as the carpenter studies how to set every part of the frame in joint. But yet herein be not like *Martha*, while she played the good housewife, was cumbered about many things. And if many things fall out together, despatch them in a prudent order, and not with too much haste and eagerness. Those things are seldom well done, that are done in a hurry. The drones fly about more hastily than the bees, but they make no honey, but combs only.

5. At your meals reflect upon God, turn your eyes to see his mercies towards you; thus will you enjoy God in all. A carnal heart regards no more than the bare enjoyment of these outward mercies, but looks not to the spring from whence they come, as a gracious heart doth, who finds the

greatest sweetness of them, to be their coming from the love of God. Besides, you may then reflect on God by raising up your thoughts to the delights in him; think seriously in your heart, if this meat be so sweet to my taste, how much more sweet is Christ the hidden manna? Here you may take occasion, like him that sat at meat with Christ, *Luke* xiv. 15, to raise up your thoughts to the blessedness of him that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Thus you will feast your soul, while you are feeding your body. Thus you may so sweeten your meat, and spice your cup, with the relishes of the love of God, as may make your table better, and more pleasant to you, than the tables of the greatest ladies in the world.

6. In the midst of all your domestic over-sight of affairs (when you shall have any) eye God's providence, casting all your care upon him, and so he will bless your endeavours. And often retire to God by ejaculations, short addresses, and holy breathings of soul after him. By these you may sanctify both your walking, riding and journeying, (which are usually vainly spent in multitudes of idle thoughts that signify nothing) and all your affairs also whatsoever. This was *Nehemiah's* practice when he was before the king, he then prayed to the God of Heaven, *chap.* ii. 4. I do not believe that he then went into some place by himself to pray; no, he sent up only some short ejaculations to God, while he was in the king's presence. It is reported of holy Mr. Dod, that he never got upon his horse. but he prayed before he alighted off. In every corner there is a throne of grace, therefore often, every day, improve this privilege; be often

looking up to God, and casting your eyes to heaven; and so you may bring down heaven to you. As often as you want direction in any sudden case and affair, or relief in any need, by one lift or sudden glance of the eye of faith to Jesus Christ, you may have it. And in such cases you may use as an ejaculatory prayer that of honourable *Jabez*; *Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and that thy hand might be with me; and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me!*—1 Chron. iv. 10, which was so pleasing to God, that it is added there, and God granted him that which he requested.

7. Besides those short ejaculations now mentioned, you must make solemn addresses to God twice a day at least. The soul must have her set meals, or a set service to God twice every day at least. Twice every day the clock must necessarily be wound up. *Aaron* lighted the lamps, and burned incense evening and morning.—*Exod.* xxx. 7, 8. Reading of Scripture is to us as his burning the lamps; and praying is as his burning incense; these two must go both together, like eating and drinking. If you do solemnly address yourself to God in the morning, you shall be in a better frame and temper of heart all the day after; and if you do it at night, you will find a better appetite to it again next morning. But I do not limit you to twice a day; it will be best to do it as often as with any convenience you can. Holy *David* did it thrice a day, evening and morning, and at noon.—*Psalms* lv. 17; so did *Daniel*, chapter vi. verse 10.

8. Fill up all the intervals and vacancies of your time every day, those pauses or breathing times betwixt one employment and another with read-

ing some good and profitable books, necessary recreations for your health, charitable visits to the poor, friendly courtesies, neighbourly civilities, or some profitable discourse or discourses to God in prayer beside your evening and morning addresses.

9. Every night before you go to bed, retire yourself, and call yourself seriously to an account in an impartial survey of all the remarkable actions, and also of the mercies of the past day. And for your better direction therein, you may ask yourself these following questions:—

1. What time have I lost or trifled away this day?
2. What particular duties have I omitted?
3. What sins have I committed this day?
4. Out of what principle have I performed my duties? whether out of an inward bias of love to God, or from some outward reasons and motives? Have not the wheels been oiled by some sinister respects in duty? Hath not my performance of duties been more out of custom, or to stop the mouth of natural conscience, than out of and delight in them?

5. In this account ask yourself what have my receivings been from God this day? what talents and mercies have I had from him? and how have I laid them out for him? what mercies have I received, and what returns have I made for them?

10. Close your eyes at night with some thoughts of God and Christ. When you are composing yourself to sleep, commit yourself then both body and soul into his hands to keep them for you, while you sleep, as the child when it goes to bed gives its mother what it would have kept safely. Or going to bed, you may suitably meditate on death,

whose image and picture sleep is. Look upon your bed as upon your grave; think to die as often as you fall asleep. Sleep is a short death, and death is nothing else but a long sleep: the bed is a grave for one night, and the grave is a bed for many ages. We expect to awaken from our beds, and we hope to rise again from our graves. If you thus rake up the fire over night, you will find it burning in the morning. *Solomon's* virtuous woman let not her candle go out by night.—*Prov.* xxxi. 18. Let your lamp be well trimmed, your grace well lighted, and put in exercise when you compose yourself to rest; and like a good watch-candle, you will find it burning when you awake. O how many are there that lie down as the beasts in their straw, without so much as bidding their souls good night?

Ejaculations which may be used at Night before Sleep.

I will both lay me down and sleep, for thou, Lord, makest me dwell in safety.—*Psalm* iv. 8.

When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet,—*Prov.* iii. 24.

Lord, I commit myself both body and soul into thy hands, who art the keeper of *Israel*, who neither slumber nor sleeps. *The Lord is my keeper; the Lord is my defence, who neither slumbers nor sleeps.* *Psalm* cxxi. 4, 5.

11. If there be any interceptions, any interruptions or breaches of sleep in the night, fill up those vacancies with meditations on some sermon lately heard, or on what you read the day before in the Bible, or some other good book; or else with some

pious ejaculations, as devout souls, those spiritual crickets of the night were used to do.

Ejaculations that may be used in the Night when you cannot Sleep.

By night upon my bed, I sought him whom my soul loveth.—Cant. iii. 1. O let me not have occasion to say, I sought him, but I found him not; or to go about as the spouse there did, in a dark night of desertion, crying out like a delolate widow, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early. Isa. xxvi. 9. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Ps. lxiii. 5, 6.

O when shall I come and appear in the presence of God, in the city of the New Jerusalem, which hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof: And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.—*Rev. xxi. 23.*

O when shall my soul be received into the number of that heavenly choir that sing for ever *hallelujahs*, that rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.—*Rev. iv. 8*

I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel: my reins also (my inward thoughts) instruct me in the night seasons.—Psalm xvi. 7.

CHAPTER XXIII.

How to Spend the Lord's Day.

IN general, be a curious spender of your time on the Lord's Day. This will be a holy curiosity. Let this day be your delight, spend it wholly in walking in the spouse's garden amongst duties and ordinances, with a sweet and holy pleasure, where there is so great a variety, that you may go (like a diligent bee) from one flower to another, from one duty to another, and never take surfeit. It is the whole day that God commands to be sanctified, and therefore the whole must be spent in holy exercises. Therefore do not think it sufficient for the sanctification thereof, that you have been at the public worship in the assembly, unless the whole day were spent there, as was antiently done by the primitive Christians in their public assemblies, almost from morning to night. On other days of the week duties call for time, but time calls for duties on the Lord's-day. If I were to pass my judgment on the religion of any person, I would take my opinion from the manner of their observation of the Lord's-day.

2. Before you go to the public worship, spend what time you can in private (besides duty in the family) that so you may be better prepared for the public: for private devotion before will be a great means to prevent worldly thoughts and distractions, when you are in the assembly. Worldly thoughts and cares do play the part of little children if they cannot keep the mother from going abroad, they will cry to go along with her; and these, if they

cannot keep you from church, they will strive to go thither with you ; but solemn preparation before, lays a restraint on them, gives them a discharge, to prevent and hinder their accompanying of you.

3. Be a constant, diligent, and reverent attendant on the public ordinances, and make the best improvement of them for your soul. This is a frequenting the royal exchange of Christians, and would exceedingly tend to the soul's advantage. Christ's presence is most to be found in the public ordinances : he walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks : here the whole assembly with united and concentrated forces do besiege the throne of grace ; and so their prayers have more power with God. Music in consort is the most pleasant. That is the sweetest posy that is made of most flowers. The prayers of many smell sweetest with God. Besides, affections are more wrought on in public than in private (which some great naturalists have observed as one of nature's great mysteries) and where affections are most raised, there God usually confers the greater blessing. Indeed sometimes it falls out that Christians are more dull under the public means, which may be in judgment, when they either put too much confidence in such places, or are fallen to a loathing or slighting of that spiritual food, either because they have it so oft, or by reason of some circumstances in worship, which they like not.

4. When you come home from public worship be careful to spend your time in religious exercises. Meditate on what you have heard, and having, like a diligent bee, gathered abroad in the public assembly, the sweet of heavenly flowers, work your

honey-comb within your own hive. Digest well by private meditations that spiritual meat, which was set before you in the dishes of the public ordinances. Meditate also on the attributes of God, the works of God, and especially the mercies of God, that you may be stirred up to holy rejoicings, praises, and thanksgivings, which are the most proper work of the day, which is a day of thanksgiving, and commemoration of the mercies of God, especially of the resurrection of Christ, and the great work of redemption.

5. Be careful that your servants do not profane or mispend this day, as being tender of their souls, as well as your own. *Solomon's* virtuous woman gave a portion of holy instructions, as well as of food, to her servants and maidens.—*Prov.* xxxi. 15, 26.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of Holy Duties in general.

1 BEFORE you go to any duty address yourself to Jesus Christ for a supply of grace for the performance thereof. If you be to go to a new act of praying, or hearing, or receiving the sacraments, you must eye Jesus Christ again, put forth a new act of faith towards him, and labour for new influences, and a fresh supply of spirit from him.

2. Do not only number your duties, but weigh your duties, how many; how many look only how oft they go to duties, but never seriously how, or in what manner they perform them! and so cheat themselves everlastingly, concluding themselves to be in a state of grace, because of their constancy

in duties, but miscarry everlastingly for want of a right manner of performing them, as out of a right spring and principle, and to a right end, and with sincerity and fervency of affection. Though the tree bear many large and fair fruits, yet it is not much valued, unless they have a good relish. If the fruits that your soul brings forth have not a good taste, through the sincerity and right ends thereof, or taste not of the love of God, they will not be acceptable unto God. Let all your works be done in love.—1 Cor. xvi. 24.

3. Do not only perform holy duties, but love holy duties, so they will be more acceptable to the God of love. An ungodly man or woman may often go to prayer, but they love it not; they may hear the Word, but they receive not the truth in the love of it: but a good heart loves duties. So long as you cannot find any relish in ordinances or private duties, but are indifferent whether you perform them or not, or have your frequent intermissions of these meals, so that sometimes you take them, and sometimes you let them alone, it is a sign you are not sound within; or if you do constantly take them, if it be without an appetite, and perform holy duties, only to stop the mouth of conscience, it is an argument your soul is not in health. Till you find sweetness in ordinances, the case is not well with you, as it should be, the soul is out of frame. If once you love duties, they will be a delight and refreshment to you. All the ways of Christ are beds of spice and roses, and can you walk on such, and not be requited for it with sweet and fragrant smells? Those that carry bundles of spices from *Arabia*, have their spirits refreshed with

the sweet odours that breathe from them. A good Christian is refreshed in duty; the soul can sing at her work. Love turns all pains into pleasures. Though the mother take a great deal of pains in tending the child, yet she finds a sweet delight in it, because of her love to it. A good Christian can say with *David*, *O how I love thy law!*—*Psalms* cxix. 97. And *I delight to do thy will, O my God.*—*Psalms* xl. 8.

CHAPTER XXV.

Of Prayer.

1. Do not rush instantly on prayer, without some serious consideration before. Read therefore some portion of Scripture before you pray. This will afford you matter of meditation, which will furnish you with matter for prayer; for so you may turn what you have read into prayer. A good heart is by one duty quickened, and prepared for another, as the wild boars, by whetting their tusks with their other teeth, make them sharp, and so every tooth mutually sets an edge on another. If therefore you intend to read, pray before by some short address to God, if to pray, read before. Yea, pray also before prayer, that God would assist you in prayer and deliver you from the evil infirmities of your prayer. Holy *David* prays for his own prayers.—*Psalms* cxli. 1, 2.

2. Look not upon prayer as a task, but as a privilege: O! what a great and glorious privilege is it, that the poorest saint may with boldness have access to God.—*Eph.* iii. 12. *Rom.* v. 1, 2. Is it not a royal privilege to have a key in our keeping, that

opens heaven's gates, and lets us into the presence chamber of the King of glory! To speak with him at any time? If you would thus look upon it, I should not need to persuade you to go to prayer constantly, morning and evening. This would be instead of a hundred arguments, that prayer is so high and so royal a privilege, that you may thereby go boldly to the throne of grace, draw near to God himself, and lay your petition in his bosom, and plead your cause before him, and fill your mouth with arguments, and reason out your great concerns with him, and receive his answers.

3. Pray earnestly. Lazy devotion and key-cold prayers will never prevail. You must wrestle with God in prayer, like holy *Jacob*, that you may prevail. In wrestling one single person strives with another, so the devout soul with God; they go to it singly, as it were hand to hand, and have as it were a single combat in private. The devout saint loves to wrestle with God in the closet, when nobody is present, the door being shut, he loves not to have spectators of it; he then comes up close to God, and takes hold of his everlasting arms. Thus the woman of *Canaan* wrestled with Christ, she stands to it, though she had many repulses from him. The soul thus wrestles with God, as a child with the father, who is much delighted and pleased, to let it get the better of him, to encourage it, and after takes it up from its knees into his arms. When you go to prayer, you must set all your faculties on work, you must open and spread the sails, open and spread forth your affections as wide as you can, that they may gather wind enough, to waft you over to the land of promise.

4. See that your prayers be followed with diligent and serious endeavours, for effecting of that which you have prayed for, otherwise they will be fruitless. If you pray for knowledge, and never take pains by reading and study to get it; or for the mortification of sin, and never labour to subdue and kill it, or for reformation of your life, and never set about the reforming of it, your prayers will be to little purpose. It is as if a man should pray to be cured of a disease, and yet never use physic, nor diet, or exercise to cure it: or like such, as the Greek heathen orator speaks of, who seeing great hailstones falling down on their heads, prayed to be secured from them but would not stir a foot. God's usual way is, to give in blessings to us concurring with him in the use of means, and he will not vary from his ordinary method, unless upon more special occasions.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Of desiring the Sincere Milk of the Word.

1. THINK that while you are in this world, you will have need of the milk of the word, need of ordinances. There are some fond Christians, that think thy are above ordinances, which are only for babes, that they are past the milk of the word, and are grown too old to suck the breasts. I wish they were ever new-born babes in Christ, which is to be feared they never were, though they conceit themselves to be tall and perfect men and women in Christ. I have read of one *Philinus*, that never

fed of any other meat or drink all his life but only milk. All the true children of God, must certainly while they live here, feed on no other food but only Scripture-milk. God will not nourish our souls by immediate influences, and communications from himself, till we come to the heavenly land, that flows with milk and honey, and to sit at God's own table at the supper of the Lamb in the kingdom of glory. When the new-born babes are grown to a perfect stature, and are perfectly weaned from the world, which will not be until this mortal shall have put on immortality; then, and not till then, shall we have immediate communion with God, which is the sweet of heaven. The pot of manna must continue in the ark of the church, until we come to the celestial *Canaan*.

2.—The end of desiring this milk, must be that you may grow thereby. We are nourished and made to grow by the same things whereby we were first bred. Indeed all the ordinances, which are the soul's nourishment, are nothing else but the word itself in several forms, or the subject matter of the word. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which was specially appointed for the soul's nourishment, and growth in grace, is but the word in a more sensible form. The sacrament is but the word visibly prepared to the eye, by an exuberance of mercy, which was barely set forth to the ear in reading and preaching, that our eye might affect our heart, and the whole man might be fed with more apt and suitable congruity by such visible signs. If you be new born, you must not satisfy yourself with that, but you must further look to it, that you grow up in Christ. It is a

shrewd sign, that that person is not in Christ, who is well contented with present grace, without endeavouring after growth therein. Be not like *Luther's* changeling, ever sucking, never thriving. Try then whether you grow in holiness. Do you perform duties with more heart and life than formerly? Are you now, not only for personal holiness, but relation holiness?

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of Reading the Word.

1. READ every day some portion of Scripture either out of the Old or New Testament, but especially out of the New: make use of both these breasts for your spiritual nourishment; prize both law and gospel; highly value and study both. The child likes to lie sometimes at the one breast, and sometimes at the other; but yet the Gospel is the better breast, and faith loves most to lie thereat; it finds most sweetness in the Gospel honey-comb; it gets honey in every little cell of it, tastes sweetness in every word or tittle of the Gospel.

2. Read the Scripture understandingly; see when you read that you understand the substance and sense, the drift and scope of the Holy Ghost in that Scripture which you read, otherwise you read unprofitably. I speak now of those places of Scripture which contain either some article of faith or matters of practical godliness, such as are incumbent upon Christians, to learn to observe and practise. But as for those places that contain mere speculative and controversial matter, or hard questionable points in divinity, an ordinary Chris-

tian need not be curious for a distinct understanding of them.

3. When you begin to read any portion of Scripture, pray unto God, that he would enlighten you by his Spirit, that you may understand it, and read it with reverence as the Word of the most Holy God; and when any thing affects you, pray to God that he would work that particular passage on your heart before you read any further.

4. In reading, take special notice of, and mark those places of Scripture, which you find most suitable and beneficial to you, and read them over oftener than others. Let your heart, like a diligent bee, sit longest on those flowers that will afford you most honey; and yet, if you stay thereon as long as you can, you shall never get out all the sweetness, you may afterwards return to read again and find more; and though the soul have even loaded herself, she leaves them, as the bee her flowers, as whole as she found them. A good serious Christian may perhaps have read a chapter twenty times over before, yet afterwards in the reading of it, God may discover something to him anew, so that he then gathers that thence, which he never did before, and tastes a new and fresh sweetness there.

5. Read the Scriptures with this end and intent, that you may know what God would have you to do, and what he would have you forbear, that the word of God may dwell in you richly in all wisdom, (as the Apostle speaks, *Col. iii. 16.*) i. e. that you may be so wise as to know how to apply it, to know how to use such an example, and such a reproof. It is the wisdom of a tradesman to know

how to use such a tool, such an instrument or engine; and of a Christian to know how to use such a portion of Scripture, to remember what Christ did in such a temptation, what *Abraham*, *David*, and *Job* did in such a case. Look into the Word of God as into an excellent glass, whereby to know how to dress yourself; look into it that you may see all your spots, and whatsoever is amiss and out of order, that you may amend and redress the same, yea, that you may behold in this glass, the glory of the Lord, and be changed into the same image, as from glory to glory, i. e. into the beauty of holiness, which this glass is proper for.—2 *Cor.* iii. 18.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Of Hearing the Word Profitably.

1. WHEN the word is preached, do not stay at home, no, not to read good books. They are strange children, that when the nurse holds out the breast, will cry out for the sucking-bottle. God is pleased to put forth his spirit in the preaching of the word, more effectually than in the reading it. The same milk is more effectual and nourishing, when it is taken warm immediately from the breast, than when it hath been milked out, and stood a while, and when it can be had, you make no use of the bottle or spoon. Though a printed sermon be as good, as that which is heard from the minister's mouth, yet it hath not pleased God ordinarily to work conversion by printed sermons at such times, when the word might be heard preached. Though *Abana* and *Pharpar* had as good water as *Jordan*, yet it

would not heal *Naaman's* leprosy. That honey tastes sweetest, which is sucked immediately out of the comb, and much better than that which is eaten out of a dish, and that word is sweeter to the soul's palate. which drops immediately from the minister's mouth, and came directly from his heart thither, than that which is read out of a book. That which comes warm from the heart of the preacher, is most likely to go to the heart of the hearer. That person which will not go to hear the word preached, but will rather stay at home to read, is like a sullen child, that will not eat his meat, unless he himself may cut it. You may expect that God will give a blessing to the endeavours of his faithful, laborious ministers. We should feed our nurses well, that our children may fare the better.

2. Mark the doctrine, design, and drift of the preacher all along, that you may understand the sermon, and observe his method, that you may remember it. For so it will be the more portable for the memory.

3. Go not to hear the word with a common frame of heart, or with the same end that you go to hear another kind of discourse : but go, that you may be made holy, otherwise you go not to the word, as a new-born babe, with an appetite to the milk of it. You must come to those golden pipes, *Zach.* iv. 2, that they may empty golden oil into you, or they will do you no good. *Canaan* itself, that flows with milk and honey, would be but a desert, a honey-comb without honey, mere wax, if Christ were not there. Therefore go to the word, to find something of Christ there, to get some influences from him, and not barely to hear a man speak ; go to

hear, not so much that you might know more, but that you may be affected more.

4. Hear the word attentively and diligently, because it is your life.—*Deut.* xxxii. 46. The things spoken, do concern the soul, and are most momentous; how slightly and carelessly do multitudes of people hear the word preached, as if it were a matter of small concern? Which might justly cause God to take away the word from us; when the mother sees that the child doth but play with the breasts, she puts them up.

5. Labour to be affected with the word I mean, not with some elegant expressions, or pleasing comparisons that are brought in a sermon to tickle the fancy of a delicate hearer. If these only affect you, you get no good, but suck wind rather than nourishment. The bee lights not on the rose which hath the freshest colour and sweetest smell, but on thyme, which is a herb of little beauty. A devout soul rests not on truths curiously decked with eloquence, but upon plain naked truths, to fetch honey from. It likes the most saving, weighty, and powerful truths, the spiritualness of the matter, the holiness of soul-searching doctrines, such doctrines, as beat down lust and corruption. But as a formalist is only delighted with the history, the elegance of language, the quaint notions, or the rational evidence of the discourse, and so rests in the outward shell, and tastes not the kernel. If these things only do affect you in hearing, you did never yet really taste the goodness of sermon milk; or the sweetness and preciousness of Christ in a sermon, which if once you had tasted, how would your heart be affected and ravished with it? It is

only the tasting of the honey-comb, that makes one affected with it, and to long after more.

6. Ponder upon what you hear, lay it up in your heart so as to retain it. Thus did *Mary* by Christ's sayings, she kept them all, and pondered them in her heart.—*Luke* ii. 19. The word is a jewel, lock it up in the cabinet of your heart. It is pondering on the word in the heart, that doth make it nourishment to you by digesting of it, and turning it into the blood and spirit of holiness. This is the squeezing of the honey-comb of the word into the heart, which makes it yield abundant store of refreshing sweetness. Yea, and presseth it so, that it slides down deep into the heart, so as it is made to abide there. When the minister hath laid on a healing plaister, meditation binds it fast on, makes it stick, and abide, which otherwise would rub off again presently, without doing any good, it fastens on our hearts the truths which we have heard.

7. If you would profit by the word preached, then pray for the minister before you go to church. *Col.* iv. 3.—*Eph.* vi. 19. Pray to God to direct him to speak a word in season to you, that might be suitable to your condition, and work upon your heart. I am persuaded that one reason why people reap no more benefit by the word, is because they do not before pray for the minister, or for a blessing on the word, that he shall preach to them. Consider that thus praying for him, you pray for yourself; if the mother have a full breast, it is the benefit of the child. *St. Austin* praised God for furnishing his nurse with milk, as he would have perished without it. O pray to God constantly before you go to church, that he would enable the minis-

ter to do the work of a spiritual nurse well, and then you will find that you will have matter to praise God for the good that you shall reap after by his church nursery.

8. When you come home, retire yourself a little, and repeat over to yourself, the most practical truths which you have heard, make application of them to yourself, and press them home upon your own heart. Think not how the doctrine you have heard, doth fit others, this hinders your profiting by the word, but think how it fits yourself.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of Receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

1. NEGLECT no opportunity of being a guest at this sacred feast of the Lord's Supper, and take care that in all your approaches to it, you come worthily. This would be a prime and most sovereign means to your living well, which is the design of all the advice that I have given you. O what excellent and heavenly lives did the primitive Christians lead, while they received the Sacrament every day, or every Lord's-day? they were thereby inflamed with such zeal and holy courage, that they were said to come from the Sacrament, like lions breathing fire; and hence in *Cyprian's* time, they had it every day, that they might be the more animated to lay out their blood for Christ. This Sacrament, saith *Chrysostom*, is for the noble eagles that would have their thoughts on high; it helps souls mightily to mount up with wings as eagles,

to run and not be weary, to fly swiftly through difficulties and duties, and to make them ascend up in a fiery chariot of love. Christians may hereby be brought unto, and preserved in a holy gallantry of spirit, and briskness and liveliness in well doing, and to move as in the chariots of *Aminadab*, with nimble vigour. The elixir of Christ's blood in the Sacrament, will make the believer full of life and spirits. Hereby a Christian, (saith *Bernard*,) is made more meek to be reprov'd, more patient to labour, more fervent to love, more ready to obey, and more devout to give God thanks. In a word, your heart by this feast of fat things, and refined wines, will be more strengthened to the practice of all holy virtues, to the mastery of all corruptions, and to the conquest of all temptations, and support to go on in its work and way, without sinking under its burthen.

2. Besides, how could you think that you live well, if you should live in the neglect or omission of so great a duty as this of receiving the Sacrament, which was the request and legacy of your dying Saviour, with strict command appendant and annexed thereunto, *Do this in remembrance of me!* Would not that be a living in rebellion against his law, a slighting of his body and blood, while you have a command to communicate therein? Unpreparedness may be your sin, but cannot be a warrantable plea for abstaining.

3. Now that you may so make your addresses hereunto, as to come worthily, be careful of these four following particulars:—

1. To know and understand the nature and ends of this feast.

2. To be such a person as the master of the feast would have his guests to be.

3. To make yourself ready before you come to it.

4. To behave yourself so at it, as becomes a guest at that royal banquet.

CHAPTER XXX.

Of the Nature of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

ENDEAVOUR to get a right understanding of the nature of this divine mystery, so as to know what you feed on there. All people love to have light when they are at a feast, to see what they eat. If you have not the light of knowledge, so as to see what you eat in the Lord's Supper, which is the great mystery of our religion, you do not then discern the Lord's body, and so cannot be a worthy receiver.

Now as for the nature of this holy Sacrament, consider both the outside, and also the inside of it.

The outside contains, 1. The Sacramental elements, bread and wine. 2. The Sacramental rites or actions.

The Sacramental elements are bread and wine, which being duly consecrated, are plain and visible representations, and divine memorials of the body and blood of Jesus Christ: but they are not bare representations thereof, they are not mere shadowy significations and resemblances: for God doth not nourish and feed our souls with thin and empty shadows, weak and languishing representations, or naked emblems. And therefore we must further

look on them as real pledges, and seals or instruments of conveyance of Christ, and the fruits of his death, in a mystical manner to the faith of his people, which comes to pass by virtue of our Lord's institution; whereupon he that duly receives the elements, receives the thing signified by them, and vailed therein. As among men, a pledge confirms a contract, and a seal conveys an estate, house or land, by virtue of the law of the land: so by virtue of Christ's institution, the covenant of grace is by the Sacramental elements confirmed betwixt God and the worthy receiver, and Jesus Christ, with all his benefits, truly exhibited and conveyed from God to the believing communicant, (though not as through a conduit-pipe, as if they were locally contained therein, yet) as an estate is conveyed from the giver by wax and seal, which is delivered by the hand of his messenger, or as the possession of a house, is delivered by a key, and of land, by a sod or turf. And so when Christ saith by the minister, Take, this is my body or my blood, he doth as much as say, Take these, they are to thee my body and blood, i. e. real pledges, together with which I give thee myself, according as a man in worldly matters, doth by pledges give the thing signified thereby; as if he that is about giving possession of a house, should give a key, and say, Take it, here is possession of my house; or delivering an evidence sealed, should say, take this, here is my land. And upon this account, the cup is called by the apostle, the communion of the blood of Christ, and the bread broken the communion of the body of Christ.—1 *Cor.* x. 16; where the apostle signifies to us, that the eating and drinking of believ-

ers in the Lord's supper, is real communication in his meritorious death, and all-sufficient sacrifice, and a true participation of the blessed fruits of the cross. As among the *Jews*, those that did eat of the sacrifice, did partake of the altar; *ver.* 18, that is, of the sacrifice offered upon the altar: So among Christians, to eat and drink by faith in the Lord's Supper, is to be partaker of his immaculate sacrifice; once for all, offered up upon the altar of the cross. The covenant is as the deed, that entitles us to all the riches of grace, and regions of glory; but the Sacrament is the institution that doth invest us therein.

The Sacramental actions or rites, are on the minister's part, 1. The consecration by blessing and giving thanks. 2. Breaking and delivering. And then on the communicant's part, the actions or rites are, taking, eating, and drinking.

The inside of the Sacrament, or the spiritual thing signified and couched in the outward Sacrament; this is Christ himself, as offered up upon mount *Calvary*, together with the precious fruits of the cross, which bear better fruits to us, than all the trees of paradise did; as olives of peace and reconciliation with God, clusters of the grapes of *Canaan*, righteousness and grace, joy and gladness, life and salvation. The elements of the bread and wine, signify the body and blood of Christ, with the precious fruits thereof, and the breaking of the bread, signifies the crucifying or sacrificing of Christ: And the delivery of the bread and wine, Christ delivering of himself with his benefits. And the taking, eating, and drinking, point forth the communicant's thankful accepting, and using that precious gift. Here is the glory and divinity of the mystery.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Of the Ends of the Sacrament.

ENDEAVOUR to understand well the ends of this Sacrament. Now for your more clear and distinct understanding hereof, I shall premise this one thing, viz., that this Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the true notion of it, is a feast, and particularly a feast upon a sacrifice, or a feast upon that which was once offered up in a sacrifice to God, viz., the body and blood of Christ, which are represented in the outward elements of bread and wine. And thus it is parallel unto, or bears proportion with the Jewish feasts under the law, which were made upon those things, which they had first offered up in sacrifice to God: for it was an ancient custom among the Jews, (as also generally among the heathen,) to link feasting and sacrificing together, and to eat of the things which themselves had sacrificed, and so had a communion therein. This they did to signify a contract or covenanting rite and solemnity betwixt God and them, as also a covenanting league of friendship among themselves, who did eat thereof. This being premised, you may more plainly understand the ends of this Sacrament, which are these following:—

The first end of this Sacrament is to be nourishment to our inward man, or that the Divine Nature in us might thrive. The end of a feast is nourishment. This sacred feast was instituted to nourish and feed the soul, to strengthen and increase its graces. Hence it is expressed by eating and

drinking.—1 *Cor.* xi. 24, 25. Christ comes to the soul as *Melchisedeck* to *Abraham* with bread and wine. The very body and blood of Christ, which were a sacrifice, as they were offered up to God, in that one full and sufficient oblation upon the cross, are meat and drink for the soul's nourishment as they are offered unto us, and set before us in the dishes of the outward Sacrament, and so Christ crucified is truly and really, but spiritually and mystically given to us in the Lord's Supper to be our nutriment, as he was given for us in the sacrifice and oblation upon the cross, to be our propitiation and atonement. Christ's flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, and do become one with us spiritually for our nourishment, as our bodily meat and drink do, being turned into our substance; here there is a kind of divine coalition into the same nature. Hence our Saviour said, He that eateth me shall live by me.—*Job* vi. 57. It is storied of *Artemisia*, that she so loved her husband *Mausolus*, that after he was dead, she took the ashes of his urn, and mingled them with her drink, and so intombed her dead husband in her living body. A faithful soul that is espoused to Christ, doth this at the Sacrament, eating and drinking there of her crucified Saviour by a spiritual commisseration, thus she lives by him, and hath him as it were intombed in her heart.

Therefore whensoever you come to this heavenly banquet, come with this end that your soul may receive increase and nourishment in grace thereby, that you may have Christ become one with you, as your food doth whereby you thrive and grow. But yet you must not think to get any nourish-

ment, from the out-side of the Sacrament, from the outward rind or bark, or skin of the ordinance, or by feeding on the outward elements, if you rest there. This would be to scrape the dish only, or out-side of the cup, and let the meat alone, and to go away whole and untouched from the table.

The second end for which this Sacrament was instituted, is a solemn commemoration of Christ and him crucified, or the celebrating a memorial of him in the church throughout all ages. Public feasts were usually made for the preserving the memory of some great benefactor. Now this Sacrament of the passion is a public feast for the whole church of God in all ages; and was it not instituted for to keep a perpetual memory of the founder of it, our dear Lord and infinite benefactor? This will appear by his own words at the first institution, Do this in remembrance of me, *Luke xxii. 19*, i. e. of me as crucified and dying, as *St. Paul* expressly interprets it, *1 Cor. xi. 26*; For as oft as ye do eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come; and therefore it was purposely ordained for the retaining a more special memory of his death and passion. For the Sacrament, (as I premised,) was a feast upon a sacrifice, and so it was ordained by Christ more particularly and specially, to commemorate that oblation of himself upon the cross for the redemption of the world, until he come to judgment, to eternize the memory of his great and infinite love and goodness in dying for us, and to transmit it to all succeeding ages and generations. The Lord hath so done this marvellous work, that it ought to be had in everlasting remembrance.

Therefore in all your addresses to this Sacrament of the passion, come for this end, to keep in a thankful and affectionate memory the great and infinite sufferings of Christ for our sins. Remember his death and passion through the whole Sacramental action, and that with the most enlarged and enravished affections and meltings of heart, and the immortal hatred of those sins that put him upon dying for us, and the shedding of his most precious blood, one drop whereof, is of more value than a mountain of pearl as big as the whole earth.

The third end of the Lord's Supper is a solemn renewing of the baptismal covenant. The feasts anciently made upon sacrifices were generally used, (as I observed before,) to signify thereby a covenanting with God. Therefore this Supper of the Lord being in the true motion of it, (as I said,) a feast upon the bloody sacrifice offered by Christ upon the cross for us, it doth clearly insinuate to us, that it was appointed to be a mutual stipulation or covenanting betwixt God and his communicants; hence Christ said concerning the cup, This is the New Testament or covenant in my blood, i. e. the rite and solemnity of the new covenant, (to declare and signify the consent of parties thereunto, and resolution to perform the duties of it,) insinuating thereby, that as the legal sacrifices on which the people did eat were as rites of an old superannuated covenant, so was this Sacrament a rite of a new covenant, by using whereof, we do testify our engagements to perform it, as God doth his for making us partakers of all the blessings couched in it. So that this Sacrament on God's part doth signify a solemn delivery of Jesus Christ, his

precious body and blood, together with remission of sins, (for which that blessed body was broken and torn, and that blood spilt,) and all other fruits of his death. And on our part it signifies a free acceptance thereof, and a hearty delivery of ourselves up to the entire obedience of him, as we engaged in the new covenant to do: so that consequently one great end of this Sacrament is to be a pledge of our happy participation of the body and blood of Christ, with remission of sins, justification, adoption, and title to the regions of bliss, and all other the inestimable benefits thereof. Hence it is called the communion of the body and blood of Christ, 1 *Cor.* x. 16, where the Apostle doth plainly declare that the Sacramental bread and cup are assured pledges of our communion with the body and blood of Christ, i. e. of the communion thereof to us if duly received.

Therefore in all your addresses to the Lord's table, go with this scope and end, that you may have a part and portion in Christ's body and blood, remission of sins, and reconciliation thereby, with all other merits of the blood of the cross, which God hath covenanted to make over to you. And go also with this intent, that you may renew the engagement, and declare that you will stand to the terms of the baptismal covenant, that you will keep firm and constant to that holy league, and stand out in a holy war against all the enemies of Christ, and never revolt or go to the enemy's quarters; but as a faithful confederate with him, will always fight under his banner, against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and continue to be on Christ's side, or of his religion to your life's end.

The fourth end of this Sacrament is to be a pledge and improvement of that love, unity, and concord, that ought to be among Christians. Those that did feast upon the sacrifices anciently, (as I before hinted,) did use to enter into a covenant of friendship among themselves as well as betwixt God and them. And it hath been an universal custom throughout the world, to make covenants or leagues of friendship by eating and drinking together. This blessed Supper of the Lord is really and truly a public love-feast, and was designed by our Saviour for this end, the promoting love and union among all his people, and to show that they should all cleave together in one spirit, as they have all been partakers of one bread.—1 Cor. x. 17. If then it was a love-feast, and the feast still remain, let not the love be excommunicated.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Of Habitual Qualifications of the Communicants.

BEFORE you make addresses to this heavenly banquet, see that you be habitually such a person as the Master of the feast, our Lord Jesus Christ would have his guests to be. Therefore you must set some portion of time apart, before the feast-day, to examine yourself, whether you be such a person or no, i. e. whether you be a real and serious Christian, one that is truly, and in good earnest, godly. When the King saw one amongst his guests, that had not on a wedding-garment, that was not vested with the robes of Christ's righteousness for justification, nor of inherent righteousness

for sanctification, he commanded to take him, and bind him hand and foot, and to cast him into utter darkness.—*Matt.* xxii. 13. The wrath of God will be up against such unworthy guests, as the King's was against *Haman*, at the banquet of wine, and will give sentence against them accordingly. The *Indians*, when they first came into these *Northern Countries*, thought roses had been fire. Surely the rose of *Sharon* will be really a consuming fire, a devouring flame to unworthy Communicants: He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks his own damnation.—*1 Cor.* xi. 29. It is as if the Apostle should say, He swallows damnation; and this is more than to swallow down flames here in the world. It would be well for such, if this Sacrament proved only an empty feast to them, but it proves mortal poison, and like poison taken in wine, works with the fiercest violence. If you be an unworthy guest at the Lord's table, you will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.—*1 Cor.* xi. 27; your soul will be dyed red in blood. I mention not this to dishearten you from going to that blessed feast, (for you ought to go,) but to persuade you to go as a worthy guest, that your going may be for your everlasting comfort, and not for your confusion.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Of Actual Qualifications.

MAKE yourself actually ready to come to this great solemnity, this holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is not enough that you be habitually, unless you be actually prepared. If you were

invited to a feast by some great person, you would not satisfy yourself to go in your ordinary dress, though it were neat and handsome, but you would put yourself to some more than ordinary pains to spruce and trim up yourself, so as not to have a hair amiss. And ought you not to be more careful to beautify, deck, and trim up your soul afresh, by special and more than ordinary devotions and actions of piety, before you come to this high and majestic solemnity, this tremendous mystery? as *Chrysostom* calls it. Before meat, it is good to use some exercise, (as physicians say,) to stir up the natural heat, for to promote digestion: and so before this spiritual feast, it is good to exercise our souls, for the stirring up our spiritual appetite thereunto, for the warming, heating, and quickening of all those graces and affections that are necessary for a worthy communicant; which are faith, repentance, hungering desires, love to God and our neighbour, joy, thankfulness, and resolutions of new obedience. You must not only have the habit of these graces, but they must be made ready, new scoured and prepared, so as they may work more kindly at the Sacrament; there must be a tuning of the viol, and a winding up of the strings, the several faculties of the soul. Now you must rally up all your affections, all the forces of your soul, and get them all in a ready frame, and due posture, for exercising themselves at this sacred solemnity. You must premeditate before you go, of all the work that you are to do at the Sacrament, and so thereby fit yourself for the better doing of it, when you come there.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Of Suitable Behaviour at the Table of the Lord.

BE careful so to behave yourself at this divine feast, as becomes one of the Lord's guests. It is not sufficient to get your heart into a devout frame, before you approach to this table of the Lord, but it is requisite also, that it be kept up in a holy tune, in a right disposition and suitable deportment, during the solemnity. It is not enough to trim up one's-self to go to the table of some noble person, but there must be also a becoming behaviour there, lest offence be given by any indecencies. And therefore that your demeanour here may be proper and becoming, I shall instruct you how, and in what particular seasons or passages of the administration, your sacramental graces respectively are to be exercised. I hinted to you in the former chapter, which are those graces that are most proper to be exercised at the Sacrament, and shall now show you in what order and method, and in what season they are aptly and pertinently to be acted there.

When you are called up by the minister to draw near to the table of blessing, think you hear Christ himself by his minister calling you up, and bidding you welcome. And then exercise humble thankfulness and joy, together with hungering desires, and let your heart say: Lord, what am I, that thou shouldst so far condesend, as to invite me a poor worm, thy worthless hand-maid to thy royal table? And to admit such a wretched creature to the ban-

quet of spiced wine, who have deserved nothing but gall and vinegar to drink? My soul therefore doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour, for he hath regarded the lowliness of his hand-maid, from henceforth all the powers of my soul shall call thee blessed. Lord, hast thou now called me into thy banqueting-house? I do promise here, that while the king sitteth at the table (and I there with him) my spicknard shall send forth the smell thereof. My faith, desires, love, and thankfulness: Yea, all my graces shall send forth a sweet and holy perfume to please him. O that the same love that hath prepared a table for me, and now called me to it, would prepare me for it, and refresh my soul with love and sweetness there!

At the minister's reciting the words of the institution, separating and blessing of the bread and wine, whereby they are consecrated; exercise faith and thankfulness, and fervent desires to God the Father, and say, Lord, out of thine infinite love, thou didst separate and set apart the Lord Jesus from all eternity, and appointed him for our Redeemer, and didst bless him with the Spirit above measure, making him the rich treasury, and common stock of grace, a fountain overflowing, to the supply of all believers: let him not be to me a locked treasure, or a fountain sealed up, but bless and sanctify these creatures of bread and wine to me, that they may be the body and blood of Christ in effect to me, for my atonement, peace and propitiation, and pardon of all my sins, and convey spiritual life, nourishment and comfort to me abundantly. O let my soul be steeped in sweetness; and let the rock

pour out oil into me, even the oil of grace, and of joy and gladness also.

When you look upon the bread and wine after consecration, exercise faith to discern the Lord's body; and look now upon them not as common bread and wine, but as sacramental representations, spiritually exhibiting the body and blood of Christ; look by faith beyond these outward elements and say; Lord, thou dost here send me a covered dish of royal cheer from heaven from thine own table, as to a beloved friend, or dear child: teach me to take off the outward cover, and to see plainly and clearly the rare delicacies that are laid in it. Let me so employ my outward senses, in minding the outside of the Sacrament, so as to raise my spiritual senses, to see and discern the inside thereof, and the glorious mysteries couched in it. And here exercise further longing desires after those veiled mysteries, and say, As the hart pants after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God.

When you see the bread broken and the wine poured out, then you see the lively spectacle of a dying Saviour. Let then repentance be renewed, faith, love, and resolutions, for new obedience, and holy desires also acted and elevated in the soul. Represent now to yourself in this mystery, what our Lord Jesus endured when he hung upon his painful bed of sorrows the cross, and say to yourself, canst thou look upon a broken Saviour, without a broken heart? Upon a bleeding Christ, without a bleeding soul? Upon a pierced Jesus, without a heart pierced through with godly sorrow, for thy sins that pierced him? Doth not every orifice made

by the nails, the thorns, and the spear in that precious, tormented, and pained body, and every drop of blood that issued thence, call aloud to thee for repentance of those sins that caused these torments? I do therefore here vow and covenant to take a revenge upon my sins, and give them their mortal wound, and cause them to bleed to death, using them, as they used my dear Lord and Saviour. O what streams of matchless love were these, that flowed from a dying Saviour, laying down his life for me; and do not these call for streamings of love back again from my breast towards him? O that my soul may be sprinkled with that blood, which issued from that fountain of infinite love! O that it may be bathed in that blessed bath, set open for sin and for uncleanness! Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I can desire besides thee, my bleeding Saviour!

When the minister comes and delivers to you the bread or wine, look on him as doing it in Christ's name, and here stir up faith and love to God. Think with admiring love, how God in Christ delivers up himself in covenant to you, offering to be your God, your reconciled Father and Redeemer: And believe with joy and thankfulness, that you hear Christ by the minister saying to your faith, Take my body and blood all the riches of that covenant, which was sealed with my blood, all the blessings couched in that blessed charter of the Gospel.

When you take these at the minister's hands, then let the hand of faith stretch forth itself, to reach God, and stir up yourself to take hold on him, and put forth entire resolutions of new obedience, and

say, Lord, by taking this, I do covenant with thee, that I take thee with my whole heart, to be my Lord, to be ruled and governed as well as saved by thee, and I do here seriously devote myself, both body and soul to the entire obedience of thee.

When you are eating the bread, then lift up your heart by faith to God and say; I believe, Lord, that thy flesh is meat indeed; thou that didst die for me, art the bread of life, that shall nourish my soul to eternal life. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips. And here by eating this bread, I do covenant with thee, to be thy servant and obedient child for ever.

And when you are drinking of the wine, or immediately upon it, say, Lord, thy blood is drink indeed. O that my soul may taste the refreshings of this heavenly wine! O stay me with flagons, comfort me with thy love, which is better than wine. I believe that thy blood was shed for the remission of sins: O that I may be washed from all mine in that holy laver! And that I may hear the soft voice of thy spirit whispering to my soul, Daughter be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases.

When you look upon the communicants receiving with you, exercise love to the saints, and say, Where the carcase is, where the crucified body of my Saviour is, thither will the believing eagles be gathered together, and shall not I be joined in love with all that heavenly flock, and holy society? These eagles do all feed on blood, the blood of a crucified Christ,

and hath not this a cementing virtue to unite affections? These are the friends of the bridegroom, and shall not I make them my friends? Shall not the beloved of my Saviour, be the beloved ones of my soul?

CHAPTER XXXV.

What is to be done after the Administration is ended.

WHEN the solemnity is over; go home with a glad heart, and a cheerful spirit, and say to yourself: What! did *Haman* go from *Esther's* banquet of wine, with a glad heart, glorying in the honour of his being there? And shall not I much more rejoice and glory, who have been in the Spouse's banqueting house, where his banner over me was love; and have been royally entertained by the King of saints with the choicest delicacies of heaven?

When you are come home retire yourself into privacy for a little time, and ask yourself what your demeanour was at the Lord's table, and what happy fruit you have found of your being there. What meltings, or softenings of heart? What glimpses of love? What cherishing beams of the spirit? What strength, vigor and liveliness of soul? What secret springings and elevations of spirit? What spiritual quickenings and refreshings have you had at that feast of fat things and refined wines? And according as you find it with your heart upon this short trial, so do you answerably make your addresses unto God. If you have found the efficacy of the ordinance, and sweet satisfaction there, bless God for it, and sing glory to God in the highest, and pray ear-

nestly to him, that it may abide upon your soul, but if you find no divine relishes, no drops of sweetness, but are come away with an earthy and drossy soul, then humble yourself before God, and labour to find out the sin that was the obstruction, and remove it.

Be watchful afterwards, lest the world or any trifling occasions damp those influences, which you found at the Sacrament. All persons are most careful of themselves after they come out of a hot bath, lest they should take cold. When you have been at this spiritual bath of the Sacrament, be exceedingly careful that cold get not into the heart; that those affections that were warmed and heated there, be not cooled again. Let not those sweet gales of devotion, that did blow within you, at the Lord's table, be presently driven away with a counterblast from Satan or the world. Satan will now be most ready to way-lay you, for to rob you of your jewels, these precious love-tokens of peace, and joy, and holy vigor, which you received from your blessed Lord at his table, and therefore you have more need after you have been there to look well about you, and to walk more circumspectly, and to live more orderly. A disorderly diet after physic received will do more hurt than before. Live ever after as one that hath been at the table of the Lord, then shall you at the end of your life be welcomed to the Supper of the Lamb, in the kingdom of glory, and the cloth never drawn to all eternity,

The Conclusion.

I have now drawn out to you the lineaments of practical religion (the chief lines and features of godliness) which consists mainly in believing in, and devoting yourself to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in living by faith, in holiness of heart and life, in love to God, in walking before God and in universal obedience to him, strictly and circum-spectly; as also in mortification, repentance, praising of God, and delighting in him, humility, meekness, love and charity, exercising grace in all conditions and relations, well spending of your time, especially on the Lord's-day, and waiting upon God in the holy ordinances of prayer, word, and Sacraments. It is now your duty not only to view these lines, but to draw out the same in your practice, and to mould yourself into the like form. I have endeavoured to anoint your right ear with wholesome advice, see that it be your care to get your right foot anointed with the oil of grace, that you may smoothly and cheerfully walk in the way here chalked out before you, till you come to the land of glory.

FINIS.

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